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NOVEMBER 2025

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MAGAZINE

HOMETOWN

holidays

Residents prepare to
enjoy the festivities.

**Meet Grace
Narber**
EDUCATION

**Honoring those
who served**
VETERANS SALUTE

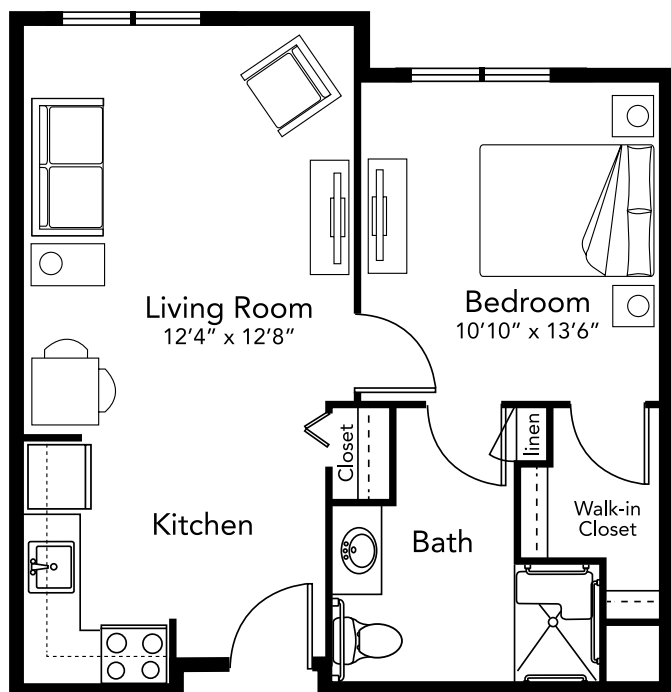
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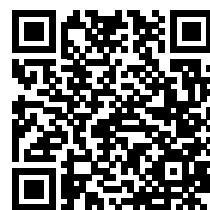
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WELCOME

GIVE Santa a hug

There he was. An overweight, old man dressed in red with an unkept beard and a peculiar hat. He was a complete stranger who wanted me to sit on his lap and share my wishes. Creepy? You're darn right! At least he was to this young boy.

Keep in mind that I didn't even want hugs or kisses from my grandmothers, so there was no way on Earth, or anywhere else, that I was going to get close to the man whose real name is Kris Kringle. I would forgo any and all presents before I would share a single word with the guy who now proclaimed himself as Father Christmas.

Santa was welcome to park his sled on our roof and break into our home to leave presents, but that's where our relationship ended. From what I can see today, and from what I remember with our kids, I am not the only one who was uncomfortable with the Christmas tradition of sitting with Santa.

But, we keep doing it. Standing in line. Cameras in hand. Hoping for that memorable keepsake image but instead apologizing to Mr. and Mrs. Claus for a screaming kid who doesn't understand the process.

You have got to love Christmastime traditions. Despite those unsettling Santa Claus memories, I certainly do enjoy the season. The caroling of festive songs. The sleigh rides. The lighting of the Christmas tree. The hot chocolate and candy canes.

Keeping these holiday traditions going takes work by many people, and I am thankful to them for their efforts. With that in mind, I hope you will join me for the wonderful holiday celebrations in the area.

I might even give Santa a hug. Maybe. ■



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ALTOONA
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HOMETOWN

holidays

Residents prepare to
enjoy the festivities.

Santa arrives at
Christmas in Olde Town
on a firetruck then
spends time listening
to children's wishes.

By Sean Dengler

The calendar page has turned to November and thoughts to the holiday season. A chill is in the air, and the aroma of pies, cookies and turkey dinners waft from the kitchen. Halls are being decked, mantles decorated and mistletoe hung. Indeed, the holiday season is upon us, and how better to celebrate than with family gatherings and hometown festivities?



The Altoona Area Historical Society hosts Christmas in Olde Town and invites participants to tour the museum, which is decorated for the holidays.

Celebrating Christmas and history

For many years, Olde Town in Altoona has come alive during Christmas time.

"The Altoona Area Historical Society has put the Christmas in Olde Town together for years," Phyllis Murphy, a board member of the Altoona Area Historical Society, says. "It's quite a production because it's all done with volunteers. We do get some funding from the city. They're a great help. We also have other people that will donate some things. It takes volunteers."

After filling up on Thanksgiving turkey, come out for the festivities.

"We have Christmas in Olde Town the first Saturday after Thanksgiving," Murphy says. "This will be Nov. 29."

The family-friendly activities start at 2 p.m.

"Santa Claus comes in at 2 o'clock on the Altoona fire truck," Murphy says. "When he gets there, he comes into the museum, which is beautifully decorated from top to bottom. Mrs. Claus joins him there at his royal seat. If they get there to see Santa Claus coming in on the fire truck, they could be first in line to ask their wishes."

Together, Santa and Mrs. Claus spread the holiday joy.

"He talks to the kids, and they can take some pictures there if they wish," Murphy says.

"He gets their list of wishes, then Mrs. Claus gives them a candy cane and a homemade cookie that is made by volunteers at the museum."

If one has forgotten to take photos for their Christmas cards, Christmas in Olde Town provides a beautiful backdrop of Christmas out the back door of the Altoona Historical Museum. After taking these pictures, participants can move on to Ellen Fitzpatrick Real Estate.

"You get free hot chocolate with all the goodies that you want to put in them," Murphy says. "Then you can go across the street. You can get your face painted, and you can get a balloon that is some kind of configuration."

Carriage rides will be offered, and vendors will be on hand. Live music will also be taking place.

"(All the activities are) free, because this is all for the kids and all for the families," Murphy says. "We make that as easy as possible."

Activities include a variety of games and fire pits where participants can make their own s'mores. CAP Theater will offer crafts.

"There's also spin art there," Murphy says.

Olde Town will also feature Santa's reindeer and a sleigh for more photo opportunities.

"It's very family oriented," Murphy says. "At 4:30 p.m., we go around the corner on First Avenue, just up the street, to the town's center.

We have the lighting of the annual Christmas tree."

The lighting of the tree has a new feature this year.

"We have a big backdrop that's all lit up," Murphy says. "And they're animated. Those are turned on for the whole season at different times."

The museum also has its own tree.

"In the museum, we have a huge 12-foot tree," Murphy says. "It is beautifully decorated by Becky Rosenberger. And, all along the way inside the museum, we have decorations galore."

There are also many other volunteers who come in and help at various times with this event.

"We just have a lot of people, a lot of help," Murphy says. "It gets very cold, but they're brave."

Despite the long list of volunteers, help is appreciated.

"We just need a lot of volunteers to help and are willing to do anything that they're assigned," Murphy says. "It represents the Olde Town. It's welcoming, and it's for the children. The kids just love to come in where it's all decorated, and they love to have the little goodies and everything. It's very rewarding for everybody. It's just a tradition that we hope to keep up."

For Tim Burget, former mayor and



A variety of activities offer fun for the entire family at Christmas in Olde Town.

president of the Altoona Historical Society, this celebration is significant.

“Since it started with Helen Blaney and then later at the museum, it was just a way to bring the community together,” he says. “As mayor, I always was concerned because Altoona changed little in population until when I first became mayor in 1988. We had about 7,000 people. Now it’s 26-27,000, and it just exploded.... We were just trying to maintain identity for the community.

“So, that’s one reason I personally liked it is because it was meant to be for the community, even if you’re hoping everybody’s relatives from outside are going to come to it,” he adds.

The event also helps promote the Altoona

Area Historical Society on a grander scale.

“There’s so much history in the museum,” Murphy says. “It gets people coming in on different days when we’re open just to read and know all the history that’s in Altoona.”

Blending the history of Altoona with this Christmas celebration is key. Murphy says many of Altoona’s residents are new to the community and don’t know about the town’s history, so the event provides them the opportunity to learn.

Christmas in Olde Town started at least 25 years ago because of former resident Helen Blaney, who owned Back Door Fabric, where the Altoona History Museum is now located.

Burget says the event began “like a farmers

market thing in November” to what it is today, with the city’s support and holiday traditions such as Santa.

“It was just a good spirit,” Burget says.

“Helen always made sure there was a Santa so that we’d have a chair there for the kids to talk to Santa.

“Helen was a force of nature,” he adds.

“It’s just a lot of fun,” Murphy says. “It’s a lot of work, but it’s very rewarding.”

For more information on Christmas in Olde Town, visit <https://altoonahistory.org/christmas/>. ■

MEET Grace Narber

Influencing students' educational journeys

An alumnus of the Southeast Polk Community School District, Grace Narber received her degree in elementary education with endorsements in reading and English as a second language from Iowa State University. Now, she is a third-year ESL teacher at the Altoona, Centennial and Delaware elementary schools. She is also attending Morningside University for a master's degree in English as a second language.

"I wanted to come back to Southeast Polk to give back to the district that shaped my life," Narber says, "I love how Southeast Polk emphasizes community and unity. Though rather large, it feels like a small town where everyone knows each other, and you can make strong connections with everyone you meet."

Narber enjoys working with students at a variety of young ages, and being an ESL teacher provides her the opportunity to work with students of every elementary grade. She says she appreciates how the district teachers put students at the forefront of their decisions and work to ensure that every student succeeds academically and in life.

"Being a teacher is the most rewarding profession I can think of, as I get the opportunity to be a positive influence in all my students' journeys through life. Getting to teach them, not only academics, but also life skills has been so wonderful. I love seeing a student's face when something finally clicks," Narber says.

Last year, Narber started a Welcome Ambassadors group at Delaware Elementary School with her colleague Callie Avon. The group, which is a leadership role that students apply for, currently has about eight students in second through fifth grade who work to create a welcoming environment for new students. These students run kindness projects for the school, guide new students and families on school tours, and make welcome bags for new students.

"It is a way to ensure that the environment in Delaware is warm and welcoming, and the students have definitely seen the impact it has on our climate here," Narber says.

This school year, Narber is looking forward to getting to know new students and staff, as she is at two new buildings. She is also looking forward to growing professionally and learning more by earning her master's degree.

"Teaching is the profession I was meant to have, so I truly look forward to simply coming to school every day, seeing my students there day after day, and putting in the work to be better every day," Narber says. ■



Grace Narber is in her third year as an ESL teacher at the elementary level.

GRATITUDE as a path to wellness

As the crisp air settles in and leaves turn, the Thanksgiving season invites us to pause and reflect on the blessings in our lives. Thanksgiving is more than just a holiday centered around food and family. Thanksgiving is a powerful reminder of the importance of gratitude, a practice that not only nurtures our relationships but also helps strengthen our minds.



Gratitude is more than a feeling; it is a mindset that can be nurtured daily. One of the easiest ways to do this is through a gratitude journal. By taking just a few minutes each day to write down things you are thankful for, whether it is a warm cup of coffee, a kind word from a friend, or a call from a loved one, you begin to train your brain to focus on the positive.

Research has shown that consistent gratitude practices can lead to improved brain function. When we express gratitude, our brain releases dopamine and serotonin that enhance mood and promote feelings of happiness. Over time, this "rewiring" helps reduce stress, improve sleep and even boost immune function.

Moreover, gratitude journaling has been linked to enhanced cognitive performance. Studies suggest that individuals who regularly reflect on what they are thankful for experience better focus, increased resilience, and improved decision-making.

Beyond journaling, there are many ways to show thankfulness during Thanksgiving and beyond:

Write a thank-you note to someone who has made a difference in your life. The act of expressing appreciation strengthens social bonds and uplifts both the sender and the receiver.

Volunteer your time to help those in need. Whether it is serving meals at a shelter or donating to a local food bank, giving back fosters a sense of purpose and community.

Share gratitude aloud. Encourage family and friends to name something they are thankful for; it can spark meaningful conversations and deepen connections.

As we gather with loved ones this Thanksgiving, let us remember that gratitude is not just a seasonal sentiment; it's a lifelong habit that enriches our emotional and brain health. By embracing practices like journaling and intentional thankfulness, we not only honor the spirit of the season but also invest in our own well-being.

So, grab a pen, open a notebook, and start your gratitude journey today. Your brain and your heart will thank you.

"The more you practice the art of thankfulness, the more you have to be thankful for." ■

Information provided by Stephanie Proper, executive director, Valley View Village, 2571 Guthrie Ave., Des Moines, 515-265-2571.

ALTOONA Public Library news



Altoona Public Library

700 Eighth St. S.W., Altoona
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www.altoonalibrary.com

Monday - Thursday: 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Friday - Saturday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Sunday: 2-5 p.m.

ADULT PROGRAMMING – AGES 18-PLUS

Women and Money, Wednesday, Dec. 3 at 6 p.m.

Join licensed Financial Planner Shalini Babu for an empowering seminar on the importance of financial literacy for women, whether you're planning for the future, navigating life transitions or simply wanting to take control of your financial well-being. Registration required.

Holiday Maker Night, Friday, Dec. 19 at 6 p.m.

Join us for a holiday maker event. Leave with customized holiday gifts made using the Glowforge Pro, Cricut and other art supplies. Registration required.

Puzzle Competish, Saturday, Dec. 20 at 1 p.m.

Ready to puzzle your way to greatness? Bring your team of three to five puzzlers and battle jigsaw style. Limber up those fingers and get ready to rumble. Our puzzle for this round is 500 pieces. Registration required.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING

Elf STEM, Wednesday, Dec. 3 from 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Test your skills with exciting Elf-themed STEM challenges. Use your creativity to build a trap, zipline, parachute and more to complete the missions. Grades K-6. Registration required.

Crafternoon, Thursday, Dec. 11 from 4-5 p.m.

Stop by the Children's Room to craft an ornament. Available while supplies last. Grades preK-6. No registration required.

Engraved Creations, Sunday, Dec. 14 from 2-4 p.m.

Drop in to turn artwork into a custom keychain or ornament using the library's maker hub equipment. Grades K-6. No registration required.

TEEN PROGRAMMING – GRADES 6-12

Pop-Tart Gingerbread Houses, Thursday, Dec. 4 from 6-7 p.m.

Get into the wintery spirit and build a Pop-Tart gingerbread house. We'll have all the Pop-Tarts, frosting and candy on hand to make a yummy holiday abode. Registration required.

Teen Maker Lab, Saturday, Dec. 13 from 1-2:30 p.m.

The Maker Lab is a chance for you to learn about and use the equipment in our Maker Hub. This month, we'll make holiday ornaments using the sublimation machine. Registration required.

Cookie Decorating, Monday, Dec. 29 from 2-3 p.m.

We'll provide the cookies, frosting and sprinkles. You bring the creativity as we decorate wintery sugar cookies. Registration not required.

HOLIDAY HOURS

- Wednesday, Dec. 24, and Thursday, Dec. 25: Closed
- Wednesday, Dec. 31: open 9-3 p.m.
- Thursday, Jan. 1: Closed

To find a complete list of events and to register, visit our website at altoonalibrary.com. Click on the Upcoming Events tab. ■

NEWS BRIEF

NEW STORE announced at Outlets of Des Moines

The Children's Place, Inc., the largest pure-play children's specialty retailer in North America, announced that it will open at the Outlets of Des Moines later this year. The Children's Place offers stylish looks kids seek at prices parents love. Shoppers will find casual denim, graphic tees, shorts and swimwear, dresses, skirts, pants, school uniforms and more in

sizes ranging from newborn to size 16.

"The Children's Place offers top fashions for kids at prices that fit every budget and will be a wonderful addition to the exciting lineup of retailers at Outlets of Des Moines," says Josie Broxson, marketing director for Outlets of Des Moines. ■



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V. BOYS WRESTLING

TYPE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
12-04-25	7:30PM	Johnston	Southeast Polk High School
12-11-25	7:30PM	Away vs. WDM Valley	Valley High School
12-18-25	7:30PM	Away vs. Waukee	Waukee High School
01-06-26	7:30PM	Away vs. Waukee NW	Waukee Northwest High School
01-08-26	7:30PM	Ankeny High School	Southeast Polk High School
01-15-26	7:30PM	Away vs. Urbandale	Urbandale High School
01-22-26	7:30PM	Dowling Catholic	Southeast Polk High School
01-29-26	7:30PM	Ankeny Centennial HS	Southeast Polk High School

V. BOYS SWIMMING

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
12-04-25	5:30PM	Away vs. Dowling Catholic	Dowling Catholic High School
12-11-25	5:30PM	Away vs. Waukee	Waukee Natatorium
12-18-25	5:30PM	Away vs. WDM Valley	Valley High School
01-06-26	5:30PM	Waukee Northwest	Southeast Polk High School Pool
01-08-26	5:30PM	Ankeny Boys Swimming	Southeast Polk High School Pool
01-15-26	5:30PM	Johnston	Southeast Polk High School Pool
01-24-26	11:00AM	Away vs. Multiple Schools	Waukee Natatorium



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POLK RAMS

SPORTS SCHEDULE

WINTER 2025-26

V. BOYS BASKETBALL

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
12-02-25	7:45PM	Johnston	Southeast Polk HS
12-05-25	7:45PM	Away vs. WDM Valley	Valley HS
12-09-25	7:45PM	Away vs. Waukee	Waukee HS
12-16-25	7:45PM	Away vs. Ankeny HS	Ankeny HS
12-19-25	7:45PM	Away vs. Waukee Northwest	Waukee Northwest HS
01-02-26	7:45PM	Away vs. Urbandale	Urbandale HS
01-06-26	7:45PM	Ankeny Centennial HS	Southeast Polk HS
01-09-26	7:45PM	Dowling Catholic	Southeast Polk HS
01-13-26	7:45PM	WDM Valley	Southeast Polk HS
01-16-26	7:45PM	Away vs. Johnston	Johnston HS
01-23-26	7:45PM	Waukee	Southeast Polk HS
01-30-26	7:45PM	Waukee Northwest	Southeast Polk HS
02-02-26	7:45PM	Ankeny HS	Southeast Polk HS
02-06-26	7:45PM	Urbandale	Southeast Polk HS
02-10-26	7:45PM	Away vs. Dowling Catholic	Dowling Catholic HS
02-13-26	7:45PM	Away vs. Ankeny Centennial HS	Ankeny Centennial HS

V. GIRLS BASKETBALL

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
12-02-25	6:15PM	Johnston	Southeast Polk HS
12-05-25	6:15PM	Away vs. WDM Valley	Valley HS
12-09-25	6:15PM	Away vs. Waukee	Waukee HS
12-16-25	6:15PM	Away vs. Ankeny HS	Ankeny HS
12-19-25	6:15PM	Away vs. Waukee Northwest	Waukee Northwest HS
01-02-26	6:15PM	Away vs. Urbandale	Urbandale HS
01-06-26	6:15PM	Ankeny Centennial HS	Southeast Polk HS
01-09-26	6:15PM	Dowling Catholic	Southeast Polk HS
01-13-26	6:15PM	WDM Valley	Southeast Polk HS
01-16-26	6:15PM	Away vs. Johnston	Johnston HS
01-23-26	6:15PM	Waukee	Southeast Polk HS
01-30-26	6:15PM	Waukee Northwest	Southeast Polk HS
02-02-26	6:15PM	Ankeny HS	Southeast Polk HS
02-06-26	6:15PM	Urbandale	Southeast Polk HS
02-10-26	6:15PM	Away vs. Dowling Catholic	Dowling Catholic HS
02-13-26	6:15PM	Away vs. Ankeny Centennial HS	Ankeny Centennial HS

V. BOYS BOWLING

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
12-04-25	3:45PM	WDM Valley	Great Escape
12-11-25	3:45PM	Away vs. Urbandale	Game Day Lanes
01-15-26	3:45PM	Away vs. Waukee/NW	Warrior Lanes
01-22-26	3:45PM	Ankeny Boys Bowling	Great Escape
02-12-26	3:30PM	Multiple Schools	Great Escape

V. GIRLS BOWLING

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
11-20-25	3:45PM	Dowling Catholic	Great Escape
12-04-25	3:45PM	WDM Valley	Great Escape
12-11-25	3:45PM	Away vs. Urbandale	Game Day Lanes
01-08-26	3:45PM	Away vs. Johnston	Game Day Lanes
01-15-26	3:45PM	Away vs. Waukee/NW	Warrior Lanes
01-22-26	3:45PM	Ankeny Girls Bowling	Great Escape
01-27-26	3:30PM	Multiple Schools	Great Escape



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PARMESAN garlic focaccia bread is a slice of comfort

This month, I share another recipe from my daughter, Samantha. She loves to make all kinds of bread. Few things make a kitchen feel more welcoming than the aroma of freshly baked bread, and parmesan garlic focaccia delivers that comfort in every bite. Golden and crisp on the outside yet soft and airy inside, this Italian favorite is elevated with the irresistible pairing of roasted garlic and nutty parmesan cheese. It is the kind of bread that feels special but is surprisingly simple to make at home. Serve as a side with soups and pastas, cut into squares for an appetizer board, or enjoy warm right out of the pan. Focaccia is versatile and crowd pleasing. The drizzle of olive oil, a sprinkling of herbs and the cheesy finish give it that bakery-style touch you will love sharing — or keeping all to yourself. Enjoy! ■



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

Parmesan Garlic Focaccia Bread

Ingredients:

- 1½ cups warm water (about 110°F)
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 2¼ teaspoons instant yeast (1 packet)
- 4 cups flour
- 1½ teaspoons salt
- 1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil, plus more for greasing
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2/3 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 teaspoon dried Italian herbs or chopped rosemary
- Flaky sea salt

Directions

- Combine warm water, sugar and yeast. Let sit for 5 minutes until foamy. Add flour and salt. Mix until dough forms. (It will be sticky.) With a mixer, kneed for 5-7 minutes or by hand for 8-10 minutes until smooth. Brush dough with olive oil and cover.
- Let rise 1-1.5 hours in a warm spot until dough has doubled.
- Heat 2 tablespoons olive oil with minced garlic until fragrant (about 1 minute) in a

pan. Keep for later.

- Place dough in greased 9-inch by 13-inch pan. Gently press to corners. Let rest 10 minutes, then stretch. Cover and rise 30-45 minutes.
- Preheat oven to 425 F. With your fingers, dimple the dough all over. Brush with garlic oil. Then sprinkle parmesan cheese, herbs and sea salt on top of dough.
- Bake 20-25 minutes until golden brown. Cool 10 minutes in pan, then transfer to wire rack.
- Slice and serve warm. Store bread for two days at room temperature or freeze up to three months.
- **For the best results, follow these additional steps:** Make sure your water is warm (110 F), not hot. For the best texture, let the dough rise completely. Use plenty of oil in your pan, as this will give your bread a crisp crust.



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TIPS to keep your inbox safe this holiday season

During the holidays, your inbox is likely overflowing with promotional emails and “limited time offers.” While these can be exciting, they can also open the door to fraud. Fraudsters often disguise malicious emails as legitimate promotions, hoping to catch you off guard.



Here are six security tips to help you keep your inbox safe this holiday season:

1. Be cautious with promotional emails:

Fraudsters often mimic popular brands to send fake promotional emails that contain harmful links or attachments. Before clicking:

- Check the sender's email address for misspellings or odd domains.
- Check for promotional deals by accessing the company's website using a trusted URL.

Avoid downloading attachments from unknown senders.

2. Unsubscribe wisely: During the holidays, you may find yourself subscribed to dozens of

retail newsletters. While unsubscribing can help declutter your inbox, be sure to:

- Unsubscribe directly from the website rather than through an email link.
- If an email looks suspicious, avoid clicking “unsubscribe” as it could be a phishing attempt.
- Use your email provider's built-in unsubscribe feature when available.

3. Shop directly from trusted websites:

Instead of clicking through email links, go directly to the retailer's website by typing the URL into your browser. This ensures you're not redirected to a fraudulent site pretending to be the real thing. Look for:

- A lock icon in the browser's address bar.
- URLs that begin with “https” (the “s” stands for secure).

4. Use unique passwords: If you create accounts while shopping online, use unique passwords for each one. This helps prevent hackers from accessing multiple accounts if one is compromised. Consider using a password manager to securely keep track of your information.

5. Shop safely online: Avoid making online

purchases while using public Wi-Fi because network access can be intercepted, and fraudsters can steal your personal information. Instead, use your secure home Wi-Fi or personal VPN. When shopping online, even using secure home Wi-Fi or personal VPN, use a virtual credit card number or services such as Apple Pay or Google Pay whenever possible.

6. Monitor your inbox and bank

statements: Keep an eye on your inbox for order confirmations and shipping updates. If something looks off, like a confirmation for a purchase you didn't make, act quickly. Be sure to:

- Review your bank statements for unauthorized charges.
- Match receipts with transactions.
- Report suspicious activity immediately.

By staying alert and following these tips, you can enjoy the convenience of online shopping without falling victim to scams. ■

Information provided by Mary Simon, VP, Altoona Branch Manager, 3820 Eighth St. S.W., Altoona, 515-245-5480, MSimon@BankersTrust.com. Bankers Trust NMLS ID: 440379.



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Mary Simon

VP, Altoona Branch Manager



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Brad McAninch

Pleasant Hill

Military branch: U.S. Army

Rank: Sergeant

Served: 1966-68 in Vietnam



Bruce K. Snethen

Military branch: U.S. Air Force
and U.S. Army

Rank: Second Lieutenant

Served: December 1973 to
March 1981.

"Military service was one of the
very best things I ever did."



Clark R. Doherty

Altoona

Military branches: U.S. Air Force, May
1980 to April 1990; Iowa Army National
Guard, May 1990 to November 1991;
Iowa Air National Guard, November
1991 to November 2012

Rank: Master Sergeant

Served: 32 years

"Serving was one of the most enjoyable
and, at times, most difficult thing I ever
did. I served with some of the most
outstanding and dedicated people ever
and would do it again in a heartbeat."



Tom Maly

Altoona

Military branch: U.S. Army

Rank: Specialist Fifth
Class – 91C - Military
Occupational Specialty

Served: 1966-1969,
Summer of 1968-1969 in
Vietnam

"However one is called to
serve one's country, our
country is one that deserves
everyone's best effort to do
what they can in whatever
specialty they are called to.
We are blessed and have
a fantastic country. We
should honor it and serve in
whatever way we're called."



Daniel Douglas

Altoona

Military branch: U.S. Army

Rank: CPT; SFC

Served: March 31, 2004 to March 31, 2024

"I committed to trying to be the best I could
be while in uniform. I wore the Green Beret as
a member of one of the most elite forces in
our military. Yet, when I see the level of service
so many others offer, I see the same level
of performance. You don't have to wear the
uniform to serve. Take pride in doing your part
to provide value to your family, friends and
community. Your service is valued, too."



What would you like others to know about serving your country?

Jeff Hanna

Altoona

Military branch: U.S. Air Force

Rank: Senior Airman

Served November 1973 to June 1977

"I was always proud to be an American and was glad to enlist and do my part. While serving, I learned how to overcome adversity, work as a team, and survive a long way from home for an extended period of time. I also came to understand diversity and the unique fabric of people that make up our country. Though the government may be flawed or altogether broken, my faith in America remains strong. I believe we, the people, can and will find a better path that will unite us."



Larry Ferguson

Altoona

Military branch: Iowa Air National Guard, 1964-1974;
Army National Guard, 1990-2004

Rank: SFC

Served: 1990-2004

Other: For the past 15 years, Larry has been volunteering at the Gold Star Military Museum at Camp Dodge.

"The early part of your life out of high school or college creates a good opportunity to live a life of discipline, get in good physical condition, learn military history, and training is intense. You are representing your country, and you get a lot of self-satisfaction. You can get a good education if you want. You are protecting people plus it is a higher quality of life if you don't know what you are going to do. Once you are in it, you stay in or get out. I loved to do the various jobs given throughout my entire experience of being in the military."



Rick Beenen

Altoona

Rank: SGT. (E4)

Military branch: U.S. Air Force

Served: October 1969 to October 1973

"Serving in the military helps create pride in your country and yourself. Serving in the military also helps build respect for others and yourself, and nurtures responsibility. You also get training in a possible career field."



VETERANS assembly

An assembly honoring veterans was held at Mitchellville Elementary.



HARVESTERS of hope

Altoona Church's community garden was ripe with success.



Volunteers worked hard at the Caring Hands Community Garden to raise a bountiful harvest that has provided fresh produce to many in need.

Just short of a year ago, a few members of Christ The King Lutheran Church in Altoona decided they wanted to do more. More for the community. More for the Lord.

And Caring Hands Community Garden came to be — an approximately 40-foot-by-50-foot piece of nearby ground that would eventually become the source of a multitude of fresh produce, including tomatoes, sweet peppers, onions, green beans, carrots, melons, cucumbers, summer squash, winter squash, lettuce, potatoes, sweet potatoes, beets and zinnia flowering plants for pollinators.

It was a lot, even for church member and volunteer Andrea Clapp. But this was a mission that volunteers were determined to complete.

"This was our first year growing our garden," Clapp says. "We began with soil testing in March and groundbreaking, soil prep and amendments in April. The first crops sown were potatoes, beans, carrots, squash, melons, cucumbers and zinnias — all from seed (and tubers for the potatoes)."

Clapp had already started the tomatoes and peppers in her greenhouse at home in February and March, which were planted in May, followed by sweet potatoes in June.

"Planting was so exhilarating because it meant we were finally to the growing stage," Clapp says.

Then it was time to grow. And it wasn't easy. This season's overabundance of rain made things trying at times, she admitted. But that didn't deter them.

"We also counted it as a blessing since we do not yet have an irrigation system in place," Clapp says. "The Lord heard our prayers and helped us in that regard."

The goal this season was to produce 800 pounds of produce — a hefty number, especially considering it was the first time around. By October, however, the hard work of the six to 10 volunteers who oversaw the project had paid off. The garden had yielded nearly 876 pounds of produce.



All of the harvested items have been donated to Caring Hands Food Pantry.

"Most (of the harvest) goes toward qualifying people in need, and sometimes there is overflow that is offered to the public for free at Caring Hands Thrift Store," Clapp says. "We would love to see that increase along with the size of our garden so that we can offer more produce to our community through Caring Hands."

It was hard work at times, but worth every drop of sweat. And then some. Clapp believes the garden is — and will remain — an important part of the church and community.

"We started small and gained deeper connections within our church's congregational family, but, in future years, we hope the garden will be a means for creating a greater sense of outward community and involvement," she says. "For me personally, to put my hands in soil or touch green life, it provided me with an instant connection to Christ, which fuels a greater sense of commitment to share His love with our community. He is the tree, and we are the branches. We can do great things through Him." ■

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HEALTH

By Ashley Powell

NEW to hemp?

Here's what you need to know

If you've been hearing more about hemp wellness lately, there's a good reason. Hemp-derived products containing cannabinoids like CBD, CBG and even low-dose THC are becoming popular for people looking to support stress, sleep, mood and more — naturally.

These products interact with the body's endocannabinoid system, which plays a role in regulating things like sleep cycles, pain response and emotional balance. When supported, many people feel and function better.

Hemp wellness products come in a variety of beginner-friendly options, including gummies, water solubles, topicals and seltzers. Dosing is controlled and consistent, and many blends are formulated for specific needs like relaxation, recovery or rest.

As interest grows, more people are turning to local hemp consultants for guidance instead of guessing with unregulated online products. In-store experts can help you understand what is in each formula, how it works and what to expect — making the process feel simple and supportive.

Whether you're feeling holiday stress creeping in or just looking for more natural balance this season, hemp-based support is worth exploring. You don't need a prescription, and products are federally legal under the 2018 Farm Bill.

If you're new to hemp or unsure where to start, stop in and talk to a certified hemp consultant. No pressure, just support. ■

Information provided by Ashley Powell, CBD American Shaman, 800 S. 50th St., No. 106, West Des Moines, 515-380-5251, and 3418 Eighth St. S.W., No. 3, Altoona, 515-967-4036.



WELLNESS

By Nikki Morgan

MINDFUL beauty

Balancing stress and self-care this holiday season

The holidays are meant to be joyful, but, between shopping lists, family gatherings and packed schedules, it is easy to feel more frazzled than festive. Amid the hustle, taking time for yourself is not indulgent; it is essential. Mindful beauty is about slowing down, being present and nurturing both your skin and your spirit.

We believe true radiance comes from balance. When stress levels rise, your skin often shows it first through dullness, breakouts or sensitivity. Incorporating small rituals of self-care can make a big difference. Start with a few mindful minutes each day: take deep breaths while cleansing your face, apply your moisturizer with gentle intention, or pause to appreciate how your skin feels after a nourishing treatment.

Professional treatments like DiamondGlow, LED therapy, or a restorative facial can do more than improve your complexion; they create space to exhale and recharge. Pair these with consistent hydration, adequate rest, and moments of gratitude to help your natural glow shine through the season.

This year, give yourself permission to slow down. When you take care of yourself inside and out, you will greet the holidays not just looking refreshed, but feeling truly renewed. ■

Information provided by Nikki Morgan, DNP, ARNP, SkinFusion, 200 Second St. S.E., Altoona, 515-967-0587, www.skinfusionfx.com, nikki.skinfusionfx@gmail.com



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INTEGRATED BEAUTY

SUPPORTING your immune system

As the seasons change and the holidays are on the horizon, now is the time to take steps to build a strong immune system that can adapt when exposed to illness and stress. Some children and adults seem to become trapped in an endless cycle of illness, and, just as one cold or virus clears, another illness arrives. Some battle persistent coughs, disrupting sleep for the entire family, perpetuating the cycle of sickness.

Most colds resolve on their own within five to seven days, but the recurring pattern indicates the immune system is struggling to keep up, and the body needs support.

As with all health concerns, addressing the root cause is key to long-term health. Rather than simply managing symptoms, supporting the nervous system and immune system function enables the body's natural ability to self-heal and self-regulate. Chiropractic adjustments help regulate the nervous system, which controls immune responses and supports the body's ability to adapt to stressors.

A healthy immune system starts with a foundation of nervous system-focused chiropractic care and is built up with consistent care and supportive healthy habits. Prioritize rest by establishing consistent sleep routines. Ensure adequate hydration by encouraging water intake throughout the day. Choose whole foods and limit processed foods and sugars. Consider immune-boosting nutrients and supplements with individualized guidance from your chiropractor.

Breaking the cycle of chronic illness requires supporting the body from the inside out, giving the immune system the foundation it needs to function optimally. ■

Information provided by Dr. Kari Swain and Dr. Elizabeth Ellrich, Swain Chiropractic, 410 Center Place S.W., Altoona, 515-967-9300.

PLAN AHEAD

By Dave Cortner

HEADING south for the winter or traveling for the holidays?

Are you traveling over the holidays to visit family? Are you a snowbird, and will you be heading south for the winter?

Have you ever thought about what you would do if something unfortunate happened during the time while you were away and you needed the services of a funeral home?

We don't like to think about these things, but, the truth is, they can happen. And when they do, having a plan in place can make a world of difference.

Perhaps a Travel Plan is something for you to consider — a plan that would take care of everything and bring your loved one back home, if such an unfortunate situation occurred.

These plans can be very cost effective and provide a great deal of peace of mind for those traveling or heading to their winter retreat.

Visit with your funeral home of choice and ask them if they offer a Travel Plan.

Better to have a plan in place and not need it than to wish you had done something to prepare. ■

Information provided by Dave Cortner, Hamilton's on Westown Parkway, 3601 Westown Parkway, West Des Moines, IA 50266, 515-697-3681.



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Coming up in the Altoona Living magazine:

Handmade gifts: If you have made or received a cherished handmade gift, we would like to share your story for the December issue. Email tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com.



Festival of Trees and Lights

Monday, Dec. 1, 1-3 p.m.
Edencrest at Tuscany, 1600 Eighth St. S.E., Altoona

The public is invited to annual Festival of Trees and Lights. Bring your family and friends to stroll through the displays, snap photos by your favorite trees, and share in the festive cheer with the residents and team. It's the perfect way to kick off the holiday season — cozy, community-centered and brimming with holiday joy. Trees will be displayed throughout the month of December.

Edencrest at the Tuscany Connections: Central States Mobility Showcase

Thursday, Jan. 15, 1-2 p.m.
Edencrest at Tuscany, 1600 Eighth St. S.E., Altoona

Join Edencrest at the Tuscany for an engaging presentation by Central States Mobility. Discover innovative mobility solutions designed to enhance comfort, safety and independence. Representatives from Central States Mobility will showcase their latest products and services, answer questions, and provide expert insights on maintaining mobility and quality of life. Questions? Call Mallory Wentland at 515-850-6119.

Edencrest at The Tuscany's Monthly Movement and Wellness Series

Dec. 18, 1:30 p.m.
Edencrest at The Tuscany, 1690 Eighth St. S.E., Altoona, Lower East entrance at bottom of the hill

The Monthly Movement & Wellness Series with Dr. Jonah Knous — Elevation Chiropractic explores ways to move better, feel better and live better — one month at a time. Each month brings a new topic, practical tips, and a little inspiration to keep you moving all year long. RSVP at 515-850-6119.



Financial Health and Your Estate Planning

Thursday, Dec. 4, 2 p.m.
Edencrest at Tuscany, 1600 Eighth St. S.E., Altoona

The public is invited for an informative afternoon with Vicki Monaco from Life and Legacy Advisors as she shares valuable insights on financial health and estate planning. Learn practical strategies to protect your assets, plan for the future, and ensure your legacy is secure.

Breakfast with Santa and Mrs. Claus

Sunday, Dec. 14, 8 a.m. to noon
West Des Moines Elks Lodge, 2060 N.W. 94th St., Clive

Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus will be giving out goody bags, talking with children and providing photo opportunities. The breakfast buffet includes biscuits and gravy, French toast, scrambled eggs, bacon, sausage patties, cheesy potatoes, and, of course, all-you-can-eat pancakes (including blueberry and chocolate chip pancakes), orange juice, milk and coffee. Enjoy a Bloody Mary or mimosa for \$3.50. Serving is from 8 a.m. till noon. Cost is \$11 for adults and \$5 for children 10 and younger. There will also be a Christmas bake sale. The Elks hold a breakfast the second Sunday of the month. Proceeds support the Elks' Hoop Shoot Program, other youth activities, veterans and community charities.

Santa's Wonderland at Bass Pro Shops

1000 Bass Pro Drive N.W., Altoona

Christmas Tales: Every Tuesday until Dec. 23 at 5 p.m., Santa or Mrs. Claus will read holiday stories to families, followed by photos. Free reservations are required at www.basspro.com/b/santas-wonderland.



Breakfast With Santa

Saturday, Dec. 6, 8:30-11 a.m.
Edencrest at Tuscany, 1600 Eighth St. S.E., Altoona

Join a magical holiday celebration featuring a festive breakfast and brunch with Santa. Enjoy a fun day of holiday shopping with local vendors — perfect for finding unique gifts. Each child will receive a special surprise from Santa. Breakfast will be free for the kids and \$10 for adults. RSVP to Mallory at 515-850-6119.

Cocoa, Carols and Cookies

Wednesday, Dec. 17, 2-4 p.m.
Edencrest at Tuscany, 1600 Eighth St. S.E., Altoona

Celebrate the holiday season at a Cocoa, Carols & Cookies Party — a cozy evening full of sweet treats and festive fun. Enjoy a delicious hot cocoa bar with all your favorite toppings. Sing along during festive caroling for all ages. Get creative at a DIY cookie decorating station. Share in the laughter, joy and holiday cheer with friends, family and neighbors.



EVENTS IN THE AREA

To submit calendar items for consideration, send to tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com

Be sure to check for cancellations.

Holiday Shopping Extravaganza

Saturday Nov. 22, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Union Park United Methodist Church, 2305 E. 12th St., Des Moines

The Extravaganza features many crafters with a variety of creative items that are perfect for the holidays. Free admission. Close-up parking and lunch available to purchase.

Holiday Promenade

Various dates, 5-8 p.m.

Historic East Village

Enjoy extended hours at local shops and restaurants, special promotions and pop-up experiences, live music and entertainment, visits from Santa and other holiday characters and free trolley rides throughout the neighborhood.

- Dec. 5: Winefest's Vino at Promenade with free wine samples.
- Dec. 12: Ugly Sweater Contest across East Village businesses.
- Dec. 19: Drone Show with Santa Claus.

Visit eastvillagedesmoines.com/promenade for the latest event updates and details.

Tinseltown in the Park

Nov. 22 - Dec. 20

Water Works Park, 2201 George Flagg Parkway, Des Moines

Mark your calendars for Tinseltown in the Park, featuring live Christmas tree sales, biergarten specials, food trucks, entertainers, unique visits from holiday A-listers, photo opportunities, and more to celebrate the holiday season in the park. Visit www.waterworkspark.org/tinseltown-in-water-works-park/ for schedule of events.

The Christkindlmarket

Dec. 4-7 and Dec. 11-14

Principal Park, 1 Line Drive, Des Moines

Experience a German-inspired Christmas Market. Enjoy the sights, sounds, smells and flavors of the holidays as you participate in a 750-year-old tradition. Shop regional vendors selling old-world, hand-crafted products from wooden vendor stalls; enjoy lively performances in Yuletide Hall; participate in children's activities; sip Glühwein (warm, mulled wine); and savor European beer. More information available at www.christkindlmarketdsm.com.

Shop and Dine Along The Peppermint Trail

Saturday, Dec. 13

The Avenues of Ingersoll and Grand

Celebrate the season with your favorite local businesses on The Avenues of Ingersoll & Grand and the Roosevelt Cultural District. The Peppermint Trail, presented by Veridian Credit Union, returns with shopping and dining specials happening all day at local shops and restaurants, plus a line-up of holiday festivities, including trolley rides, ice carving, photos with Santa, carolers and more. The "Bee-Merry-Line" trolley will travel on a loop from noon to 4 p.m. with multiple stops along Ingersoll Avenue and at the Shops At Roosevelt. See a route map on the event website, as well as list of businesses' specials and times for special activities. www.theavenuesdsm.com/peppermint-trail ■

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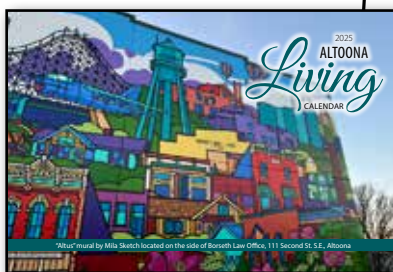
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FAITH

By Nathan Anenson

A WEARY world rejoices

When is the last time you truly celebrated? Like really felt carefree and rejoiced in all the blessings you have been given? For a lot of us, it may have been a while. The author Harvey Cox put it like this: “The modern man has been pressed so hard toward useful work and rational calculation he has all but forgotten the joy of ecstatic celebration.” Combine those cultural norms of constantly pursuing achievement and success with all the worries of life, and we rarely have the best conditions to celebrate.



Even during the holiday season, the tendency is to work harder, get busier and spend more. Worries and stress build. It all leaves us weary.

I appreciate the words from the carol “O Holy Night”: “A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices.” That phrase captures both the reality of our world and the beauty of Christmas. The first Christmas wasn’t a calm, cozy holiday postcard. It was messy, uncertain and full of struggle. A young couple traveled miles away from home under government orders. They couldn’t find a room. They were exhausted and afraid. Into that world, an angel appeared with this message:

“Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.” — Luke 2:10.

That good news was the birth of Jesus — the moment hope broke through human weariness. The angel’s words still echo today: “Do not be afraid.” There is good news. There is joy for all people — including you.

When Jesus was born, God didn’t choose comfort or power. He entered our weariness. He stepped into our world not as a distant observer, but as one of us — crying in a manger, walking dusty roads, carrying our burdens, and ultimately bringing forgiveness and peace through the cross.

That’s why we can rejoice, even in a weary world. Christmas doesn’t ignore our pain or pretend life is easy. It reminds us that we are not alone. God has come near. And because He has come near, there is joy — real, unshakable joy.

Every year, churches gather to celebrate that joy. We light candles, sing familiar songs, and remember that, even when darkness feels overwhelming, light still shines. And that light — Jesus — still changes lives.

So, if you’re feeling weary this season, take heart. The same God who brought joy to a weary world 2,000 years ago still brings joy today. Let this Christmas be more than a holiday — let it be an invitation to truly celebrate and experience the love and peace of Christ for yourself. ■

Information provided by Pastor Nathan Anenson, Lutheran Church of the Cross, 1701 Eighth St. S.W., Altoona, 515-967-4818.

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PRESIDENT'S holiday message

A year of growth, gratitude and community spirit

As the holiday season arrives and we wrap up another wonderful year, I want to take a moment to thank each of you for the part you've played in making our town such a special place to live, work and call home.

Serving as your chamber president this past year has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. Together, we've accomplished a lot. We have welcomed new businesses, supported one another through challenges and celebrated our traditions — from summer Wine and Craft Beer Fest, the Annual Golf Outing and Business Trick or Treat, just to name a few — these events make our town truly one of a kind. Each event reminded me that it is not the size of our town that matters, but the size of our community spirit.

As we look ahead to a new year, I'm filled with gratitude and excitement. The chamber will continue to focus on supporting local businesses, encouraging people to shop local and creating opportunities for connection and growth. With your continued support, I know our small-town charm and strong sense of community will only keep growing.

Thank you to our business community that continues to invest in the chamber, our events and programming. You give of your resources and time to benefit the greater good of the region, and we couldn't ask for better partnerships. We love what we do, and we hope it shows in the value we provide.

On behalf of the chamber board, I wish you and your families a joyful holiday season filled with peace, laughter and togetherness. Thank you for making this year so memorable — and for reminding me every day why this town is such a great place to call home.

Here's a reminder of some fun things coming up:

- Small Business Saturday, Nov. 29 – get out and Shop Small, Shop Local.
- Christmas in Olde Town, Nov. 29 from 2-4 p.m., enjoy Santa, reindeer, s'mores and more.
- Second Annual Holiday Bazaar, Dec. 6 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Townsend Community Center.
- Also, beginning in December, we want you to nominate your Small Business of the Year, Young Professional of the Year, Corporate Star and Citizen of the Year for our annual awards ceremony next April. ■

Information provided by Amy Ferguson, 2025 President of the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors.



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OUT & ABOUT



Dr. Manmohan and Patty Ferlitsch at the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Restored Psychiatry & Wellness, 612 Eighth St. S.W., on Nov. 14.



Page Birkle and Jessica Lust at the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Restored Psychiatry & Wellness.



Erica Tinius, Cayte McClanathan and Steve Kautz at the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Restored Psychiatry & Wellness.



Tony Ferlitsch, Terri Lust and Monica Reynolds at the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Restored Psychiatry & Wellness.



Mindy Duncin, Terri Lust, Linda Duncin and Ed Lust at the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Restored Psychiatry & Wellness.



Garrett Birkett, Patty Ferlitsch and Erika Birkett at the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Restored Psychiatry & Wellness.



Chad Quick and Jay Mathes at the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Restored Psychiatry & Wellness.



Victoria Veatch and Kyle Lee at the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Restored Psychiatry & Wellness.



Patty and Tony Ferlitsch at the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Restored Psychiatry & Wellness.



Kennedy Wilson and Melissa Horton at Perk Before Work held with That 1 Painter Central Iowa on Oct. 7.



Jessica Dabb and Linda Lawson at Perk Before Work held with That 1 Painter Central Iowa on Oct. 7.



Jay Mathes, Samantha Hillier and Kyle Lee at Perk Before Work held with That 1 Painter Central Iowa on Oct. 7.

OUT & ABOUT



Kyle Lee, Jackson Harper-Griffith and Kennedy Wilson at the Altoona Area Chamber Noon Networking Oct. 21 at Spectator's Sports Bar & Grill with host Dr. Kari Swain from Swain Chiropractic.



Victoria Veatch, Emma Wiederstein and Katie James at the Altoona Area Chamber Noon Networking at Spectator's Sports Bar & Grill with host Dr. Kari Swain from Swain Chiropractic.



Dr. Kari Swain and Dr. Elizabeth Ellrich at the Altoona Area Chamber Noon Networking at Spectator's Sports Bar & Grill from Swain Chiropractic.



Rick Kroeger, Twila Shreves, Tammy Main and Dan Douglas at the Altoona Area Chamber Noon Networking at Spectator's Sports Bar & Grill with host Dr. Kari Swain from Swain Chiropractic.



Christine Clark and Riley Wilkie at the Altoona Area Chamber Noon Networking at Spectator's Sports Bar & Grill with host Dr. Kari Swain from Swain Chiropractic.



Jonathan Yesulis and Trisha Flaherty-Barnes at the Altoona Area Chamber Noon Networking at Spectator's Sports Bar & Grill with host Dr. Kari Swain from Swain Chiropractic.



The Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Planet Fitness at 801 Bass Pro Drive N.W., Suite 120, at the Outlets of Des Moines on Sept 12.



Sebastian Denham and Susana Carina at the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Planet Fitness.



Mary Simon, Brittany Glienke, Nikki Morgan and Ellie Moats at the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Planet Fitness.



Daniel Pena, Chad Rainwater and Nick Mills at the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Planet Fitness.



Maya Carson, Joe Gillie and Jessica Fedson at the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Planet Fitness.

CLASSIFIEDS

DISCLAIMER: This publication does not knowingly accept advertising that is deceptive, fraudulent, or which might otherwise violate the law or accepted standards of taste. However, this publication does not warrant or guarantee the accuracy of any advertisement, or the quality of the goods or services advertised. Readers are cautioned to thoroughly investigate all claims made in any advertisement and to use good judgment and reasonable care, particularly when dealing with persons unknown to you who ask for money in advance of delivery of the goods or services advertised.

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Get a break on your taxes! Donate your car, truck, or SUV to assist the blind and visually impaired. Arrange a swift, no-cost vehicle pickup and secure a generous tax credit for 2025. Call Heritage for the Blind Today at 1-855 977-7030 today! (mcn)

Donate your car, truck, boat, RV and more to support our veterans! Schedule a FAST, FREE vehicle pickup and receive a top tax deduction! Call Veteran Car Donations at 1-888-429-2331 today! (mcn)

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FINANCIAL

Inflation is at 40-year highs. Interest rates are way up. Credit Cards. Medical Bills. Car Loans. Do you have \$10k or more in debt? Call NATIONAL DEBT RELIEF and find out how to pay off your debt for significantly less than what you owe! FREE quote: Call 1-866-552-0649. (mcn)

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DENTAL INSURANCE from Physicians Mutual Insurance Company. Coverage for 400 plus procedures. Real dental insurance -NOT just a discount plan. Do not wait! Call now! Get your FREE Dental Information Kit with all the details! 1-855-973-9175 www.dental50plus.com/midwest#6258 (mcn)

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WE BUY VINTAGE GUITARS! Looking for 1920-1980 Gibson, Martin, Fender, Gretsch, Epiphone, Guild, Mosrite, Rickenbacker, Prairie State, D'Angelico, Stromberg. And Gibson Mandolins / Banjos. 1-833-641-7028. (mcn)

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NOVEMBER 2025

City of Altoona • 900 Venbury Drive • Altoona, IA 50009 • 515-967-5136

CITY HALL

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Altoona, IA 50009

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FAX: 515-967-0842

Open 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Monday – Friday

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Scott Duer 515-418-2227

Kyle Mertz 515-954-8470

Jerry Evans 515-967-5136

Julie Stewart 515-967-5136

City Administrator

515-967-5136

City Clerk

515-967-5136

Police Chief

515-967-5132

Fire Chief

515-967-2216

Library Director

515-967-3881

Fax: 515-967-6934

Water Billing

515-967-5136

Building Department/ Code Enforcement

515-967-5138

Building Official

515-967-5138

Planning & Zoning Department

515-967-5136

Public Works Director

515-967-5136

HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

City Offices will not be open on the following dates:

Thanksgiving: 11/27 and 11/28

Christmas: 12/25 and 12/26

New Year's: 1/1

The Altoona Public Library will not be open on the following dates:

Thanksgiving: 11/27 and 11/28

Christmas: 12/24, 12/25 and 12/26

New Year's: 1/1

**Shortened hours on additional days surrounding the holidays will be posted via social media and website updates.*



CHRISTMAS ON OLDE TOWN

Celebrate Christmas in Olde Town on Saturday November 29th from 2-4:30pm! You'll have the chance to meet Santa, enjoy reindeer encounters, hop on carriage rides and so much more! For more information, follow the Altoona Historical Society on Facebook, or visit

www.altoonahistory.org.

CURBSIDE YARD WASTE COLLECTION IS LEAF-ING FOR THE SEASON

Yard waste collection for communities participating in the Compost It! The program will end the week of December 1, 2025, on your regular collection day.

You can set out a variety of yard waste for curbside collection, including:

- Twigs and branches
- Leaves
- Grass clippings
- Garden vegetation (such as spoiled vegetables on the vine or wilted flowers from landscaping)

Items that are not accepted include:

- Dirt
- Mulch
- Rocks
- Food or pet waste

HOW TO SET OUT YARD WASTE

You have two options for curbside collection:

- **Bags and Stickers:** Place yard waste in Compost It! bags or store-brand bags with a green Compost It! sticker attached. Set bags at the curb by 6 AM on your regular collection day. Bags and stickers are available at many local retailers.
- **Cart Service:** If you have a Compost It! cart, fill the 96-gallon cart and place it at the curb on your regular collection day each week.

WINTER COLLECTION

If you have leaves hanging around, or a live Christmas tree to dispose, curbside collection of yard waste for the

winter will occur December 29, 2025 – January 9, 2026. During the event, regular yard waste bags, bundles with a Compost It! sticker, as well as Compost It! carts can be set out for collection. If setting out a live tree, it must be free from all decorations and have a Compost It! sticker.

Have questions about yard waste or the Compost It! program? Visit www.WhereItShouldGo.com/YardWaste or call Metro Waste Authority at 515.244.0021!

SNOW ORDINANCE

The snow removal parking ban is in effect from October through May or anytime snow and/or ice removal efforts are required. When the weather forecast predicts weather conditions that will require enforcement of the parking ban, a notice will be published on the City of Altoona's and/or Altoona Police Department's Facebook and X pages.



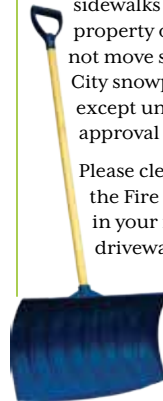
HOMEOWNER SNOW REMOVAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Homeowners/property owners are responsible for clearing snow from all sidewalks adjacent to your property within 24 hours after a snow weather event.

All complaint calls will be referred to the Building Department for follow-up and code enforcement. If possible, please wait until after plows travel through before removing snow, as snow that ends up on

sidewalks or driveways from city plows is the property owner's responsibility to remove. Please do not move snow from your driveway into the street. City snowplows will not clear private driveways except under emergency conditions and with the approval of their supervisor.

Please clean around fire hydrants in your yard so the Fire Department has easy access in case of a fire in your neighborhood. Please try and keep your driveway and approach to your house clear in case emergency personnel need to respond to your home. Postal workers and others delivering packages to your home will also appreciate a safe route to your front door.



BECOME AN ALTOONA BOARD MEMBER

Have you ever wanted to be a part of the process? The City of Altoona has openings on its Parks and Library Boards as well as the Arts and Culture Commission. To learn more, check under the "Government" section at Altoona-iowa.com!

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ALTOONA
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4 BED 4 BATH

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ALTOONA
3217 LAKEVIEW DR SE

3 Bed
2.25 Bath

\$450,000

ALTOONA
1110 SANDALWOOD CT SW

5 Bed
4 Bath

\$425,000

ALTOONA
713 17th Ave SW

3 Bed
3 Bath

\$435,000

ALTOONA
1735 34th Ave SW #2

2 Bed
2 Bath

\$155,000

ALTOONA
4161 NE 88th ST

3 Bed
4 Bath

\$599,500

ALTOONA
1005 6th ST NW

3 Bed
2 Bath

\$259,000

BONDURANT
420 EVA POINT DR SW

4 Bed
2.5 Bath

\$415,000

PLEASANT HILL
680 HICKORY BLVD

3 Bed
2 Bath

\$239,500

PLEASANT HILL
6019 ROBIN RD

3 Bed
1.75 Bath

\$375,000

PLEASANT HILL
1745 WATERS EDGE DR

2 Bed
2 Bath

\$244,900

PLEASANT HILL
5917 6th AVE
68 ACRES
RANCH HOME
POND

\$1.775M

ALTOONA
1206 3rd Ave SE

3 Bed
1 Bath

\$235,000

PLEASANT HILL
625 NE 72nd ST

5 Bed
5 Bath

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2 Bath

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