

WINTERSET

DECEMBER 2025

Living

MAGAZINE

Handmade FOR THE holidays

Residents share the joy
of gifts from the heart.

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EDUCATION

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RECIPE

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WELCOME

MADE by hand

There was a time in my life when I may have viewed a homemade Christmas gift as a cheap way out for the giver. If I am being honest, I didn't truly appreciate the time and work that a person would put into creating such a gift. Today, I view it differently.

Now, don't get me wrong. I don't need another horse painting from Aunt Velma or a CD of self-recorded polka music from my neighbor Bill. In fact, I have a few to offer, if you are interested.

When my brother Steve and I were young, Mom made us each a homemade quilt, created with fabric from various pieces of clothing we no longer used. They were warm and fuzzy scrap-books of sorts. We used them so much, we wore them out. Years later, to our surprise, Mom repaired and recrafted them. Decades later, mine is showing its age again, but it still warms me up on those cold winter evenings. In fact, I laugh because I sometimes find a needle tucked away in it. I guess that is Mom's way of still poking me from time to time. That quilt brings more smiles than any store-bought present ever could.

I also smile each year when we put the ornaments on our Christmas tree, as we recount the times when we bought or received each one. I have known our editor, Tammy Pearson, for many years, and she has been kind enough to give us handmade ornaments many times. Most are ones she created with her kids, and that makes them even more special. Some years, she didn't give any. I am not sure what that means.

Of course, some of the best homemade gifts are the edible ones. You simply can't go wrong with candies and cookies. My favorite is the chocolate fudge, and I can go through a tray of it faster than I want to admit. One year, my 16-year-old daughter, Sara, thought it would be nice to take a plate of cookies and candies out to some of the folks who were working on Christmas day. So, she loaded up several boxes and drove around to stores, dropping off the goodies and wishing them a merry Christmas. She said she got some strange looks, which was unfortunate. Even so, I bet — after a bit of testing — they eventually ate them. Especially the fudge.

In this issue of your Living magazine, we share the stories of homemade gifts and the smiles they put on the givers and the receivers. Merry Christmas to you all, and thanks for reading. ■



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Isaiah Esser with the crocheted bear his mother made for him and the handmade quilt from his grandmother.

Handmade FOR THE *holidays*

Residents share
the joy of gifts
from the heart.

By Rachel Harrington

The quilt from a beloved aunt. Knitted sweaters from Grandma. A child's table and chairs crafted in a relative's workshop. A personalized ornament. Handmade gifts are unique, but, more than that, they are gifts of time spent in the crafting, imagination in their design and love in their giving.



John Gambrall makes a host of gifts ranging from signs to toys, trinkets to storage chests. He has also made cutting boards, charcuterie boards, games and toys.

Skillfully crafted

For 35 years, John Gambrall worked in the sign-making business. Roughly 70% of his career has been as a self-employed craftsman. In the winter, he and his family have made a tradition of giving gifts made with his carpentry, engraving and woodworking skills.

"In a blue-collar worker family, Christmas meant a lot to us," Gambrall shares. "It was not so much about spending money but giving of yourself and your essence."

Gambrall creates all kinds of items ranging from signs to toys, trinkets to storage chests. He has also made cutting boards, charcuterie boards and games.

"I used to do craft shows, and we'd make earrings as a part of it," he recalls. "I had a stand to display them on. Since we don't do the shows anymore, my wife decided to use the stand for herself. My daughter-in-law saw it and asked for one but designed with a bit more of her 'flavor,' so I did."

For a long while, Gambrall's favorite things to make as gifts were toys for his grandchildren. He would make wooden toys and games like cribbage, marble games and backgammon. Now he gives gifts that fit his family's lifestyles.

"Our own children and their spouses love necessity things as well as fun things," he says. "I made my son-in-law a bow rack and plaques for hanging antlers. I've also made an amp stand for one of my sons who loves music, and I've made dart board cabinets."

The most involved and complicated handmade gifts he has made for his children were dining room tables for each one of wood and steel in their own styles. They were rustic style, made from a tree off his and his wife's property, and one of them was live-edge.

"From start to finish, the tables probably took about 20 to 30 hours to complete," he shares.

The most recent gift Gambrall has crafted was a small drinking glass, laser engraved for his friend. He says that Christmas ornaments are probably the most numerous items he makes.

"I have a list like Santa," he says, "and I probably make about 25 to 30 ornaments each year."

There is even a running joke he and his son-in-law have had with each other about who can give the ugliest ornament each year, so Gambrall puts a lot of humorous thought into his.

"I love having fun with gifts like that," he says.

Gambrall passed down skills for making crafty things to his children from the time they were young.

"Both my daughters would work alongside me and craft things," Gambrall states. "One daughter designed a kitchen drawer organizer for herself, and the other daughter and I started a craft show business together."

Gambrall continues looking for new ideas.

"Each thing I make, I tweak a little bit so that it doesn't look like something from Amazon," he says. "I think handmade things are better quality than what you can find in stores or online. I do it for the pleasure and joy of making things."

Pieces of the heart

Crafting for others is often a skill and love learned from watching others. Alyson Allsup has three aunts who would often make and gift blankets of various kinds to family members. One would make tie blankets the family used in their tractors and combines, another would make quilts for graduations and newborn babies, and another aunt made a bed quilt for the family.

"Making blankets is kind of in the family," Allsup shares.

Though Allsup has made small baby blankets for others, she had not yet gotten around to making some for her siblings. When her husband's grandpa died, his grandma gifted him and his cousins his grandpa's shirts. Because his grandpa was a bit smaller, Allsup wanted to find a way to use the shirts, so she began to quilt them together.

"I'm a newbie to quilting, but I didn't want to measure out squares from the shirts because I wanted to use as much of them as possible," she explains.

The quilt progress was interrupted by daily life and growing family, so it was laid aside for a



Alyson Allsup, center, says making blankets is a family tradition, and she has made blankets with personal touches for all her siblings.

few years.

Last year, Allsup was expecting her fourth son when she encountered complications and needed to deliver him at 34 weeks and have a hysterectomy.

"I had a great team behind me, but there was a chance I wouldn't make it off the table," she remembers. "After that scare, I decided I had put off making things for my family long enough. So, I decided to finish my husband's quilt and make blankets for my four sisters and

one brother."

Allsup is new to quilting and admits that none of the blankets are perfect, though she put her heart into making them to the best of her ability.

"I looked up the easiest way to do it," she says. "I ordered pre-cut 10-inch squares. I went through patterns and picked out their favorite colors. On my brother's quilt, I made sure there was one square that had tractors on it. My older sister likes greens and blues, so I sorted out

those two colors for her. My sister just younger than me likes dark colors, so I picked out dark blues, reds and black for her."

She arranged the quilt blocks in five clusters of six for each quilt, making it the size of a throw blanket. For her siblings' blankets and her husband's, she ordered six fleece throw blankets and used them for the backing of each quilt.

"I am new, but I was impressed with myself on how they turned out," she shares.

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Allsup says that her siblings' blankets were the first time she truly had to quilt since it was the first time she had to make sure things lined up. It took her a week for the first one, then, after a few life interruptions, she finished the other four in a two-week stretch before Christmas.

"It made me respect my aunts for all the ones they'd made because it takes a lot of time and patience," she says.

Allsup recently felt honored when her youngest sister told her she had found the perfect place in her room for her quilt.

"It's nice to know they'll always have something from me," she shares.

One stitch at a time

Joanna Esser began crocheting animals just a few years ago. She had a teacher friend who was putting together an "Under the Sea" classroom theme, and she was inspired to try to crochet an octopus.

"I had tried several crochet projects before that," Esser shares. "My mom was part of a church ministry that makes about 20 or so rectangles into quilts and blankets. Prior to 2022, I had made a few rectangles for her. So, when I tried the octopus, I discovered that I really loved crocheting small animals. It wasn't a long project, but one that was intricate and adorable, and I could see the results really quickly."

Arts and crafts skills seem to be a family trait, since Esser's mother-in-law's mother was a quilter and her mom's dad was a painter.

Before her son, Isaiah, was born, Esser crocheted a little sleeping bear lying down for him.

"I was given a kit for my birthday that matched his room," she says. "It took a while to finish because life got busy."

The room theme that the bear matched was made possible by Esser's mother-in-law. She chose fabric for a quilt she wanted to make for her grandson, then she worked with Esser to decorate his room. The room décor features a gray tree with a bear sleeping on it.

"It is a type of woodland theme with grays, greens and bears," Esser states. "The quilt she made is a baby quilt size... It was a cozy, soft blankie on the back. I love the pattern because there are bears all over it. I wouldn't normally think of the blue in a woodland theme."

Her mother-in-law made the quilt and sent it to a fellow quilter who sewed on a leaf-patterned binding.



Joanna and Gabriel Esser and his mom, Dawn Esser, with the quilt Dawn made for Joanna and Gabriel's baby shower. Below is a knitted blanket with dinosaurs made by Joanna's mother for the baby.

Esser also received a knitted blanket from her mother for her son.

"She actually made two knitted blankets," Esser shares. "The first one was done before we knew I was having a boy, and it was more girly. My mom said that, if it wasn't a girl, that one would be for me. When we found out I was having a boy, my sister helped her decide that she needed to knit a blanket with a dinosaur on it. My mom made a blanket whose texture changes and has the shape of a dinosaur on it."

Esser says receiving any handmade gift is special, and it is even more so when it comes from someone you love.

"I love my mom, and her gift is special to me because she made it. I have such a sweet relationship with my mom, and it's neat how she thinks about me and my baby," Esser says.



"My son's room is special because my mother-in-law decorated it to go with a quilt she made just for him. They were so excited about having a grandson." ■



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EDUCATION

By Lindsey Giardino

GUIDING the next generation

Williamson's impact at Head Start

Rose Williamson joined the Winterset Head Start program, officially known as Matura Head Start, in September 2024. Since then, the position has proven to be the perfect fit for her.

Matura Head Start is a comprehensive preschool program serving children ages 3-5. Head Start, a federally funded initiative, provides free learning and development services to children from low-income families, from birth to age 5. The program offers developmentally appropriate activities that help children grow socially, emotionally, mentally and physically, with the overarching goal of increasing school readiness.

The "Matura" name comes from the region's primary agency dedicated to eliminating the causes and conditions of poverty — a mission that resonates deeply with Williamson, who currently serves as the lead teacher in Winterset.

"As soon as I read 'Educating Children, Empowering Families,' I knew I found my home," she says. "I made sure they knew I was serious about joining this team. I have a superpower with families some would say, and I love to find every available avenue to help these families succeed."

Williamson's dedication goes beyond the classroom. She tirelessly seeks donations to meet the needs of the program's families.

"No shame in my game," she says. "I've learned this town is really willing to support those in need."

Her efforts reflect her commitment to connecting the community with the children and families who benefit from Head Start's services.

What Williamson enjoys most is the daily opportunity to carefully craft her lessons, gently guiding children as they build the foundation for their years of schooling ahead. But the most rewarding moments, she says, come from seeing those lessons take root.

"The tears that form in my eyes when our kiddos implement the things I've been working hard to teach them," she says. "The overabundance of serotonin, pride and joy."

Williamson also emphasizes the program's focus on parental involvement, recognizing that parents are their children's first and most important teachers.

"We welcome parent involvement in our program activities," she says, noting that fostering these connections is a key part of her work.

She also gives credit to her coworkers, giving a special shout-out to Lindsay Adamson.

"I can't thank her enough for being my right-hand lady," Williamson says. "She is extremely knowledgeable, kind-hearted and goes above and beyond in our program daily. Also, a thank you to Tisha for providing the children two balanced meals made with love daily."

For Williamson, Matura Head Start is more than a job. Her passion for the program and the community shines through in every interaction, demonstrating the true impact of early childhood education.

For more information about Matura Head Start, contact the administration office at 641-782-8431. ■



Rose Williamson is the lead teacher at Winterset Matura Head Start, a comprehensive preschool program serving children ages 3-5.

HAPPY holidays

As the year comes to a close, it offers an important moment to recognize the many individuals who contribute to successful real estate transactions. Clients remain at the center of this work, and the relationships formed throughout the buying and selling process often continue long after a home has closed. It is always rewarding to see past clients in the community, hear updates about their lives, and learn about the improvements they've made to their homes.



Behind every completed transaction is a network of professionals whose expertise makes each step possible. Loan originators, abstractors, attorneys, pest inspectors, home inspectors and plumbing and HVAC contractors all play essential roles. Their dedication and collaboration help ensure that clients receive a smooth and professional experience from start to finish.

This year also welcomed two new Realtors to the team, bringing fresh perspectives and adding a dynamic new energy. Their insights will be featured in this column in the coming year.

Looking ahead to 2026, Madison County is poised for continued growth and prosperity. The real estate community remains committed to serving both long-standing residents and those new to the area. Readers can look forward to more real estate tips, insights and explanations of key terminology in the year ahead. ■

Information provided by Jennifer Stover, 515-480-3389, Madison County Realty,
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AUTOMOTIVE

By Dawn Lauer

TOP 5 reasons your check engine light is on

From minor to serious issues, here are a few reasons your check engine light might be on.

1. **Loose gas cap.** Check to make sure it is properly secured and that there are no cracks in it.
2. **Failing oxygen sensor.** If you're experiencing a decline in fuel economy and your check engine light appears, have your oxygen sensor checked.
3. **Failing catalytic converter.** When your catalytic converter is failing, it could be caused by issues related to other systems that work interdependently with it that have not been addressed.
4. **Failing mass air flow sensor.** Always have your mass air flow sensor checked when the check engine light comes on. Since many parts of the engine work together, when one part fails, others tend to follow suit.
5. **Damaged spark plugs or wires.**
- 



It's important to keep in mind that these are some of the most common reasons for the check engine light to come on; however, there can be other issues that cause the check engine light to illuminate. Also, a flashing check engine light indicates a major internal failure and requires immediate attention. Regardless, you should not ignore the check engine light. Always check it as soon as possible to ensure the integrity of your vehicle. ■

Information provided by Dawn Lauer, marketing specialist, Quality Car Care, 1012 N. 10th St., Winterset, 515-462-1035. Source: www.topdriver.com/education-blog/top-5-reasons-your-check-engine-light-is-on/



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BEAUTY

By Annie Wiseman

HAIR and the holidays

The holiday season is one of the busiest — and most photographed — times of the year, which means your hair deserves a little extra attention. Between family gatherings, office parties, school events and festive outings, your schedule fills up quickly, and so does your stylist's. That's why it is important to plan ahead and schedule your hair appointments early. Stylists often book up weeks in advance during holiday seasons, so securing your spot ensures you will look polished and confident for every event on your calendar.



Beyond logistics, the holidays are a time when people naturally want to look and feel their best. With the surge of family photos — whether it's the official holiday portrait, candid moments around the tree or group photos at gatherings — your hair will be front and center. Fresh color, a clean trim or a well-executed styling session can make a meaningful difference in how you feel on camera. Investing in a little prep can help you avoid last-minute stress and ensure your hair complements the festive outfits and cozy winter accessories you'll be wearing.

Holiday hair care isn't just about vanity; it's also an act of self-care during a hectic season. Taking time for yourself in the salon chair can be grounding, giving you a moment to relax before the whirlwind of celebrations. Prioritizing your hair needs will help you step into every holiday moment looking photo-ready, polished and beautifully confident. ■

Information provided by Annie Wiseman, owner of Salon 107 and a licensed cosmetologist with 25 years of experience. 107 John Wayne Drive, Winterset, 515-462-4247, salon107style@gmail.com.

HEALTH

By Dr. Amanda Queck

SIMPLE eating hacks to set you up for success

Part 2: 'Tis the season for family, friends and food. Be encouraged that there are a few hacks you can consider as you prepare for the festivities to help you avoid the cravings and the after effects of the eating habits this season brings. (See hack 1-2 in previous months).



Hack 3: Drink 1 tablespoon of apple cider vinegar with your meals — ideally before. Vinegar is known to slow down breakdown of starch into glucose and cue our muscles to absorb the glucose instead going into our bloodstream. This leaves you less likely to experience that sugar high after your meal.

Hack 4: Movement is the best "medicine." As a chiropractor, this saying matches my philosophy to a tee. There are many benefits of movement (beyond a healthy moving spine). If you move after a meal, it pushes sugar into your muscles instead of your bloodstream (ultimately avoiding that post-meal crash). You don't have to hit the gym or do a HIIT workout. A simple 10-minute walk or even moving around to do the dishes and clean up is all it takes to avoid a sugar spike after your meal.

Hack 5: Stop counting calories. Instead, focus on the nutritional content of what you are eating. Picture half of your plate being veggies, a quarter protein and a quarter carbs and fat from the sauces and/or dressings you use to embellish your carbs. ■

Information provided by Dr. Amanda Queck, D.C. Flourish Chiropractic & Wellness, 108 W. Court Ave., Winterset, 515-384-0360, www.flourishchiro.life. Source: Glucose Revolution by Jessie Inchauspé

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TYPE 2 diabetes and oral health

More than 90% of the 38 million people in the United States with diabetes have what is known as type 2 diabetes. People with type 2 diabetes develop resistance to the hormone insulin, which helps manage blood sugar levels. Although it used to be considered a disease of adults 45 years and older, more children, teens and younger adults are developing type 2 diabetes.

Risk factors for type 2 diabetes include being overweight, having a family history of the disease or being physically inactive. Although type 2 diabetes cannot be cured, it can be controlled with lifestyle changes, such as eating a healthy diet, getting regular physical activity or taking medications.

If you have type 2 diabetes, you may notice that your gums are swollen or may even bleed, especially when brushing or cleaning between your teeth. Left untreated, gum disease can become severe and cause tooth loss. To help prevent gum disease, you should have professional cleanings in the dental office regularly. Advanced gum disease, also called periodontal disease, may require additional, more intensive treatments.



Type 2 diabetes can also increase your risk of developing cavities. Good oral hygiene can help keep your teeth and gums healthy. Brush your teeth twice per day for two minutes each time using a fluoride toothpaste. Clean between your teeth once per day using floss. Eat a healthy diet low in sugar. Your dentist may also suggest additional fluoride treatments to reduce your risk of developing cavities.

With type 2 diabetes, you may notice that your mouth is dry. Dry mouth can be uncomfortable and may also increase your risk of developing oral health problems like cavities, bad breath, sore tongue, trouble chewing, swallowing or speaking. Here are some things you can try to help relieve dry mouth. Sipping water or sugarless drinks that do not contain caffeine, sucking (not chewing) on ice chips, chewing sugar-free gum or sucking on sugar-free candy to stimulate saliva flow.

If you have type 2 diabetes, be sure to tell your dentist about any oral health issues you have so they can help you manage them. ■

Information provided by Dr. Jason Phelps, Winterset Dental, 225 Wambold Drive, Winterset, 515-462-5755, Instagram: dr._jason_phelps. Source: Journal of the American Dental Association.

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INSURANCE

By Eric Johnson

THE VALUE of having a local insurance agent



We've all seen the persuasive insurance ads promising the perfect low-cost, hassle-free policy in 7.5 to 15 minutes. And while quick online options may have their place, it is worth considering what you might sacrifice for that convenience. Before locking yourself into a policy you found online or over the phone, it is important to understand the real advantages of working with a trusted local agent.

The most critical moment in insurance is not when you buy your policy — it is when you need to use it.

Accidents and emergencies never happen at a convenient time, and they often come with stress and uncertainty. In those moments, having an agent you know and trust can make all the difference. Instead of searching for a customer service number, repeating your story to multiple representatives or navigating an automated phone tree, you can call someone right here in the community — someone who recognizes your name, understands your situation, and will advocate for you during the claims process. That personal connection provides peace of mind that no online platform can match.

An agent's value also shows up at the time you purchase your policy. The outcome of any future claim is determined by the coverage you choose today. Many people buying insurance on their own unknowingly select limits that are too low or miss important coverage altogether. It is not uncommon for someone to choose the cheapest option, only to learn later that state-minimum liability limits won't fully protect their assets or that their health plan doesn't include local providers. A knowledgeable agent helps you avoid these pitfalls by explaining options, tailoring coverage to your needs and ensuring you're not surprised when a claim occurs. And if you have already purchased a policy online, most agents are happy to review it at no cost.

Price is another area where an agent can save you money long-term.

Bundling policies — such as home and auto — often provides meaningful discounts that outweigh any small savings from purchasing a single policy directly. You might save \$50 by handling your auto insurance online, but you could easily pay \$50 more on your homeowner's premium by not keeping your policies together. The "savings" advertised in quick quotes rarely tell the whole story.

Ads for direct-to-consumer insurance are entertaining, memorable and, often, quite funny. But insurance is ultimately about protecting our families, our assets and our financial future. Those decisions deserve more than a few minutes and a catchy slogan. Partnering with a local agent ensures you have the right coverage, the right support, and someone in your corner when it matters most. ■

Information provided by Eric Johnson, IFG Insurance, 224 E. Highway 92, Suite B, Winterset, 515-462-4553.



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FROM COAST to countryside

McTaggarts find home in the heartland.

When Scott McTaggart and his family traded the sunny skies of San Diego, California, for the rolling hills of Winterset, they weren't sure what to expect. But a little more than a year and a half later, they can confidently say the move was worth it. Surrounded by open air, farmland and all four seasons, the McTaggarts have found a life — and a community — that feels like home.

McTaggart first became familiar with the area decades ago, in 2004, when he was involved in building Costco in West Des Moines. It was then that he and his wife initially decided to move to Iowa. They spent a year in Winterset at that time but had to return to California to care for McTaggart's mother.

Twenty years later, they made the move back. After retiring from Costco following a 35-year career — and with his wife retiring from the school district in Escondido, California — the timing felt right.

Their search began online. They first saw their home on Zillow, and after getting in touch with their friends' real estate agent in town, they decided to make an offer.

"We bought it sight unseen," McTaggart shares. "Our Realtor walked through, took pictures and everything, and, with the 12.72 acres and the pond, we decided to pull the plug and moved to Winterset."

McTaggart's favorite aspect of the property is the space it provides. Surrounded by farmland and nature, it's everything he could have hoped for. The open air and wide horizons offer a sense of freedom he didn't realize he had been missing. The acreage also gives the family room to pursue hobbies, spend time outdoors and enjoy quiet moments away from the bustle of city life.



Scott McTaggart and his family traded the sunny skies of San Diego, California, for the rolling hills of Winterset.

"The Winterset community is awesome," McTaggart adds. "All the people we've met have been fantastic."

He also likes the charming town square with the courthouse at the center, which makes it feel like a genuine small town.

But, ultimately, it's the simplicity of life and the changing of the seasons that makes McTaggart feel he and his family have found a forever home. ■

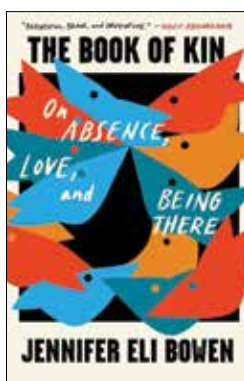
'The Book of Kin: On Absence, Love, and Being There'

This is such a book of the moment, for me. It is healing and kind and full of the parts of humanity we rarely see these days, the power of what can be accomplished together. It is a radiant blend of memoir, essay and cultural insight that explores how love and presence shape our humanity and, ultimately, heals us in myriad ways.

The Minnesota Prison Writing Workshop was founded by the author and remains the country's largest and most enduring prison-based literary organization. Working with the incarcerated people has had a profound effect on her view of the world, and that shows in her earnest, beautiful writing about grief, family, loneliness and what it means to care. These might be some of the most human essays I've ever read — unflinching but overflowing with generosity.

Lyrical and life-affirming, this is a gorgeous book for anyone feeling the strain of these divided days. It would make a brilliant gift for those who might feel lost or alone. When everything feels so heavy, it is books like this that remind us how to lighten the load — together. ■

— Review by Julie Goodrich



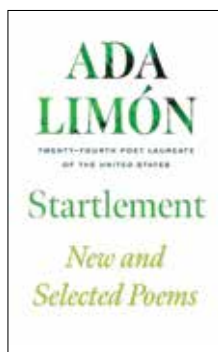
By Jennifer Eli Bowen
10/21/25
264 pages
\$20
Milkweed Editions

'Startlement: New and Selected Poems'

There is a lot of talk about how poetry enhances storytelling. Lyrical, rhythmic words in a novel add punch and feeling to a narrative. I'm guilty of it myself. I reach for books with pretty words and sharp wit.

My newest revelation is that the converse can be true, too. In this glorious, tremendous collection celebrating one of the best poets in existence, we see the power story and narrative can have in the tiny space of a poem. This collection feels almost voyeuristic, like the best memoir filled with pinpoint experiences and voluminous emotion and the universal lessons that can only come from a single person's memories.

Poetry isn't for everyone, but for those who can see the magic in it, Ada Limon needs no introduction. Her unique take on the mysteries of life is legendary, and this bountiful book contains both new and beloved poems organized into a path that reads almost like a fairy tale. It would make the loveliest gift for any poetry-fiend or even the poetry-curious. ■ — Review by Julie Goodrich



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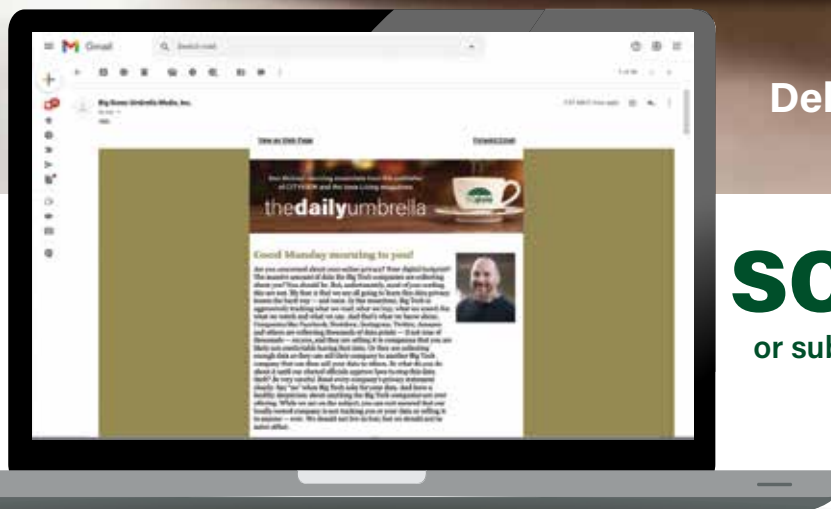
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TYPES of stock market analysis

There is no shortage of analysis for anyone interested in investing. A search for the term “stock market analysis” will bring up millions of results on your favorite search engine.

The majority of stock market analysis can be lumped into three broad groups: fundamental, technical and sentimental. Here’s a close look at each.



Fundamental analysis: The goal of fundamental analysis is to determine whether a company’s future value is accurately reflected in its current stock price. Fundamental analysis attempts to estimate the value of a particular stock based on a variety of factors, such as the current finances of the company and the prevailing economic environment. Fundamental analysis also may include speaking with a company’s management team and assessing how the company’s products are received in the marketplace. When a fundamental review is complete, the analyst may decide the stock is an attractive opportunity because the market has underestimated its future prospects. The analyst also may determine the stock to be a “hold” or a “sell” if the value is fully reflected in the price.

Technical analysis: Technical analysts evaluate recent trading movements and trends to attempt to determine what’s next for a company’s stock price. Generally, technical analysts pay less attention to the fundamentals underlying the stock price. Technical analysts rely on stock charts to make their assessment of a company’s stock price. For example, technicians may look for a support level and resistance level when assessing a stock’s next move. A support level is a price level at which the stock might find support and below which it may not fall. In contrast, a resistance level is a price at which the stock might find pressure and above which it may not rise.

Sentimental analysis: Sentimental analysis attempts to measure the market in terms of the attitudes of investors. Sentimental analysis starts from the assumption that the majority of investors are wrong. In other words, that the stock market has the potential to disappoint when “masses of investors” believe prices are headed in a particular direction. Sentiment analysts are often referred to as contrarians who look to invest against the majority view of the market. For example, if the majority of professional market watchers expect a stock price to trend higher, sentiment analysts may look for prices to disappoint the majority and trend lower.

Which approach is best? There is no clear answer to that question. But it’s important to remember three things: Past performance does not guarantee future results, actual results will vary, and the best approach is to create a portfolio based on your time horizon, risk tolerance, and goals.

Keep in mind that the return and principal value of stock prices will fluctuate as market conditions change. And shares, when sold, may be worth more or less than their original cost. ■

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Be sure to check for cancellations

Upcoming in Winterset Living magazine:

Super Bowl parties: Do you have a tradition of holding a Super Bowl party? Share your party plans, recipes and other ideas. Email tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com to share your story!

"I do!" Stories about marriage proposals: Share the story of how your courtship culminated in a proposal to remember. Email tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com to share your story!



Winter Solstice Market

Friday Dec. 12, 6-9 p.m.;
Saturday, Dec. 13, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Livery Building, 116 S. First Ave.,
Winterset and Warehouse on 2nd,
213 N. Second Ave.

Enjoy a two-day indoor holiday market featuring 40 curated arts, crafts and food vendors in two locations around the Winterset Courthouse Square. Savor the sights, sounds and scents of the holiday season while shopping for handcrafted items for everyone on your list. Named Best Holiday Market in Iowa by "Food & Wine," and one of the Best Christmas Markets and Craft Fairs in the Midwest by Midwest Living. No admission fee.

Tinseltown in the Park

Through 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.

Wednesday Winterset Wellness Support

Second and fourth Wednesdays,
5:30 p.m.
Winterset Public Library,
23 N. Second St.

A healthy lifestyle is easier to achieve when you have support. This group meets every two weeks, which gives each person enough time to work on their goals in between meetings and discover what obstacles or achievements they encounter. Participants can share what has worked for them and find ways to get active and eat healthy together.

Iowa Watercolor Society Traveling Show

Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays
during December and January,
11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Winterset Art Center, 224 S. John
Wayne Drive, Winterset

Winterset Art Center is pleased to present the Iowa Watercolor Society Traveling Show, weekends in December and January.

Stage and theater

Ankeny Community Theater

1932 S.W. Third St., Ankeny,
www.ankenycommunitytheatre.com

- Dec. 5-14: "Miracle on 34th Street, the play"

Des Moines Performing Arts

Des Moines Civic Center, Cowles Commons,
Stoner Theater, Temple Theatre, 221 Walnut St.,
Des Moines, www.dmpa.org

- Dec. 2-7: "The Notebook"
- Dec. 16-21: "Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas! The Musical"

Des Moines Community Playhouse

831 42nd St., Des Moines, www.dmpplayhouse.com
• Dec. 5-27: "Frozen"

Iowa Stage Theatre Company

Stoner Theatre, 221 Walnut St., Des Moines,
www.iowastage.org

- Dec. 5-21: "A Christmas Carol"

Tallgrass Theatre Company

2019 Grand Ave., Suite 100, West Des Moines,
www.tallgrasstheatre.org

- Dec. 19-21: "The A Sisters & Friends at The Velvet Lounge"



Ongoing Winterset Public Library programs

123 N. Second St.

www.wintersetlibrary.org

- **Friday Flicks**, Jan. 16, March 27, May 29, 1:30 p.m., free popcorn, family-friendly movie.
- **Mah Jongg**, every Saturday, 9:30 a.m. Learn to play this ancient, intriguing, and challenging tile game. All necessary items will be provided free; all you need is a desire to learn. Registration required.
- **Story Time**, Wednesdays 10-10:30 a.m. During this 30-minute program, children will discover books, songs, rhymes and movement activities while building language and literacy skills. Ages 3 and older.
- **Let's Play Cribbage**, Wednesdays, 2-4 p.m.
- **Adult Game Day**, Tuesdays at 1:30 p.m. Many games to choose from or bring your own. Snacks are welcome. Free and no registration required.
- **Messy Munchkins**, Thursdays, 10:15 a.m. to noon. Children 0-5 with an adult. No registration required.
- **Lego Club**, ages 8-12, third Thursday of the month, 3:30-4:30 p.m.. Dates are Dec. 18, Jan. 15, Feb. 19, March 19, April 16 and May 21. Legos provided. Do not bring your own. No registration required.
- **Get Fit with Geri-Fit**, Tuesdays and Fridays, no registration required. A strength-training class for older adults.
- **Acoustic Jam**, first Friday of the month, 1-4 p.m.
- **Game On!** Mondays, 3-5 p.m., ages 10 and older. No registration required. Behavior policies must be followed.
- **Chess Club**, Tuesdays, 5-7 p.m. All ages welcome. No experience necessary. Boards and sets available.
- **Morning Tai Chi**, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, 9 a.m. Follow Dr. Paul Lam's DVDs with stretching followed by the 12 forms and cool down exercises. Sessions are 30-45 minutes.

EVENTS IN THE AREA

Be sure to check for cancellations

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

Jingle in the Junction

Thursdays, Dec. 4, 11 and 18, 5-8 p.m.

5th Street Main Street District, West Des Moines

Shop for one-of-a-kind gifts at locally owned small businesses. Dine and drink at local restaurants and bars. Enjoy free horse-drawn trolley rides, visit with Santa and Mrs. Claus in Old City Hall, and watch live ice carving demonstrations. Food and treat vendors will be available. Free admission and family-friendly programming on all dates. Free parking is available in the 886 spaces located off Fourth and Sixth streets. Weekly rotating features include live reindeer and specialty performers. See the full event schedule at <https://valleyjunction.com/upcoming-events/>.

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.

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 of polka music, traditional dance and choirs 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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WINTERSET Lions fulfill myriad of needs

Club offers opportunities to help others and the community.

Many people know the Lions Clubs collect eyeglasses to help those in need. But Lions Clubs do much more in the area of vision, and much more in many other areas as well.

Two members of the Winterset Lions gave a glimpse into what their club does. President Ben Grabill and Treasurer Greta Pretzer tell the history of the club.

"We do take donations of both eyeglasses and hearing aids, and we also assist those in need of getting them, but there's much more. The Winterset Lions Club has been around since 1939. We do a lot of service areas related to sight, diabetes, childhood cancer and others," Grabill says. "Some of our bigger things that we've been donating to over the past few years are leader dogs for the blind and Iowa KidSight screening for vision issues. We donate to CRISP and Matura here in town pretty regularly, and we donate to our booster clubs for the schools."

Pretzer tells of a project she found particularly notable.

"I think one of the most important things that we've done just recently is we purchased AEDs (Artificial External Defibrillators) for our community. We have two of them in the town square and two over at the high school," Pretzer says.

Another project the Winterset Lions have undertaken helps address hunger.



Scot Clark of Farm Bureau presents the Citizen of the Month certificate to members of the Winterset Lions Club. From left are: Ben Grabill, Greta Pretzer, Buddy Pretzer, Denny Jurgens, Scot Clark and Tad Tadlock.

"We also do a lot of community food giveaway programs. We have a soup supper where we make soups for the community. We have a beef burger event, and we also pack up food boxes during Thanksgiving and Christmas for families in need," Pretzer says. "We try to do a lot of different types of programs within the community."

Grabill shares some numbers related to the club and its programs.

"Currently, we have 29 members, and we're always looking to add members," Grabill says. "From the beginning of our fiscal year in July, we've raised about \$6,700, and we've donated about \$7,200 back into the community already."

Other local Lions programs that are not well known include a camp for foreign students.

"We have a camp for international youth. These kids come and do all sorts of activities with their host families and the other exchange students," Pretzer says. "It's really fun to see these kids make connections."

Pretzer said one current need in that program is more families willing to host a student for a couple of weeks.

Not all of the Lions programs benefit groups, however. Grabill tells of an individual the club was able to help.

"We also did a fundraiser and donated to a young man who had eye cancer and had to go through multiple surgeries," he says. "If I had to pick a feel-good story, that was one for me."

The club aims to welcome anyone who wants to learn more about the club, as well as anyone who simply wants to volunteer but isn't yet ready to join.

"We have meetings the first and third Mondays of the month at the Sports Page at 6:30 p.m., so if someone wants to come see what we're all about, they're welcome," Pretzer says. "We also started bingo on two Sundays a month. It's a way we get to know people in the community."

Bingo is held on the first and third Sundays at 2 p.m. at Sports Page.

Grabill shares how interested persons can contact the club.

"Our Facebook page (Winterset Lions) is probably the easiest way to find us. We post everything we're doing on our Facebook page," he says.

According to Pretzer, there is great joy in helping.

"You don't understand what it feels like to volunteer for something until you actually do it. It really is very fulfilling. It's fun, and you meet people. It really does make you feel good inside," Pretzer says. ■

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

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FRIEND'S apples create a perfect fall treat

When Cheryl Castile shared a bag of freshly picked apples with me, I knew exactly what to do — turn them into something warm, comforting and perfect for sharing. I love to bake, and these apple cinnamon muffins are the result: soft, fragrant and filled with cozy autumn flavor in every bite. There is something special about baking with fruit that comes straight from someone's tree.

As they bake, the kitchen fills with the irresistible scent of cinnamon and caramelizing apples, promising a treat that is both nostalgic and homemade. These muffins strike the right balance — tender on the inside with just a hint of golden crispness on top. They are wonderful for breakfast, a mid-morning snack or an afternoon pick-me-up with coffee or tea.

Simple to make and even better to share, these muffins are a sweet way to say thank you or to celebrate the small gestures of kindness that brighten an ordinary day. So, if you have a handful of apples and a little time, this recipe transforms them into something truly special — a batch of warm, cinnamon-kissed gratitude. ■



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

Apple cinnamon muffins

Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 1/2 cup brown sugar, packed
- 1 large apple, Granny Smith works well
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup butter
- 2 eggs
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 1 1/2 cups flour
- 1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 pinch salt
- 1/2 cup milk (can use soy, almond or other varieties)



Directions

- Combine cinnamon and brown sugar and set aside.
- Peel apple, dice into small pieces and set aside.
- Mix flour, baking powder and salt and set aside.
- Cream together sugar and butter using a mixer.
- Add eggs and vanilla and mix well.
- Stir in flour mixture.
- Slowly stir in milk until combined.
- Grease a 12-muffin pan. Divide dough, diced apples and cinnamon/brown sugar mixture in half.
- Place one half of the dough among the 12 muffin cups. F
- Follow with one half of the apples and then the cinnamon/brown sugar mixture. Repeat.
- Bake at 350 degrees for 25-30 minutes.
- These can be frozen up to three months or enjoy warm.

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OUT & ABOUT



A ribbon cutting was held at the Cidery on Oct. 17.



Kristin and Maysen Wilkinson at the Madison County Health Care System's Denim & Diamonds Gala Nov. 15 at the Barnes Place.



Dan and Laura VandenBosch at the Madison County Health Care System's Denim & Diamonds Gala Nov. 15 at the Barnes Place.



Wayne and Deb Martens, Marcia Hendricks and Carmen Strain at the Madison County Health Care System's Denim & Diamonds Gala Nov. 15 at the Barnes Place.



Drs. Jonathan Suddarth and Julie Anderson-Suddarth at the Madison County Health Care System's Denim & Diamonds Gala Nov. 15 at the Barnes Place.



Brenda Roberts and Sarah Bradley at the Madison County Health Care System's Denim & Diamonds Gala Nov. 15 at the Barnes Place.



Lauri Duff, Jennifer Kraai, Janelle Goemaat, Steve Hood, Kristine McDonald and Matt Cole at the Covered Bridge Festival, held Oct. 11-12.



Kathy and Mike Morrison at the Covered Bridge Festival, held Oct. 11-12.



Linda Hennings and Nicky Huntoon at the Covered Bridge Festival, held Oct. 11-12.



Bailey Brown and Katie Farao at the Covered Bridge Festival, held Oct. 11-12.



Elise and Ella Cole at the Covered Bridge Festival, held Oct. 11-12.

TRICK or Treat

Trick or Treat was held around the Square on Oct. 31.



Owen Songer and Josie Sorensen



Libby Daniels and Maggie Hensley



Chicken from the chamber



Ford and Tanner, Mariah and Chance Benoit



Izzy, Jamie, Cat, Sam, Bill and Brooke Stephens



Adi Ramirez



Holden, Rebecca and Tanner Angie



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