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WELCOME

HALLOWEEN is not just for kids

If you have not yet decided on a Halloween costume, you might want to hurry up. You can't wear that Elvis costume every year.

Yes, Halloween is near, and it's not just for kids. Most all of us have great memories of trick-or-treating with our siblings and friends, amassing a bag of candy we would struggle to carry.

Choosing a costume as a kid was not high pressure, as I simply wore whatever Mom had for me, which was usually a hand-me-down from my siblings. I really didn't care. As an adult, though, the pressure in choosing a Halloween costume intensified. I could no longer strap on a plastic mask and call it good.

Through the years, Jolene and I had some costume hits and some costume misses. The biggest miss was in our younger years when we dressed as mummies, wearing white long underwear tops and bottoms and covering each other with strips of white bed sheets. It seemed like a great idea — until we had to go to the bathroom.

Another year, we went with a group and dressed as the Gilligan's Island crew. Jolene and I were Mr. and Mrs. Howell. And, yes, I carried the teddy bear.

Speaking of bears, a few years later, we tried Goldilocks and the three bears with another couple. It didn't work. We looked like a little girl and three giant mice.

Jolene and I also did stunts as the farmer and the cow, the hunter and the deer, the Lone Ranger and Tonto, and Farrah Fawcett and Michael Jackson.

The best costumes we ever had, though, were when we dressed as the couple that was throwing the party. We pulled that one off twice, to the dismay of the hosts.

I encourage you to get into the Halloween spirit this year. Attend a costume party or event, or just dress up and entertain the kids who are trick-or-treating. And, if you struggle to come up with a costume, well, there is always Elvis.

Happy Halloween, and thanks for reading. ■



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Costume CREATIONS

Residents share how they
add their own touches to
Halloween garbs.

By Jackie Wilson

When it comes to Halloween, some people like to pull out all the stops. They turn their yards into haunted or cartoon landscapes. They carve pumpkins, bob for apples, and offer the best treats to their trick-or-treaters. And, they put their energy and holiday spirit into making sure their costumes — or their kids' — make others “ooh” and “aah” ... and perhaps shudder.

Ian and Emma Pak go trick or treating as a Vikings football player and cheerleader.

Imagination transforms walker

When Ian Pak was 3 years old, he enjoyed watching “Blaze and The Monster Machines,” a cartoon on Nickelodeon. The show featured a boy who drives a monster truck named Blaze. The pair go on adventures together, fighting villains and saving the day.

As Halloween time rolled around, Ian’s dad, Jason, wondered how he could make a costume such as Blaze. Yet, he had one requirement. Any idea needed to incorporate Ian’s medical walker.

“I started looking at his walker. I thought it’d be cool if we could synergize some ideas and give the walker a ‘cool’ factor,” he recalls.

Jason watched the show and used a miniature toy as a model. He cut cardboard, painted panels and assembled monster truck parts on the walker. He added lightning bolts to make it look speedy.

For Ian’s costume, Jason bought various Blaze items and made them into a racing gear outfit.

“He really liked it. We got a lot of great reactions when we went trick or treating,” Jason recalls.

After that initial costume, Jason said it

“snowballed.” The next year — and subsequent years — he wanted to create a costume just as unique as the first one. He accepted the challenge with enthusiasm.

One year, Ian was a Hot Wheels racer. The walker was colored blue and included a spoiler on the back. A racing driver’s outfit completed the look.

As Ian got older, he wanted more say in what characters or costumes he wore. A Godzilla costume was flanked by a miniature cityscape of tall buildings with working lights.

The next year, he was a dinosaur in Jurassic Park. The park had a volcano while Ian was a scary dinosaur. A Michael Jordan costume incorporated a basketball backboard with a hoop plus a miniature basketball and a working digital scoreboard. Jordan’s number 23 jersey was worn by Ian as well.

Before long, Ian’s younger sister, Emma, wanted in on the creative costuming her dad provided.

Last year, Ian was Justin Jefferson, a wide receiver for the Minnesota Vikings football team. The walker this time included a goal post and a scoreboard, while Ian wore a Vikings



Jason Pak created a Godzilla costume. Ian’s walker was part of the city, while Ian, the Godzilla, towered over the structure.

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Jason Pak began incorporating his son, Ian's, medical walker into "cool" accessories for Halloween costumes.

football uniform and helmet. His sister was a Vikings cheerleader.

The next year, his daughter was Wednesday Addams from "The Addams Family" and "Wednesday" show on Netflix.

"I made a button to put on her costume, so she could play the theme song," Jason says. "People just love the costumes."

Jason adds, he wasn't sure how to put it all together. He looked at ideas from the shows, then viewed the walker and tried to figure out what elements would fit best.

"I looked at Comic-Con for techniques," he explains. "They have a lot of costumes. It's just something I stumbled upon."

As a young boy, Jason also celebrated Halloween with trick-or-treating, but his parents never made costumes.

"My parents went to Walmart to pick something out. Maybe this is making up for that," he reflects.

His wife, Jessica, enjoys his creations and offers input on costumes and accessories, but mostly it's the guys doing the work. Now that Ian is a fifth grader in Waukee schools, he has more input on ideas and also helps with the construction of the costumes.

Jason says it's important to make costumes that help his son feel special.

"It's important for him to be inclusive," Jason reflects. "It's a lot of fun. We're trying to figure out what to make for this year."

Mix-and-match costumes

The Reiland family of Waukee has multiple boxes full of Halloween costumes and accessories. Jeff and Jenny Reiland have five kids between the ages of 8 and 20 years old. Over the years, many costumes have been reused and worn by multiple siblings.

Jeff is the practical and imaginative mastermind when it comes to helping his kids choose costumes.

"I'm a creative person. I've always been a hands-on person and can usually figure it out when the kids request a costume," he says.

For his son, Travis, who was 8 years old at the time, Jeff created a costume of Poe Dameron, a "Star Wars" character. He put together cargo pants, different T-shirts and belts. To accessorize it, he used a pistol belt from his own childhood costume when he was Hans Solo.

"I'm a big fan of 'Star Wars,' and so are the boys," he explains.

Another accessory that has been reused over the years is a pair of wings. He repainted the wings black and orange to resemble butterfly wings. He added a headband with pipe cleaners for the antenna.

"We used those wings heavily for different costumes throughout the years," Jeff explains.

A Viking costume and Robin Hood outfits were fashioned from old costumes. Robin Hood is a favorite. It is made with an oversized green T-shirt, a belt, real leather arrow quiver, a money pouch made from a tan sock and a hat made with green craft felt, topped with a red feather. A Raggedy Ann wig included a stocking cap with yarn tied into it. The rest of the outfit was purchased at a thrift store by Jenny. A simple black cat costume is easy to make with a headband, tail and black sweatpants and painted whiskers.

"We mix and match from old costumes," Jeff says. "It might take more time, but we spend less money than if we buy it from the store."

Some years, his kids might want a purchased costume, yet it often appears too generic. If they go that route, he will add accessories.

"Not everyone has a homemade costume," Jeff explains. "Every year, someone will use a hand-me-down."

In October before Halloween, he pulls out the costume box for inspiration.

"We think ahead and knock around ideas. We figure out what is feasible with what we already have on hand," he explains.

Occasionally Jeff will dress up with the kids to take them trick or treating.

He encourages other families to start early to come up with ideas. He



The Robin Hood outfit is a favorite costume for Jeff and Jenny Reiland.



The Reiland family enjoy creating their costumes. "Star Wars" characters are among their favorites.

suggests that parents have a "plan B" when it comes to creating costumes.

"Don't be afraid to try," he suggests. "The more you do it, the better you get at it. If you start early, it gives you time, especially if costumes don't stay together."



Jeff Reiland converted a dual stroller into a fire truck for his young boys who were a firefighter and dalmatian.

Jeff says he likes to assist his kids with costumes because it is quality time spent together.

"I like finding out what my kids like and what they are into," he reflects. "I can spend time with them while they still think I'm cool." ■

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HOW-TO

GUIDE

HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT EYE DOCTOR

Choosing the right eye doctor is crucial for maintaining optimal vision and eye health. With a wide variety of eye care professionals available, it is important to understand the differences between them and consider several factors to ensure you select the right one for your needs.

UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF EYE DOCTORS

Doctors of optometry (OD) are your primary eye care providers. They do eye exams for eyeglasses and contact lenses as well as to diagnose and treat ocular disease such as glaucoma and monitor for diabetic and thyroid eye disease issues among numerous other conditions. They also perform minor surgical procedures like removing metal and other things from people's eyes. Doctors of optometry also treat ocular disease like dry eye syndrome with everything from prescription eye drops to intense pulsed light therapy and heated expression procedures. Doctors of optometry also co-manage surgery with doctors of ophthalmology such as cataract surgery pre and post-op, retinal detachment surgery pre and post op, etc.

Ophthalmologists are medical doctors (MD) who specialize in the eyes and surrounding facial areas and perform major surgery and manage major disease of the eyes and systemic

diseases affecting the eyes. They perform glaucoma surgery, cataract surgery, retinal surgery, plastic surgery and corneal surgery. There are also subspecialties in neuro-ophthalmology, pediatric ophthalmology, glaucoma, anterior segment of the eyes, oculoplastic and retinal specialties, among others.

SEEK RECOMMENDATIONS AND READ REVIEWS

A great way to find a reliable eye doctor is by seeking recommendations from friends, family or your primary care doctor. Online reviews are also helpful in understanding the doctor's reputation. Look for consistent feedback regarding the doctor's communication, thoroughness and office staff's professionalism.

EVALUATE PRACTICAL MATTERS

Consider the location of the eye clinic, office hours and whether they accept your insurance. Convenience and flexibility are key, as regular checkups are essential for maintaining eye health.

By taking time to research and consider these factors, you will be more likely to choose an eye doctor who is well-suited to your needs, ensuring quality care for your eyes in the long term. ■

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HOW TO CHOOSE AN AUTO BODY REPAIR SHOP

From dents and scrapes to fender-benders and more intense damage resulting from an accident or weather-related incidents, you may have a need for an auto body repair shop.

Not surprisingly, shops specializing in this service can vary in quality, reliability and cost. It is not unusual for auto body repair estimates to differ by hundreds if not thousands of dollars. To get the best work at the fairest price requires an investment in time and asking the right questions.

Your insurance company more than likely has a list of “preferred shops” that they will encourage or demand that you obtain an estimate from. You are not required by Iowa law to utilize your insurance company’s “shop.” You choose where the work is done. Whatever shop you choose will need to be able to work off of the preferred shop’s estimate. Many times, once a repair is started, there are additional costs. No fear, the body shop will deal with the insurance company to be

paid for those additional charges.

Your insurance company may indicate that, if you have repairs completed at a shop that is not “preferred,” then they cannot ensure that a warranty will be given. This is a conversation that you need to have with your shop. Most reputable shops will have a written warranty they can provide.

Start your search by asking your friends, family and colleagues. Most of us have worked with an auto body shop at one time in our lives, and it is easier to ask those close to us for referrals for who they have used before.

CHECK OUT REVIEWS. Many auto body shops will promote testimonials from prior customers on their websites. Reading valuable reviews and testimonials from people who have used their service before can help with the process of choosing an auto body shop.

LOOK FOR LOCAL SHOPS. When you take your vehicle to a local body shop,

you’re much more likely to be met by friendly faces, better service, use of top-quality parts, high standards and honest prices. They can maintain low overhead costs and provide friendly customer service. Create a list of shops, contact them on the phone and ask some questions. How long have they been in business? Do they provide free estimates? What is their turnaround time? Do they offer warranties? Do they work directly with insurance companies? What are their specialties? How soon can you bring your vehicle in for an inspection?

CONSIDER PRICES. Are they comparable to other body shops? While you want to find a great deal, cheaper is not always better. Low prices may be tempting, but they could mean sub-par work, used parts and paint that is incorrectly applied.

Finding the right auto body shop will make the experience much more pleasant, and you will be happy with the repairs. ■

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HOW TO CHOOSE GARAGE DOORS

Garage doors are often an afterthought to homeowners — but they shouldn't be. Garage doors are the first thing most notice about a home, so when it comes to choosing them for a new home or replacing them, significant thought and research should take place. If your garage faces the front of the house, a new door could dramatically improve your curb appeal and change the overall look of your home. If you're selling, worn, dated doors tend to say a lot about the condition of the rest of the home. A garage door is also an excellent security asset for your home, allowing you to secure your vehicle inside. If you're thinking about installing a new garage door, you may be surprised at just how many options are on the market — and how affordably they can be installed.

THE LOOK

Garage doors have seen an explosion in styles, materials and colors that are designed to match the architecture of any home, from rural barns to craftsman bungalows or sleek

urban getaways. So if you thought your choices were limited to simple sheet metal styles, think again. You should also pay close attention to the materials. Today's garage doors can be made from expensive hardwoods, textured vinyl, fiberglass or basic aluminum, all of which will have a big impact on the look and longevity of your doors. Pay close attention to the maintenance needs of whatever material you choose. Some will hold their color longer than others, and real wood doors can require regular staining and sealing every few years to keep them looking spectacular.

INSULATION

Depending on climate, the insulation of your garage door can be an important factor to help reduce your energy bills. This is especially important in heated garages. But even an insulated door on unheated garages can make a positive impact on your energy usage if it can keep the hot and cold weather away from the interior of your house. ■

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HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT CBD STORE

CBD has been steadily making its way into Iowa communities, popping up everywhere from boutique wellness shops to small-town main streets. With so many stores opening their doors, it can feel overwhelming to know which ones are worth trusting. Choosing the right CBD store isn't just about grabbing a bottle off the shelf. It's about finding a place where you feel educated, supported and confident in what you're buying.

1. LOOK FOR KNOWLEDGE, NOT JUST SALES.

The best CBD stores are focused on education first, not pushing products. For example, if you mention you're having trouble sleeping, a knowledgeable staff member should be able to explain the difference between CBD and CBN and suggest what might be most effective. One of the strongest signs of quality is finding a shop with certified hemp consultants,

since that shows the team has real training and expertise.

2. CHECK FOR TRANSPARENCY.

A trustworthy store will always share where their hemp comes from and provide third-party lab reports. Imagine you're comparing two oils: one comes with a clear certificate of analysis showing cannabinoid levels and purity, while the other has no details at all. The first store is proving they stand behind their products, and that transparency should give you confidence in your purchase.

3. PAY ATTENTION TO ATMOSPHERE AND SERVICE.

How you feel in the store matters. If you walk in, and the staff seems rushed or uninterested, that's a red flag. But if someone takes the time to listen to your concerns — whether you are new to CBD or curious about dosage methods — you'll feel

more at ease. For example, a welcoming shop might walk you through different product types and even share personal experiences to help guide your decision.

4. LOOK FOR VARIETY AND QUALITY.

Not every CBD product works the same way for everyone, so having options is key. A strong store will carry tinctures, gummies, capsules and topicals, giving you room to explore. Maybe you try a topical cream for sore muscles while also experimenting with gummies for stress relief. Having choices means you can find what fits your lifestyle best.

FINAL THOUGHT

At the end of the day, ask yourself: Does this store make me feel supported in my wellness journey? The right CBD shop should provide more than just products. It should offer education, transparency and genuine care to help you feel your best. ■

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Seeing how much CBD helped Jason inspired me to share it with others, and during the pandemic I realized my purpose was to bring healing—which is why we started CBD American Shaman.



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HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT PODIATRIST

When foot or ankle pain begins to impact your quality of life, choosing the right podiatrist is one of the most important steps in your recovery. Whether you are facing a bunion, heel pain, sports injury or chronic discomfort, the expertise and approach of your provider will significantly influence your outcome.

CREDENTIALS AND CLINICAL EXPERTISE

Start by verifying board certification through the American Board of Foot and Ankle Surgery (ABFAS). This distinction signals that your podiatric surgeon has met nationally recognized standards for education, surgical training and professional performance. Doctors of Podiatric Medicine (DPMs) complete four years of medical school focused on the full body — with a strong emphasis on lower extremity anatomy — followed by at several years of intensive residency training in foot and ankle medicine and surgery. In fact, they typically perform

more foot and ankle procedures during training than any other medical specialty.

GO BEYOND WORD OF MOUTH

Recommendations from friends, family or your primary care doctor are a great starting point, but do not stop there. Take time to explore the podiatrist's website. You can learn a great deal about their background, areas of specialization, and the clinic's overall philosophy of care. Are they publishing research or contributing to medical education? If so, it often indicates a commitment to innovation and advancing the field. Patient reviews are also valuable — they offer real insight into what it is like to be under that provider's care.

MODERN TREATMENTS AND MEANINGFUL COMMUNICATION

The best podiatrists stay current with evidence-based, state-of-the-art treatments like Lapiplasty® for bunions

or laser therapy for soft tissue injuries. If a provider is still doing things the same way they did 20 years ago, it may be time to explore newer, more effective options.

Equally important is how well your provider communicates. You should leave each appointment feeling educated and confident — not confused or dismissed. Expect a thorough explanation of your diagnosis, treatment options and recovery plan. If that is missing, it is a red flag.

YOUR CARE, YOUR CHOICE

Most insurance plans do not require a referral to see a podiatrist, though you should confirm with your provider. Even if you are referred within a larger health system, you are free to choose the specialist who best aligns with your needs, values and goals. And do not overlook the clinic's culture — a personable, knowledgeable and compassionate team speaks volumes about the care you'll receive throughout your journey. ■

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HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT FIBER INTERNET COMPANY

Choosing the right fiber internet company for your needs can significantly impact your on line experience. Making an informed decision with an array of options is essential.

Here are some key factors to consider when selecting a local fiber internet provider:

Coverage and availability: To find internet providers, check their websites or contact them to confirm availability in your area, as not all companies offer services in every location.

Speed and bandwidth: Evaluate your usage needs based on the number of devices and online activities you're planning on. Gamers and 4K video streamers require higher speeds and larger bandwidth than occasional web surfers.

Pricing and plans: Compare prices and inquire about promotions or bundles available to save money. Watch out for hidden fees or price increases and ask about a price-for-life guarantee for

consistency in your budget.

Customer reviews and reputation: When researching local internet providers, read online reviews and ask for recommendations from friends or neighbors, paying attention to feedback on reliability, customer service and overall satisfaction.

Customer service and support: Good customer service is crucial. Inquire about their support options and response times. Check if they offer 24/7 customer service or have local support in case you need assistance.

Contracts and commitments: Before signing up, make sure you understand the contract terms, including any early termination fees. Some providers may require long-term contracts, while others offer more flexible month-to-month options.

Equipment and installation: Inquire about the equipment included, such as modem and router, and if there are

additional charges. Additionally, ask about the installation process and whether the cost is included or requires an extra fee.

Speed consistency: For a consistent internet speed, ask your provider about their contention ratio, especially during peak usage times. Dedicated connections from local providers can offer a more reliable internet experience by avoiding shared bandwidth with neighbors.

Reliability and uptime: When choosing a provider, prioritize reliability by looking for high uptime rates, minimal service disruptions, and service level agreements that guarantee a certain level of reliability.

Additional services and features: Assess whether any additional optional features such as security packages, cloud storage or Wi-Fi hotspot access meet your needs and are worth the extra cost.

Local support: Choosing a local internet company often means supporting your community. This can also mean supporting local jobs and economy. ■



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HOW TO CHOOSE A MEDICARE PLAN ADVISER

If you are 65 years or older, you are about to begin receiving calls and mail from companies wanting to help you choose a Medicare plan. Medicare is federal health insurance for anyone age 65 and older and some people under 65 with certain disabilities or conditions. You'll get Medicare Part A (hospital insurance) automatically when you turn 65, but Medicare Part B (medical insurance) is an elective choice. Most people take Part B at age 65 but people with coverage from an employer can keep their current coverage until they leave employment. You will also need to make important decisions, like which prescription drug plan best covers your needs.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MEDICARE, MEDICARE ADVANTAGE AND MEDICARE SUPPLEMENT?

Simply stated, original Medicare is the basic government program. Medicare Advantage and Medicare Supplement

are secondary coverage plans offered by Medicare approved private companies that can help with costs that Medicare does not pay for. Medicare Advantage can pay for fitness programs, vision, hearing and dental services. Some plans also cover foreign travel. Medicare Supplement helps pay for out-of-pocket expenses such as copays, deductibles and other costs associated with Medicare.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO CONTACT A LOCAL MEDICARE ADVISER TO HELP YOU CHOOSE A PLAN?

Medicare telemarketing companies purchase phone numbers and addresses of people who are 65 years and older. The telemarketers must be licensed in Iowa, but they can call from any state in the country. Plans vary greatly. Plans that work well in one geographic area may not work well locally. You will want to choose a plan that includes your doctor, hospital and pharmacy of choice within its network, as

well as covers the drugs you need. A local professional can better assist you with navigating through the options that will work best for you.

DO YOU NEED TO GET A NEW POLICY IF YOU MOVE?

It depends on where you move. If you move out of state, most likely you will need a new Medicare Advantage or Medicare Supplement policy. Your original Medicare plan does not change but you must notify the Medicare office in your new community or state.

HOW DO I GET THE TELEMARKETERS TO STOP CALLING ME?

Ask to be added to the National Do Not Call list.

The open enrollment period for Medicare Advantage and Medicare Supplement runs from Oct. 15 to Dec. 7, 2024. Now is the time to find a local adviser to help you maximize your benefits. ■

Medicare can be complicated.

A Farm Bureau agent makes it easy.

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JohnHarada.com/



AUTHORIZED INDEPENDENT AGENTS FOR



Products available at Farm Bureau Financial Services

This is a solicitation of insurance. Wellmark Medicare Supplement insurance plans are not affiliated with any government agency. To be eligible, you must reside in the service area of the plan. Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Iowa is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. W5018029 6/24

HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT REALTOR

Buying or selling a home is one of the most significant financial and personal decisions most people will ever make. The expertise and guidance of a skilled Realtor can greatly influence not only the outcome of the transaction but also the overall experience. With countless agents to choose from, it is essential to understand which qualities and credentials set the best professionals apart.

VERIFY CREDENTIALS AND EXPERIENCE

A reputable Realtor should be licensed and in good standing with the appropriate state real estate board. Experience is equally important, particularly in today's competitive market. Prospective clients should inquire about an agent's years in the industry, recent transaction history and areas of specialization. An agent well-versed in your specific property type — whether residential, luxury, or investment — will be better equipped to meet your needs.

SEEK LOCAL MARKET EXPERTISE

In-depth knowledge of the local market is one of the most valuable assets a realtor can offer. From understanding recent sales trends to knowing the nuances of school districts, amenities, and upcoming developments, a Realtor with strong local insight can price properties accurately and negotiate effectively.

EVALUATE COMMUNICATION AND ACCESSIBILITY

The pace of real estate transactions requires clear and timely communication. A reliable Realtor should be responsive to calls, emails and texts, as well as proactive in providing updates. Their ability to explain complex terms and processes in an accessible manner is critical to fostering confidence and minimizing stress.

REVIEW MARKETING STRATEGIES

For those selling a home, the quality of

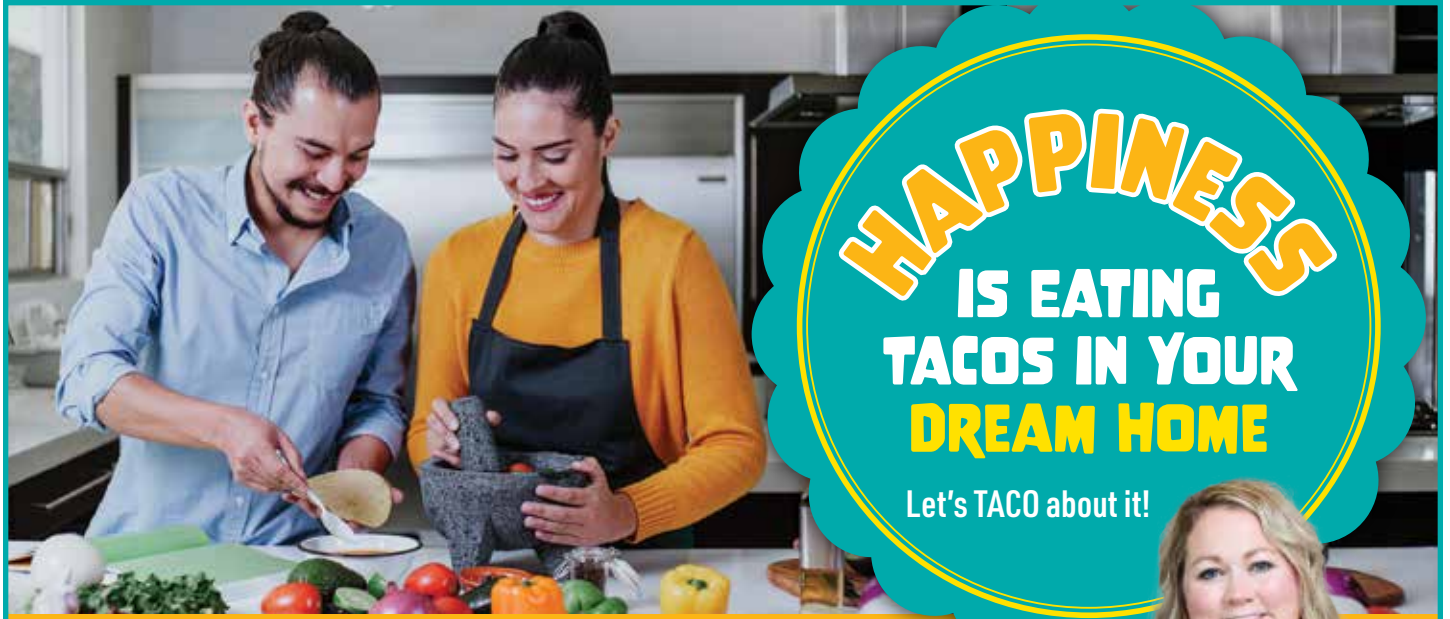
an agent's marketing plan is paramount. Beyond listing the property on the MLS, an accomplished Realtor should utilize professional photography, digital marketing campaigns, social media outreach and staging recommendations to ensure maximum exposure. Reviewing past listings can provide insight into the caliber of their marketing approach.

ASSESS NEGOTIATION SKILLS

Whether working to achieve top dollar for a seller or helping a buyer remain within budget, an effective Realtor should demonstrate both confidence and strategy in navigating offers and counteroffers.

CONSIDER CLIENT FEEDBACK

Finally, client testimonials and references offer valuable perspectives on a Realtor's professionalism, integrity and track record. Consistent positive feedback is often an indicator of exceptional service. ■



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HOW TO CHOOSE THE PERFECT DOG GROOMER

Finding the right dog groomer is an important step for your dog's health and happiness. A great groomer does more than keep your dog clean. They become a trusted partner in maintaining healthy skin, a beautiful coat, and even spotting minor health issues early. With so many professionals to choose from, here is how to confidently find the best match for your furry friend.

BUILD YOUR LIST WITH POSITIVE REFERRALS

Start with enthusiastic recommendations from friends, family, vets, and fellow dog owners whose pets look great. Positive word-of-mouth is the best sign of a groomer who provides a wonderful experience. Online reviews and local community groups can also reveal insights about professionalism, patience, and the salon's atmosphere.

PRIORITIZE ATTENTIVENESS AND STYLE

The best groomers are great listeners. Look for someone who takes time to consult with you about your dog's lifestyle, coat needs, and desired look — whether that is a classic breed cut, a low-maintenance trim or something trendier. Bring photos. A skilled groomer will align with your vision while prioritizing your dog's comfort and well-being.

TAKE A TOUR OF THE FACILITY

A quick visit can tell you a lot. The salon should be clean, bright and organized. Observe how staff interact with the dogs — calm, patient handling shows your pup will be treated kindly and respectfully.

REVIEW THEIR SAFETY PROTOCOLS

A top groomer makes safety their highest priority. Ask about procedures for anxious, senior or energetic pets, as well as drying supervision and emergency plans. Requiring proof of vaccinations is a sign of

a responsible business committed to every pet's health.

DISCUSS SERVICES, VALUE AND PRICING

Know what's included in each package. Some bundle nail trims, ear cleaning or teeth brushing, while others charge separately. Request a detailed pricing sheet to avoid surprises. Focus on value: skilled care, quality products, and attention to detail are worth the investment in your dog's health and happiness.

BEGIN WITH A "MEET AND GREET"

Before booking a full session, try a nail trim or brief visit to introduce your dog. This helps your pup build comfort and ensures a positive first experience.

By focusing on these qualities, you'll find not just a groomer, but a trusted partner who keeps your dog healthy, stylish and confident. Ready to meet your dog's next best friend? ■



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- Indoor Dog Park • Pet Parties/Space Rental

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HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT CREDIT UNION

Choosing a financial institution is one of the most important decisions you can make for your financial well-being. Many people are turning to credit unions as a preferred alternative to traditional banks because of their community focus, personalized service and lower fees. However, not all credit unions are the same, so it is worth doing a little homework before opening an account. Here is what to consider when choosing the right credit union for your needs.

1. MEMBERSHIP ELIGIBILITY

Credit unions are member-owned cooperatives, which means you must qualify for membership. Eligibility is typically based on where you live, work, worship or attend school. Some are tied to specific employers or professional organizations. Start by checking which credit unions you qualify to join.

2. SERVICES AND PRODUCTS OFFERED

Think about your financial goals. Do you

need checking and savings accounts, auto loans, mortgages or small business services? Make sure the credit union offers a full range of products that fit your needs. Many now provide mobile banking, online bill pay, and even investment or insurance services comparable to larger banks.

3. RATES AND FEES

One of the biggest advantages of credit unions is their typically lower fees and better interest rates. Compare loan rates, savings yields, and account fees between a few local options. Even small differences can add up significantly over time.

4. ACCESSIBILITY AND CONVENIENCE

Consider how easy it will be to access your money. Look at branch locations, ATM availability, and digital tools. Many credit unions participate in shared branch networks, allowing members to access accounts nationwide at other participating locations.

5. MEMBER SERVICE AND REPUTATION

Because credit unions are member-focused, customer service is usually a top priority. Look for a credit union with strong community ties, positive online reviews, and a reputation for supporting members through financial education and community involvement.

6. TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Today's credit unions are keeping pace with modern technology. If mobile apps, mobile check deposits, and online loan applications are important to you, make sure the credit union's technology fits your expectations.

Choosing a credit union is about finding the right blend of trust, service, and convenience. By taking the time to research your options, you can find a financial partner that helps you save money, reach your goals, and stay connected to your community. ■

Your bank charges you \$34 for non-sufficient funds?

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 Community Choice

NoBankYou.com

According to The Banker Group May 2025 Peer Intelligence report, Community Choice has one of the lowest total non-interest income/average assets ratio compared to peers.



HOW TO ADVERTISE YOUR BUSINESS IN PRINT

Print advertising remains one of the most trusted ways to reach local customers. Whether you are promoting a sale, a new service, or simply building awareness, print can deliver lasting impressions that online ads often can't. Here is how to make it work for your business.

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

Identify who you want to reach. Are your customers homeowners, families or professionals? Knowing your audience helps you choose the right publication — local and regional magazines, newspapers, or industry newsletters — and craft a message that speaks directly to them.

KEEP IT SIMPLE AND VISUAL

A clean, eye-catching design grabs attention. Use bold headlines, strong images and easy-to-read fonts. Avoid clutter and focus on one clear message, like “Call Today for a Free Estimate.” White space helps important details stand out.

FOCUS ON BENEFITS

Don't just list what you sell — explain why it matters. A lawn care

company, for instance, might say “Enjoy a perfectly manicured yard without the work.” Show how your product or service makes life easier or better.

INCLUDE A STRONG CALL TO ACTION

Tell readers what to do next: call, visit or scan a QR code. Include your phone number, website and address prominently. Adding a limited-time offer encourages faster response.

BE CONSISTENT

One ad won't build recognition overnight. Consistency across issues and repetition of your message help customers remember your name. A steady presence builds trust and familiarity.

TRACK YOUR RESULTS

Print results can be measured. Use unique promo codes, QR links or special offers to see where leads originate. Over time, this data helps refine your strategy.

Used strategically — with clear messaging, repetition and strong design — print advertising can boost visibility, drive sales and build credibility that stands the test of time. ■

NEED MORE CUSTOMERS?

The image shows an open Living magazine. The left page features a 'LIBRARY' section with a 'DANCE party, authors and puzzles' article and a 'PEACE OF MIND' section. The right page has a 'HOME HEALTH' section with an article on 'HIDDEN gem of caregiving: adult day services' and a large, bold advertisement that reads 'SELL PRODUCTS & SERVICES IN YOUR AD HERE!'. A yellow arrow points from the text 'FIND THEM HERE!' to the advertisement.

FIND THEM HERE!

Connect with thousands of local residents who are reading the Living Magazines. Target local affluent buyers in any of our 14 Living magazine communities.

80% of households read the Living Magazines*

68% of readers purchase products & services seen from the ads*

48% of readers keep the Living Magazines one month or more*

*Source: CVC audit report 2024

Contact
JOLENE GOODMAN
515-326-0082
jolene@iowalivingmagazines.com



www.iowalivingmagazines.com

IOWA
Living
MAGAZINES

GROWING produce for food pantries

Brinkman cultivates community through service.



For the nine years Mary Kay Brinkman has lived in Waukee, she has made a point to give back. She volunteers through her church, as a Master Gardener and with WayPoint Resources.

At Saint Theresa Catholic Church in Des Moines, she works in the food pantry and helps with the social justice committee. Each month, she helps prepare food for Central Iowa Shelter & Services and assists with Fair Trade sales that support global artisans.

In fall 2023, Brinkman took the Master Gardener classes and was officially named a Master Gardener this year — an accomplishment that perfectly combines her love of nature and her desire to help others.

Why all this volunteering?



Travis Gaule, Trust Bridge Wealth Advisors, presents the Neighbor Spotlight certificate to Mary Kay Brinkman.

“I retired in 2023 and wanted to use my free time to work on food security,” Brinkman says.

For her, all her talents culminate in this work, especially as she serves WayPoint’s Fruitful Vine Garden, located on the grounds of Westview Church in Waukee. The garden provides fresh produce for local families and food pantries, a mission Brinkman finds deeply meaningful.

“I love playing in the dirt,” she says. “It is my happy place. And by working at the Fruitful Vine, I’m also helping others.”

Brinkman says one of the best parts of volunteering is making memories with fellow volunteers and building community through shared purpose. Even though the work is physical and often messy, she finds it grounding.

“Plus you are helping to assure healthy food choices for others,” Brinkman says. “The people that come to the garden to get fresh produce are so appreciative. They really love coming, and I love helping them.”

Through her dedication, Brinkman is helping cultivate not just plants, but a stronger, more connected community. ■

Wealth Management & Retirement Planning

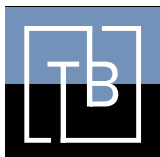


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**Do you know a neighbor who
deserves recognition?**

Nominate at tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com.

A PERFECT fit

Conley finds the right size in Waukee.

LaCee Conley's life in Waukee started in 2013, while she was still in law school — a time when the town was still “small.”

Her husband chose the location, and Conley remembers being more than happy to oblige.

One reason she loves her current home is that it is just the right size for her family of pets — her cats, Thea and Vivienne, and dog, Reign. She chose a corner lot with a big backyard and a long fence so their Doberman pinscher would have plenty of space to run and play. The pool is a bonus.

Better still, the neighborhood the Conleys live in has just the right amount of quiet. The convenience helps, too.

“I love the location because I am just a short drive from the gas station, grocery store, pharmacy and other amenities,” Conley says. “Just one quick jump onto Hickman or University.”

When Conley first moved to Waukee, the town basically just had Hy-Vee. Now, there are things like Target and 7 Brew — two essentials for Conley. Traffic, she says, is never too crazy and always manageable. She appreciates that Waukee still offers a “smaller-town feel” while



LaCee Conley enjoys the amenities that have been added to Waukee as it grows and especially is glad to have a trail nearby for walking her Doberman.



providing access to everything a larger city might have.

She also likes the Waukee Arts Festival each summer and takes full advantage of the community's green spaces.

“I also love, love, love that there is a long walking trail right out my back door for Doberman walking and exercise,” she says. “The community is very animal friendly, and Reign has made a lot of friends.”

To give back to the town she's called home for more than a decade, Conley has been active in civic and cultural leadership. She previously

served on Waukee's Board of Appeals and as a zoning commissioner before joining the board for the Des Moines Ballet and the Iowa European Cultural Connection, which runs the popular Christkindlmarket in Des Moines.

Through her involvement, Conley has found new ways to stay connected to the community while pursuing her professional and personal passions. For her, Waukee represents the perfect balance of charm and convenience.

“Waukee feels like small-town living with friendly neighbors and tidy homes with great space and laughter to grow a family,” she says. ■



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City of Waukee Bulletin

OCTOBER 2025

Find more information on City services,
programs and events at Waukee.org

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City of Waukee



TheCityofWaukee

Waukee.org



Waukee City Hall
230 W. Hickman Rd.
515-978-7900



If you want to make a difference in Waukee, now is your chance! The City is looking for residents to join our boards and commissions. These volunteer groups play a vital role in shaping local policies and helping guide important decisions. Time investment varies by board for meetings, reviewing documents and volunteering (in some cases). All appointees will complete a training on open meetings and records laws to prepare them to serve.

Here's a quick look at some of the groups you could be a part of:

- **Board of Adjustment:** This board handles requests for exceptions to the City's zoning rules. If someone wants to do something outside the usual zoning laws, the Board of Adjustment reviews the case and can approve special exceptions. Meets as needed.
- **Board of Appeals:** This board reviews requests for alternative construction materials or methods and hears appeals regarding rental certificates and tenant concerns. A majority of the members of this board shall have training or education in either the construction industry or fire service. Meets as needed.
- **Park Board:** This board advises on planning for Waukee's parks, trails, green spaces and recreation programs. Members also volunteer at Parks & Recreation-sponsored events. One meeting per month plus volunteering at events.
- **Planning & Zoning Commission:** This commission helps shape the future of Waukee by reviewing zoning changes, site plans and ordinance changes. Their recommendations go to the City Council for final decisions. Two meetings per month.
- **Public Art Advisory Commission:** This commission advises City Council and staff on public art strategy and reviews proposed public art projects. Quarterly meetings plus additional meetings as needed during projects.

Interested in joining? Applications are open until November 16, and it's easy to apply at Waukee.org/BoardsAndCommissions. Note that applications for the Library Board of Trustees open in the spring.

Dates to Know

Trick or Treating

October 31, 6-8 p.m.

General Election

November 4, 7 a.m.-8 p.m.
See SOS.iowa.gov for
polling places

City Council Meetings

November 3 and 17 at 5:30 p.m.
City Hall and Zoom
Waukee.org/CityCouncil



Election Day 2025

On November 4, polls will be open 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. for the regular election. Waukee voters will have three seats for City Council, four seats for Waukee School Board and a local bond referendum from Dallas County on their ballot. For more information on these questions, visit Waukee.org/Elections. To register to vote or find your polling place, go to SOS.iowa.gov.

Last Call for Yard Waste Pick-Up

Monday, November 24 is the final day to set out grass, leaves, sticks and other yard waste for curbside pick-up. Sticks and branches must be cut to 4-foot lengths and tied with string. If they fit into a small container, bundling isn't necessary. Please do not use your ASI garbage or recycling containers for yard waste. Put your yard materials into biodegradable bags or reusable containers marked "YARD WASTE" or with a large "Y". Each bundle or container should weigh less than 40 pounds.

Aid for House Repairs

Funding is currently available through the Dallas County Local Housing Trust Fund (DCLHTF) to help low-income residents complete house repairs and fix code violations. Dallas County residents in single-family houses who meet certain income thresholds can apply now for a 5-year forgivable loan for eligible repairs, such as basic structural repairs, building systems, weatherization and handicap accessibility. This assistance is only available for the applicant's primary residence. Mobile homes, homes being bought on contract, duplexes or rental units are not eligible. For more information, call 515-304-3524 or visit MidIowaPlanningAlliance.com/DCLHTF.

Holiday Help

The Waukee Police Department is preparing to help local families during the holidays. In November, they'll deliver Thanksgiving boxes to more than 20 families. In December, they will provide gifts and essentials to children in need through Operation Wish List. You can help by donating money to support these efforts. Cash or checks can be sent or delivered to: Waukee Police Department, 815 NW 20th Street, Waukee, IA 50263.

New Places to Play

Two new parks recently opened on the west side of Waukee. Painted Woods West features a treehouse theme at 950 Indian Ridge Drive. For a huge hillside



play area and zones for different ages with line of sight across all, visit Spring Crest Park at 1195 Spruce Street. Stop by Centennial Park to try out the new "Crickets" installation next to the big playground. Waukee is one of the first in the U.S. to have this new playscape thanks to Play-Pro Recreation and the Sligh family. Find the details at Waukee.org/Parks.

Jumpstart Learning

Your Waukee Public Library card grants you access to dozens of online resources for free! Try BookFlix for your kids. This resource pairs animated children's storybooks with nonfiction eBooks to build early reading skills and comprehension. BookFlix engages children with read-along narration, interactive games and educational activities that reinforce vocabulary and critical thinking. Visit WaukeePublicLibrary.org to access BookFlix and other amazing resources for people of all ages.



Bingo

November 7 at 1 p.m.
Waukee Public Library
\$1 entry and \$0.10 per card

Veterans Day - City Buildings & Library Closed

November 11
No change to trash collection

Thanksgiving - City Buildings & Library Closed

November 27 and 28
No trash collection on November 27

JOHNSONS have many reasons to enjoy Waukee

Special people and special place

Maureen Johnson and her husband, Matthew, moved to Des Moines in fall 2019, right after college. While they enjoyed it there, they found a place they loved even more after Johnson took a new job: a teaching position in the Waukee Community School District.

“Once I started in Waukee, I fell in love with the school district and knew I wanted our future kids to go to school in this district,” Johnson says. “We then started looking for a home in Waukee.”

They found just the place and moved in February 2020.

Today, after adding two children to the family, Johnson has found even more reasons to appreciate where they live.

“We absolutely love our neighborhood, Clayton Estates,” she says. “There are kids all up and down our street that love to play outside like our daughters do. I love the small town feel of my daughter being excited when a neighbor’s garage door is open, meaning they’re outside ready to play.”

All of the Johnson’s neighbors are friendly, she adds, and they have built many relationships in town.

“We enjoy living in walking distance to the Triangle so we can walk to the ice cream shop and stop to see our favorite Waukee resident, Andie the cat, at Waukee Hardware,” Johnson says.

It really is the sense of place that’s made the Johnson family so committed to Waukee.

“We love how at home we have felt since we arrived,” Johnson says. “We have found a church we love, Saint Boniface, made connections with neighbors, and found favorite spots in the community that make us feel so welcome, like the Waukee Library. It’s a bigger town, but has a small-town feel, which, as well, feels so special.”

Because Johnson grew up in a large city, she didn’t always see familiar people. That changed when she moved to Waukee.

“One of the Waukee librarians whom I hadn’t seen in months remembered that my daughter was about to turn 1,” she shares. “There are very special people here. We’re so lucky to raise two girls that will call Waukee their hometown.” ■



Maureen and Matthew Johnson are glad they have moved to Waukee and that their home is close to the Triangle, where they enjoy taking their children for ice cream.



CITY and school board elections upcoming

City and school board elections are Tuesday, Nov. 4. Polls are open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

The city council is responsible for establishing city ordinances, the city budget and city policies. It decides the laws for the community and how its tax dollars are spent. The mayor acts as the chief executive officer of the city and presides over the city council meetings. Communities with city administrators assign some of the mayor's executive duties to administrators.

School boards set the policies and budget for the school district within the parameters set by the state.

To find your polling location, visit: <https://apps.sos.iowa.gov/elections/voterreg/pollingplace/search.aspx>.



City Council

City Council members in Waukee serve at large, which means they do not represent a specific geographic section of Waukee but rather serve all Waukee residents.

Candidates for Waukee City Council (three seats)

Anna Bergman Pierce
Jon Eichhorn
Kala Anderson
Leigh White
Lori Lyon

Waukee Community School District

Board director (four seats):

Jill Burns
Becky Lachenmaier
Jaime Secory
Michael Schrodt
Armel R Traore Dit Nignan

Dallas County

Dallas County has proposed a bond referendum for the construction of a new criminal court building to be on the ballot in November. The county website says, "The new facility will address critical issues related to court function, security, technology, efficiency and accessibility, while also preserving the historic character of the existing courthouse, which will be maintained for civil law, civil equity, family law, divorce and foreclosure court proceedings." Learn about the Criminal Court Building Bond Referendum at www.dallascountyiaowa.gov/487/Criminal-Court-Building-Bond-Referendum. ■

BUSINESSES: CLAIM YOUR MONTH!

2026 IOWA LIVING COMMUNITY CALENDARS

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				1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30		



IT'S BACK!

Who will be voted favorite in Dallas County?

We all have our favorite local people, places and things. And now it's time to share your choices and honor those who deserve the recognition.

Make your voice be heard and cast your votes in the 2025 Dallas County Residents' Choice Poll. This contest is being hosted by Iowa Living magazines, and the results will publish January in Waukee, and February in Adel and West Des Moines - Jordan Creek editions. You can vote in one or every category, or anywhere in between.

SCAN HERE TO
VOTE TODAY!



HURRY! POLL CLOSES DEC. 19, 2025

See rules and vote at www.iowalivingmagazines.com/residentspoll.
One vote per resident, please.

FOOD AND DRINK

- Restaurant
- Restaurant for Breakfast
- Restaurant for Lunch
- Restaurant for Dinner
- Restaurant for Dessert
- Place for Ice Cream
- Pizza Establishment
- Bar
- Coffee Shop
- Catering Company
- Server/Bartender

AUTOMOTIVE

- Auto Service
- Auto Body Shop
- Car Dealership

COMMUNITY

- Preschool/Daycare
- Nonprofit
- School (name of building)
- Park
- Community Festival or Event
- Church
- Pastor
- Chamber of Commerce
- Library
- Camping Spot

SHOPPING

- Grocery Store
- Boutique
- Retail Store
- Thrift Store
- Home Improvement Retail Store
- Liquor Store
- Nursery or Garden Center
- Place to Purchase a Gift for a Man
- Place to Purchase a Gift for a Woman
- Bakery
- Florist

ENTERTAINMENT

- Dad/Child Date Spot
- Mom/Child Date Spot
- Place to Take Your Mom and Dad
- Place to Take Your Kids or Grandkids
- Place for Child's Birthday Party
- Golf Course
- Bowling Alley

HEALTH/BEAUTY

- Hair Salon
- Physicians Clinic
- Dental Office
- Orthodontist Office
- Mental Health Service
- Chiropractic Office
- Audiologist/Hearing Clinic
- Vision Care

HEALTH/BEAUTY

- Health Club or Gym
- CBD Store
- Pharmacy
- Cosmetic Service
- Physical Therapy
- Dance Studio
- Gymnastics/Tumbling Studio

OTHER PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

- Financial Planner
- Law Firm
- Accounting Firm
- Veterinarian
- Dog Groomer
- Pet Care
- Lawn Care Business
- Landscaping Company
- Heating and Cooling Business
- Electrical Business
- Plumbing Company
- Senior Living Establishment
- Insurance Agency
- Realtor
- Bank/Credit Union
- Photographer
- Place for Guests to Stay
- Home Builder/Remodeling
- Outdoor Lawn Equipment Store
- Pest Control

FEDERAL estate tax exclusion limit extended

Recent legislation answers a huge estate planning question: The federal estate tax exclusion limit will be extended.

When an individual dies, the owned assets are generally referred to as the "estate." Settling the estate — either through the court-supervised probate process or by distribution through a trust — raises potential tax issues. Every estate is liable for different types of taxes, including federal estate tax.

Federal estate tax is a tax on the transfer of property at death and is levied on the total value of assets in the estate. Federal estate tax is applied to estates that exceed the lifetime estate tax exemption, also called the "unified credit." In 2017, legislation increased the federal



estate tax exemption amount to \$10,000,000, adjusted for inflation.

The exemption amount for federal estate tax in 2025 is \$13,990,000. If the estate is less than \$14 million, no federal estate tax is due and no return has to be filed. However, this increase was set to end — and roll back to \$5,000,000 — at the end of 2025.

New legislation extends the exclusion amount. Effective Jan. 1, 2026, the federal estate tax exemption will increase to \$15,000,000 per person. The enactment of this legislation has prevented a decrease in the basic exclusion amount that would have automatically occurred on Jan. 1, 2026, if this legislation had not been passed, because of an automatic sunset (expiration) date that was inserted into Code section 2010(c) in 2017, when the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act was enacted.

This means that, in 2026, an individual can transfer \$15,000,000 (increased from

\$13,990,000 in 2025) free of any federal estate, gift or generation-skipping taxes. A married couple can transfer a combined \$30,000,000, increased from \$27,980,000 in 2025. This amount is subject to an annual cost-of-living adjustment, so the \$15,000,000 limit may adjust upwards in the future.

This extension of the federal estate tax exclusion will prevent individuals from having to radically re-think their estate plans before the end of the year. It also offers an opportunity for better planning for individuals and couples who want to ensure that their family will inherit a legacy that they can preserve for the future. Consult with an attorney who is experienced in estate planning to determine how these changes can benefit you. ■

Information provided by Ross Barnett, Abendroth Russell Barnett Law Firm, 2560 73rd St., Urbandale, 515-278-0623, www.ARPCLaw.com.

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EVENTS IN THE AREA

Be sure to check for cancellations.

Trick or Trout

Monday, Oct. 27, 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Triumph Park, 700 N.W. Douglas
Parkway, Waukee

The public is invited to Triumph Park for a special day to see the Iowa DNR stock the pond with gorgeous trout. Come out to enjoy activities, freebies and the fun of watching hundreds of trout transfer from truck to pond. Prizes will be available for those who catch trout that have been pre-tagged by Iowa DNR. A fishing license is required for anyone age 16 or older. Find out more at www.waukee.org/1152/Trick-or-Trout.



Trick-or-Treating

Oct. 31, 6-8 p.m.

Starting this year, the Waukee City Council has designated Halloween evening for trick-or-treating.

Strengthening Families Program

Tuesdays, Oct. 28 - Dec. 9, 5:30-8 p.m.

New Hope Church,
25712 Highway 6, Adel

Strengthening Families Program is for parents and youth ages 10-14. It can help your family learn to manage emotions, set goals, avoid peer pressure, make better decisions and create better relationships. You will learn how to show love while setting limits, how to listen to your child and how to help family members show appreciation to each other. Registration is required at <https://go.iastate.edu/ETKEBA>. For more information, contact Anne Schliemann at annek@iastate.edu.



Honorary Veterans Breakfast

Tuesday, Nov. 11, 9-11 a.m.
Edencrest at Kettlestone, 805
S.E. Tallgrass Lane, Waukee

Join this Veterans Day Breakfast honoring all who served. Enjoy a short ceremony to follow and a flag presentation from the local VFW.

WinterFest

Friday, Dec. 5
Downtown
Triangle

Bring on the holiday cheer with your friends, family and neighbors at Waukee's free, annual WinterFest celebration held at the Downtown Triangle. Enjoy warm holiday treats, games and activities, a visit with Santa, tree lighting and much more. www.waukee.org/476/WinterFest



HONOR OUR VETERANS

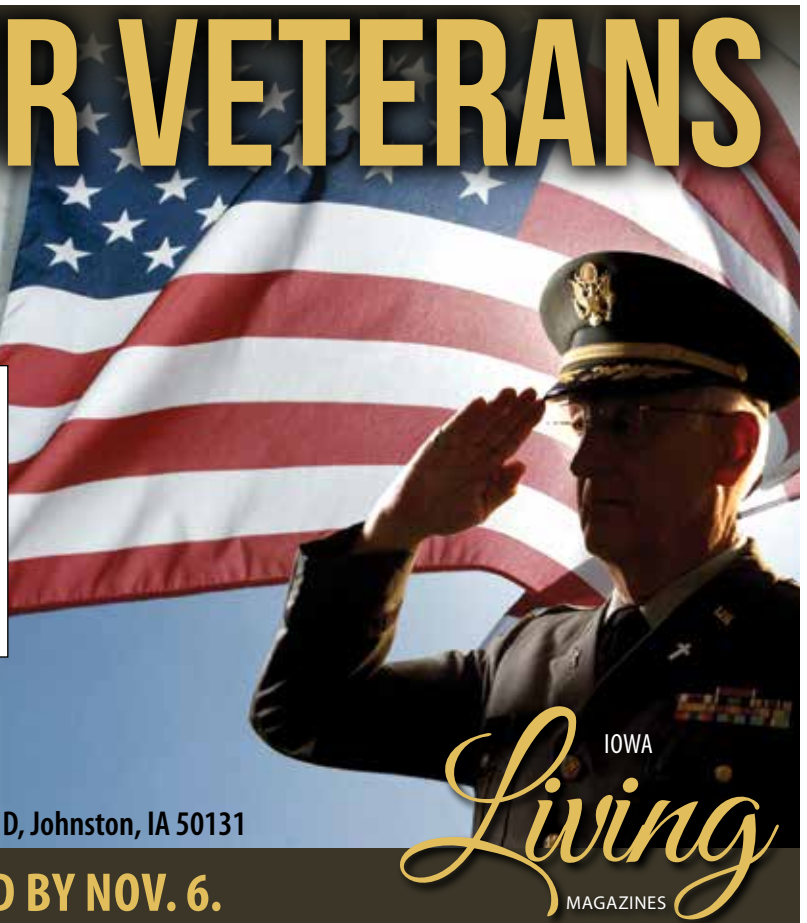
Iowa Living magazines will be saluting veterans in November issues. If you are a veteran who would like to be included, please send a photo (military or current) and the following information:

NAME:
CURRENT TOWN:
MILITARY BRANCH:
RANK:
ENLISTMENT DATES::
QUOTE: "What would you like others to know about serving your country?"

Family members submitting on behalf of veterans should include the veteran's answer to the above question.

Email to tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com or mail to:
Big Green Umbrella Media, 8101 Birchwood Court Suite D, Johnston, IA 50131

SUBMISSIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY NOV. 6.



EVENTS IN THE AREA

Be sure to check for cancellations.

Bowling family fun

Various dates

Warrior Lanes, 190 S.E.

Laurel St., Waukee



Warrior Lanes holds a variety of family-fun events. The glow-in-the-dark bowling includes a one-topping pizza and pitcher of soda for up to five bowlers. For more information and booking, visit <https://warriorlanes.com/specials/>. All are on Sundays from noon to 1:30 p.m. with registration deadline at 6 p.m. two days prior.

Nov. 16, Turkey Time Party; **Dec. 14**, Ugly Holiday Sweater Party. A special Countdown to Noon Year's Eve event is **Dec. 31**, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Des Moines Community Orchestra Concerts

• **Fall Concert: Sunday, Oct. 26**, 2 p.m., Drake University Sheslow Auditorium, 2507 University Ave., Des Moines. Guest conductor: Dr. Jonathan Sturm, featured soloist: Logan TeKolste, French horn.

• **Sing Messiah!: Sunday, Dec. 7**, 2 p.m., Grace United Methodist Church, 3700 Cottage Grove Ave., Des Moines. Guest conductor: Dr. Marion Scott.

• **Winter Concert: Sunday, Feb. 22**, 2 p.m., Staplin Performing Arts Center, 3650 Woodland Ave., West Des Moines. Guest conductor: Joshua Barlage, featured soloist: Curtis Barr, cello.

• **Spring Concert: Sunday, May 10**, 2 p.m., Drake University Sheslow Auditorium, 2507 University Ave., Des Moines. Guest conductor: Kara Mather, Des Moines Community Orchestra, featured soloist: Dr. Kevin Allemagne, clarinet.

ART EXHIBITS

Mainframe Studios

900 Keosauqua Way, Des Moines, www.mainframestudios.org

Mainframe Studios hosts First Fridays every first Friday of the month, featuring a changing theme, with the artist's works on display alongside live music and food.

- Nov. 7: State of the Arts: Iowa's Artist Fellows
- Dec. 5: Daulities

Des Moines Art Center

4700 Grand Ave., Des Moines

- Through Nov. 2: Iowa Artists 2025 - Ben Millett

Olson-Larsen Galleries

542 Fifth St., West Des Moines

- Through Nov. 29: The Female Gaze
- Dec. 4 to Jan. 31: The Animal Show 2025

Polk County Heritage Gallery

Polk County Administration Building, 111 Court Ave., Des Moines, www.polkcountyheritagegallery.org

- Through Nov. 13: TBD, curated by Larry Campbell
- Nov. 20 to Dec. 31: The Invitational: Curated Show

Ankeny Art Center

1520 S.W. Ordinance Road, Ankeny, www.ankenyartcenter.org

- Through Nov. 26: Iowa Watercolor Society - Susan Moore
- Dec. 3 to Jan. 14: Members Show ■

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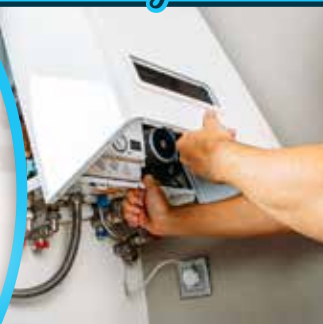
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HIDDEN gem of caregiving: adult day services

Caring for a loved one can certainly be rewarding, but balancing work, household responsibilities, and your own well-being can feel overwhelming. The good news: Resources are readily available in the form of adult day services, which can provide meaningful enrichment during the day while easing the stress of caregiving.



What are adult day services? Adult day services offer daytime support and engagement for adults who may need help with daily activities, face safety risks when left alone, or simply benefit from social interaction. Participants can attend daily or just a few times a week. While many participants live with dementia, a memory-challenge diagnosis is not required.

Safety and peace of mind. Safety is a cornerstone of adult day programs. Participants

thrive in secure environments with professional oversight, while families gain confidence knowing their loved one is supported.

One caregiver shared that she found relief when her husband, who was living with dementia, began attending an adult day program. At home, he had begun leaving the stove on and water running. “I was trying to work from home to make sure he was safe, but I couldn’t get anything done. Adult day was a godsend. I finally felt like I could stop worrying 24/7.”

More than “something to do.”

Programming is designed to nourish body, mind and spirit through:

- Social activities that reduce isolation
- Nutritious meals and snacks
- Physical and cognitive activities that promote engagement
- Safe spaces where participants can thrive, even with chronic conditions

Why families choose adult day services.

Although adult day services can make a

tremendous difference, many families are unaware they exist. Too often, the services remain a best-kept secret until caregiving stress reaches a breaking point.

Benefits extend to both participants and caregivers. Participants enjoy engagement, connection, and better nutrition. Caregivers experience reduced stress, more time for self-care, and confidence that their loved one is thriving.

Take the first step. If you’re balancing caregiving and searching for peace of mind, consider exploring adult day services in your area. These programs provide the support your loved one deserves — and the breathing room you need to be at your best. ■

Aaron Wheeler is Vice President of Home and Community-Based Services for WesleyLife, which provides health and well-being services for older adults — including adult day services in Des Moines and Newton. To learn more, visit wesleylife.org.



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PLAN AHEAD

By Sarah Masteller

HAVE the conversation

"We want to talk to the kids first..."

As we meet with folks to address their funeral prearrangements, they often mention that a conversation with their children is something they want to have first, before making any final decisions. That is certainly understandable and something that we encourage. Sometimes finding that "right time" or finding that opportunity when everyone is together can be a challenge.



With-that-said, the holidays are a time that bring families together, and that can be the ideal setting to have that important conversation with everyone. That doesn't mean you are going to bring up this topic as you sit down to the holiday meal, but there can be times around the holidays when people are together that can provide the right moment and setting to broach this topic.

You are doing this because you love your family and because you care about what will be important to them. You ultimately want to make things easier for them. As we head into that time of year, make it a priority to have this important conversation. You will be glad you did. ■

Information provided by Sarah Masteller, Advanced Planning Counselor, Hamilton's Southtown Funeral Home, 5400 S.W. Ninth St., Des Moines, 515-697-3679.

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Email: info@attivotrail.com
 Phone: 515-561-5426
 Website: www.AttivoWaukee.com



SENIOR

By Jay Heaton

TIPS for fall prevention during the fall season

Autumn is a favorite time of the year for many of us — the cool air, colorful leaves and cozy evenings. But with all that beauty comes a few extra hazards. Wet leaves, rainy days and early sunsets can make sidewalks and steps slick, which raises the risk of falling. A few small changes can help keep you safe so you can enjoy the season.



Outside, leaves can be as slippery as ice when damp. Be sure to sweep leaves off your porch, walkways and driveway often. Check that handrails are sturdy and add a non-slip mat by the door if it tends to get wet. Good lighting makes a big difference, too. Replace any burned-out bulbs and consider motion lights or small path lights to brighten dark areas.

Inside, keep floors clear and secure of any loose rugs with non-slip backing. Turn on nightlights in hallways or bathrooms so you can see clearly if you get up after dark.

Don't forget your shoes. Always choose sturdy footwear with good traction. Just skip the loose slippers or heels. Staying active helps as well. Gentle exercises like stretching, yoga or tai chi can improve balance and strength.

With a little planning, you can soak up everything you love about fall. Enjoy colorful walks, crisp air and cozy gatherings without worrying about a fall. A few simple steps now mean a safer, more enjoyable season ahead. ■

Information provided by Jay Heaton, leasing counselor, Attivo Trail Waukee, 835 N.E. Boston Parkway, Waukee, www.attivotrail.com.

WELLNESS

By Mary Doherty, LISW

NORMALIZING struggles

I have joined multiple groups on Facebook as a way to promote business, connect with someone looking for therapy and to see what services are needed within the community. Something I have noticed in these groups is that, when someone wants to post about an issue they are struggling with, they post anonymously, as do the responders who are sharing similar struggles. While we have come far in normalizing mental health and similar struggles in life, we are still in an era where we feel we cannot own the struggles we are experiencing. Someone in one of these chats noticed this, commenting, "Why do we all feel the need to post anonymously when discussing this topic?"



This stuck out to me. Why do we still feel the need to be anonymous when it comes to our struggles in life, even when others are agreeing with us and are feeling similarly? There was a saying my teachers said often, "If you have a question, odds are there are seven other people in the room with the same, or similar, question." If no one asks the question, then multiple people are left with questions. If no one is willing to start the conversations, then everyone is left wondering, "Am I the only one who feels this way?" The answer is simple. No. So, now I challenge you: How can you normalize this conversation with those around you? ■

Information provide by Mary Doherty, LISW, Renewed Strength Counseling, 2910 Westown Parkway, Suite 314, West Des Moines, IA 50266, 515-809-2419.

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WELLNESS

By Viktor Vali and Amy Anderson-Vali

WRITE a new chapter with hormone replacement therapy

Foggy mornings, restless nights, and a quiet feeling that something just isn't right — that's how it starts for many women and men as hormone levels begin to shift. You're not sick, but you're not you either. Energy fades. Motivation slips. Sleep turns elusive. The spark you once had feels more like a flicker. What if you didn't have to accept that as "just aging"?



Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) is more than a treatment — it is a way back to yourself. For women, it can mean freedom from hot flashes, emotional swings and that constant feeling of being out of sync. For men, it can restore focus, drive and strength that seemed lost to time.

This isn't about vanity or chasing youth. It's about waking up and feeling good in your body again. Clearer mind. Steadier mood. Restful sleep. A body that responds and a mind that feels alive.

Ask yourself, what would life look like if you had your edge back? Maybe it's not just a dream. Maybe it's time to write a new chapter with hormone therapy as your turning point. ■

Information provided by Viktor Vali and Amy Anderson-Vali, owners, 4 Ever Young, 1180 S.E. University Ave., Wauke, 515-304-2324, www.4everyyoungantiaging.com

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HOP into reading

Waukeez Public Library's Winter Bingo Challenge is coming up.

Winter is almost here, and it's the perfect time to hop into reading. The Waukeez Public Library's annual Winter Bingo Challenge invites readers of all ages to try fun activities, discover new hobbies and earn prizes along the way.

How it works: The

Winter Bingo Challenge starts on Wednesday, Nov. 15, and runs through Jan. 31. Register online or at the library and pick up your Bingo card to start your winter reading adventure. Complete five activities in a row on your bingo card and bring it to the library to claim a prize. You'll also earn an entry into the grand prize drawing. Go for the blackout. Complete all 25 activities on the bingo card to receive a special blackout reward and a bonus entry into the grand prize drawing. Everyone is welcome — kids, teens and adults alike. Each age group will have its own grand prize, so the whole family can participate. Sign up online or at the library. Visit waukeepubliclibrary.org/winter to learn more and make this winter your most adventurous reading season yet.

Learn more about the Library and sign up for a card at waukeepubliclibrary.org or contact askme@waukeez.org or 515-978-7944.

Upcoming closures: Tuesday, Nov. 11; Wednesday, Nov. 26, closing at 3 p.m.; Thursday, Nov. 27 and Friday, Nov. 28.

PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

Most events require advanced registration and can be viewed at waukeez.org.

Art Gallery Exhibit: "Glass by DJ," Nov. 2-30, David Johnston

Babywearing Dance Party, Saturday, Nov. 1, 10 a.m. Bring your baby and get ready to groove. We'll practice basic dance moves suitable for holding or wearing baby, then bop along to some upbeat tunes. The party will end with open playtime to encourage learning through movement with props like bubbles, parachutes and ribbon wands. For infants 0-12 months and their caregivers. Families with older siblings are encouraged to attend Songs & Stories or Pajama Storytime. Registration is required.

Tween Crafts, Friday, Nov. 21, 3:30 p.m. Middle grade students are invited to discover a different fun craft project each month. This month, create beaded plants. For students in grades 4-6. Registration is required.

Snacks & Facts: Tea Parties Past & Present, Friday, Nov. 7, 11:30 a.m. Living History Farms presents a peek into the past. Learn where tea comes from, how it became a popular beverage, and how the manners of serving tea developed. Discover how Victorian England and the United States felt about tea party menus and manners, and how tea became a fixture in Iowa's culture. Stick around afterward for Waukeez Parks & Recreation's bingo at 1 p.m. for \$1 per play. For adults ages 18 and older. Registration is not required.

Cookies and CultureALL, Sunday, Nov. 16, 2 p.m. Bring your friends and family and join us to listen and learn about world cultures. A different cultural ambassador will present each month. Cookies will be served. This month learn about Urdu: the Language of Caravan, presented by Mona Majeed. All ages welcome. Registration is requested. ■

Waukeez Public Library

950 S. Warrior Lane, Waukeez

515-978-7944

www.waukeezpubliclibrary.org

Monday - Tuesday, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.;

Wednesday - Thursday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.;

Friday, 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; Saturday, 9

a.m. to 4 p.m.; Sunday, closed

MEET Cody Saveraid

Enjoys seeing the positive growth in students

A native Iowan, Cody Saveraid has lived in Waukeez with his wife and two sons for the past decade. After graduating from the Adel-DeSoto-Minburn School District, Saveraid earned a degree from Iowa State University, and he is about to graduate once again with a degree in teaching special education from Western Governor's University (WGU).

Saveraid currently works at Trailridge School and is completing his student teaching with an expected graduation date at the end of 2025.

"I began as a substitute teacher in the district in 2021 and absolutely loved it. I became a long-term sub for a special education associate and really enjoyed working with the students," Saveraid says.

Saveraid became a full time paraeducator in the fall of 2021, which led him to enroll in the Teach Waukeez para-to-teacher program through the coordination of the Waukeez School District and WGU. Saveraid is also a GSA sponsor and an assistant coach with the Waukeez Northwest boys soccer team. Saveraid says he enjoys working with his students and seeing the positive growth in their life as a result of their working together.

"I work with ninth-graders, many of whom don't have the same advantages and opportunities as their peers. It's exhilarating when they connect school to positive influence in their lives," Saveraid says.

For Saveraid, a typical day often features working one-on-one with students and with small groups. During this time, there is often as much focus on life skills and social emotional concerns as core academic subjects. Saveraid says that every student is unique, and the same strategies for connecting with one student don't work with every student.

"Every day is an adventure, and that is what I love about the job. Whatever your scheduled plans are for the day, your students may think otherwise," Saveraid says.

This school year, Saveraid is excited to get to know a new group of students and see how they grow as the year progresses. He's also excited to help coach another season with the Waukeez Wolves soccer.

"Freshman year can be a tough, transformative time for many 14 and 15 year olds. I'm proud our staff can help ease students through this tricky time in their lives," Saveraid says. ■



Cody Saveraid is completing his student teaching as he transitions from paraeducator to teacher.

HOME safety

Small steps that protect your family and your insurance

When it comes to protecting your home, insurance is there to help after a loss, but prevention is just as important. Taking a few safety steps can lower your risk of a fire, injury or costly damage.

Start with fire safety

Every home should have at least one fire extinguisher, and it is not enough to buy it and forget it. Extinguishers should be checked monthly to ensure the pressure gauge is in the green, the pin is intact, and there are no dents or leaks. Replace or service any extinguisher more than 12 years old. Just as important: Make sure every household member knows where the extinguisher is kept and how to use it. The simple "PASS" method — Pull, Aim, Squeeze, Sweep — can make all the difference in an emergency.



Test your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors

Working smoke detectors cut the risk of dying in a house fire by half, yet many households neglect to test them. Batteries should be checked monthly and replaced at least once a year, even if they still seem to work. Detectors themselves should be replaced every 10 years. Carbon monoxide detectors, just as essential, should be tested regularly and placed on every level of the home, especially near sleeping areas.

Other safety steps that matter

- **Electrical safety:** Avoid overloading outlets or using frayed cords. Many house fires start with small electrical problems that could have been prevented.
- **Heating systems:** Have furnaces, fireplaces and chimneys inspected annually. Clean filters and vents to reduce fire hazards and improve efficiency.
- **Escape plan:** Create and practice a family escape plan with at least two ways out of every room. Keep hallways and exits clear.
- **Water damage prevention:** Inspect hoses on washing machines and dishwashers, and consider water sensors in basements or near sump pumps. Water damage claims are among the most common for homeowners.

Peace of mind for you and your family

Insurance is designed to be there when the unexpected happens, but avoiding a loss is always the best outcome. Simple steps — like checking your smoke detectors, keeping extinguishers ready and inspecting appliances — can prevent the kinds of accidents that disrupt lives and cause costly damage. More importantly, they give you confidence that your family and home are better protected. A few minutes of maintenance today can prevent the type of loss no one wants to face tomorrow. ■

Information provided by Chase VanWerden, IFG Insurance, 520 Walnut St., Waukee, 515-987-9598. Credit: Auto-Owners Blog

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INVESTMENT

By Daniel Rundahl

DO interest rates really matter?



When I was growing up on the farm in the mid-1980s, I can remember distinctly the frustration my father shared with the family over how much the interest was on the new manure spreader and feed grinder. This didn't mean much to me and my siblings as we were preparing our backpacks at night for show and tell the next day, but it holds value now for me as a husband and father with a mortgage and adult bills. Let's look at that through different eyes.

For the stock market: In late September, the FED announced a .25% interest rate drop and plans for two more interest rate changes in October and December. Initially, the stock market has favored this change, and language of this interest rate drop was already "baked into the markets." However, in October — and to finish off the holiday season — your 401K could see a boost with a potential 1% additional drop. This reduction of interest rates stimulates the economy by making borrowing cheaper for businesses and consumers, which tends to drive positive steam toward stock market equities.

For the economy: Historically, the health of the economy, or lack of, has usually been measured by many factors; however, four well-known major measurements reported over the four weeks of a month include: The Jobs Report, housing sales, prices at the pump and consumer spending (prices at the grocery store). The measure of any good standing macro or micro economy is the "motion of money." By reflection, favorable interest rates, as interpreted by consumers, will reduce unemployment, increase home sales, drive down fuel prices and increase consumer spending across all blue- and white-collar factors.

For your retirement: Many retired or near-retired individuals are seeking diversity away from higher risk investments. They are staring down the tunnel of the next 30 years of their life with the broad unanswered question, "Have I saved enough for the long haul?" In the last few years since the drop of COVID, we witnessed an interest rate hike of vast proportions. Overnight in the third and fourth quarter of 2021, CD rates saw 6% and 7% changes. Fixed and Fixed Indexed Annuities saw guarantees with 12% and bonuses to make dramatic relocations, and home rates rose to 8%. This change was attractive but short term. For this "30-year tunnel," it was a seasonal flower with a short-lived show. So, how should you be planning for retirement when so much fear lies around the short game of interest rates?

First, take a breath. At every age, we've leaned on a personal advisor. My wrestling coach emphasized technique, training and conditioning; my teachers urged study, hard work and focus for the long game; and when our children were born, wise voices guided how to raise the next generation. My point...in all the chaos, and especially this time of year, it may be a good time to set that appointment with an advisor for your retirement. Blessings for a safe and productive fall season. ■

Information provided by Daniel Rundahl, Financial Advisor, Rundahl Financial Consultants, 8230 Hickman Road, Suite 300, Clive, 515-727-1701, drundahl@rundahlfinaancial.com, www.rundahlfinaancialconsultants.com.

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CREAMY tomato soup is rich with sun-ripened flavor

There is something special about cooking with ingredients grown from your own backyard. Recently, I was watching our grandson at my daughter and son-in-law's house. He and I ventured outside to check on their garden and discovered a bumper crop of tomatoes.



Since the weather was cool, I decided that a batch of tomato soup for dinner would serve the harvest well. Our grandson, just 8 months old, is already a curious observer in the kitchen. He keeps me company from his high chair, happily armed with a dozen measuring cups to toss and a few snacks to keep him content. This creamy tomato soup, made with an abundance of fresh-picked tomatoes and a blend of herbs, is rich with sun-ripened flavor. Paired with a golden, melty grilled cheese on homemade sourdough, it was the perfect fall dinner — simple, cozy and made even sweeter by sharing it together with my grandson. ■

Information provided by Jolene Goodman, vice president of Big Green Umbrella Media.

Creamy tomato soup

Total time: 45 minutes

Servings: 4

Ingredients:

- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 3-4 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tablespoons olive or avocado oil
- 2 pounds fresh tomatoes (about 6 large), blanched, skins off and chopped
- 2 cups chicken broth (low sodium preferred)
- 1/3 cup Parmesan cheese, grated
- 1/2 -3/4 cup heavy (whipping) cream
- 2 tablespoons honey
- Salt and pepper, basil, oregano — more of everything than you think
- Pinch of rosemary
- Fresh basil or parsley (optional, for garnish)

Directions

- Heat oil over medium heat. Add onion and sauté for about 5 minutes until soft.
- Add garlic and cook all for 2 more minutes.
- Add tomatoes and cook for 10 minutes.



- Add chicken broth and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 20 minutes, uncovered. Stir occasionally.
- Blend until smooth by using an immersion blender and scooping the mixture into a traditional blender. Return soup to the pan.
- Add whipping cream and honey and stir. Season with salt, pepper, basil, oregano and other herbs of choice.
- Simmer for 5 more minutes.
- Serve immediately. Garnish with fresh basil or parsley. This pairs well with a grilled cheese sandwich on sourdough bread. Enjoy!

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PARK features new fitness court

Pull-up bar honors CrossFit member.

Want to get in a workout, but lack a gym membership or equipment?

Waukee residents can now work their muscles, thanks to a new fitness court at Ridge Pointe Park. The fitness court includes an outdoor body weight training system with seven stations and shock-resistant flooring. It opened Sept. 10 and is the first of its kind in the metro and one of only five in Iowa. The City of Waukee received a \$30,000 grant from the 2025 Healthy Cities Campaign by the National Fitness Campaign (NFC). The Healthy Cities Campaign is part of a national movement to make world-class fitness free and accessible in public spaces across the country. In addition to the NFC grant, the city received support from the Dallas County Foundation, the Rotary Club of Waukee, I-80 Concrete and CrossFit Waukee.

Laura and Reggie Hoegh own CrossFit Waukee and helped fund the project, along with member donations. They received donations in honor of one of their CrossFit members, Kara Ungerman, who died unexpectedly two years ago.

After her death, Reggie created a memorial workout in her name. The gym members exercised the memorial workout and donated money in her honor.

As Laura heard about the proposed fitness court, she was eager to give back to the community and honor Kara. Kara was known for her work out of pull-ups. CrossFit is sponsoring a pull-up bar in Kara's name at the fitness court.

CrossFit Waukee is located just 800 meters from the fitness court. Laura says CrossFit will be hosting occasional classes at the fitness court and invites anyone to attend.

When Kara passed away, the CrossFit members were shocked and saddened.

"It was a devastating loss to us. We're known for community and for being there for each other in and outside of the gym," she reflects, adding members are like family and often use exercise to get through the tough times. Supporting members, such as Kara, is important.

"It's knowing what your members love and helping them push through something that's both physical and mental," Laura says.

The Fitness Court is located at 655 S.E. Legacy Pointe Blvd. and adjacent to the Heart of the Warrior Trail in Waukee. For guidelines, visit www.waukee.org/564/Ridge-Pointe-Park/. To download the Fitness Court App or to find workouts, challenges and fitness courts in other cities, visit www.nationalfitnesscampaign.com. ■



Reggie Hoegh, Laura Hoegh, Andy Ungerman (Kara Ungerman's husband) and Brad Munford check out the new fitness court equipment in Waukee.

OFFICER Hart graduates from academy

Iowa Attorney General Brenna Bird congratulated Officer Collin Hart on his graduation from the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy in a ceremony held at Valley Church in West Des Moines on Friday, Aug. 22. The graduation ceremony was attended by family, friends and law enforcement officials from across the state.



Officer Hart was part of the 322nd graduating class and completed the academy's rigorous 16-week training program that consisted of coursework in policing communications, criminal law, physical fitness and emergency response. They also received training in patrol procedures, investigations and tactical and administrative skills. Attorney General Bird welcomed the graduates on stage as they were presented with their diplomas by ILEA Director Brady Carney.

"I am so proud of our Iowa Law Enforcement Academy graduates for answering the call to serve," said Attorney General Bird. "It is a challenging and demanding job, but it's essential for the safety of our communities. Our state is grateful to them and their families for their selfless sacrifice. As Attorney General, I look forward to working with them in the line of duty and my office will always be here to offer unwavering support."

Officer Hart will serve with the Waukee Police Department. ■

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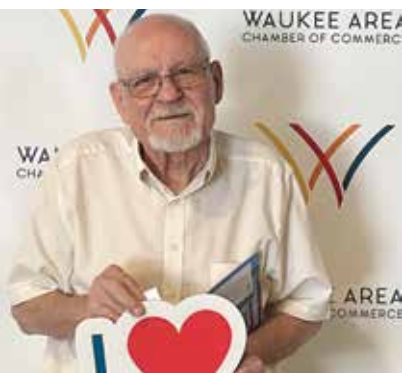
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