

NORWALK

DECEMBER 2025

# Living

## Handmade FOR THE holidays

Residents share the joy  
of gifts from the heart.

**Meet Kelly Burkett**  
EDUCATION

**Apple cinnamon muffins**  
RECIPE

**DMOS breaks ground in Norwalk**  
COMMUNITY

PRSR STD  
ECRWSS EDDM  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
BIG GREEN  
UMBRELLA MEDIA  
RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMER  
BIG GREEN  
UMBRELLA MEDIA  
8101 Birchwood Ct. Ste. D  
Johnston, Iowa 50131





# Breakfast with Santa

**Saturday, Dec. 13  
9-11 a.m.**

**1225 Colonial Pkwy  
Norwalk, Iowa**

**Cocoa • Donuts • Prizes • and more!**

[www.citystatebank.com](http://www.citystatebank.com)



## Merry Christmas!

Proudly serving Iowa since 1895.



801 Main St. | 1225 Colonial Pkwy. | Norwalk | 515-981-4234

[www.citystatebank.com](http://www.citystatebank.com)



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 scrapbooks 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. ■

## SHANE GOODMAN

President and Publisher  
Big Green Umbrella Media  
shane@dmcityview.com  
515-953-4822, ext. 305



**Tammy Pearson**  
Editor  
515-953-4822 ext. 302  
tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com

**Martha Munro**  
Advertising Account Executive  
515-953-4822 ext. 314  
martha@iowalivingmagazines.com



IOWA  
*Living*  
MAGAZINES



Circulation and readership  
audited by Circulation  
Verification Council

## NORWALK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



*Making Disciples of  
Jesus Christ for the  
Transformation of the World.*

### Christmas Eve Services

Join us for a night filled with meaningful  
worship and candlelight as we celebrate the  
birth of our Savior.

Wednesday, December 24 at 3pm and 5pm



SCAN NOW!

*Please Join Us for Worship*

#### SUNDAY SERVICES:

8:30 am Church & Youth Faith Classes

9:45 am Adult Faith Classes

1100 Gordon Avenue, Norwalk • 515-981-4251



## CALL TODAY!

- **INDIVIDUAL**
- **SMALL BUSINESS**
- **CORPORATE TAX RETURNS**
- **PAYROLL SERVICES**
- **SMALL BUSINESS COUNSELING**

## ACCOUNTING & TAX SOLUTIONS

**Se Habla Español**

**Ricardo J. Alverio, CPA**  
1017 MAIN STREET, STE. 2  
**515.981.5222**

# 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.

Megan Hegwood made a special "Coraline" Teddy bear for her niece Roslyn.



## Handmade hugs

When a loved one passes away, sometimes the clothing and material things that belonged to him or her are a source of comfort for many years. Ten years ago, Tammy Peavy lost her dad. During the months before his passing, a woman from Peavy's church made a tie blanket for him. After his passing, Tammy and each of her siblings wanted to have that blanket.

"We all wanted it, so now we share it," she says. "When someone is having a bad day or a rough time with something, we call around to see who has the blanket so we can get it. When it is my turn, I wrap it around myself, and it is like dad is still with us. When I feel alone or sad, I wrap it around me to feel his hugs."

The blanket was such a comfort to her that Peavy decided to make the same kind of tie blankets for her grandkids last year. As a traveling long-term-care nurse, Peavy is gone from home quite often. All her grandkids live nearby, and, when she is gone, they share how much they miss her.

"When I'm gone and I talk to one of them on the phone and they share that they miss me, I'll tell them to go grab Grandma's blanket, and they often end up sleeping with it that night," she shares.

The blankets are all glow-in-the-dark fabric, and each one varies from images of dinosaurs to unicorns and rainbows.

"Whatever the kids like are what I chose for their blankets," Peavy says.

Peavy made eight total blankets last year, seven for her grandkids and one for her mom.

"Now, my grown kids are asking where their blankets are," she says. "I also have a new grandbaby coming in February, so I'll be making one for the baby. My hope is that those I make blankets for will use them for the same thing I do."

Each blanket takes about two hours to complete, though, the first time she made one, she spent about seven hours figuring out the right way to tie it together. Before Joann Fabrics closed both locally and nationally, she would pick her materials out there.

"Walmart and Hobby Lobby don't have patterns I like, so I'll have to keep looking around for patterns that I think my family will like and that I'd like to use," Peavy shares. "I just have to get two pieces of fleece fabric cut the same size, then I cut strips around the edges all the way around and tie them together. They are so warm and comforting."



Tammy Peavy's grandkids were gifted blanks she had made.

Peavy is a self-proclaimed "old-school" grandma.

"If you ask for it, you get it," she says. "The blankets, though, were something I could do for them just because I wanted to. Every time I see the lady who made the blanket for my dad, I tell her thank you. I hope, when my grandkids get older, their blankets will mean that much to them."

## Special bond leads to unique handmade gift

Nieces and nephews can make wonderful companions. At least, that is what Megan Hegwood would say. She often picks up her young niece, Roslyn, and "steals" her away to spend time together. Since her own daughter is older now, Hegwood enjoys the company and banter of Roslyn. She shares her love for crafting and sewing with her niece the same way her own mother shared a love for crafting when she was a young girl.

Roslyn often assists Hegwood in making Teddy bears. When Hegwood's father-in-law passed away nine years ago, she made memory Teddy bears from his clothing for his grandkids. Since that time, she has made quite a few more Teddy bears.

"Last year, I hit the mark of 1,000 Teddy bears," Hegwood says.



Megan Hegwood fashioned a special Teddy bear, after the character "Coraline," for her niece, Roslyn.

Usually, people share fabrics for her to create memory bears for them, but, last year, she received an unusual request.

"My niece really likes the movie 'Coraline,'" Hegwood says. "One day last year, she was helping me stuff bears and pick out buttons for another Teddy bear's eyes and nose when she came across some big buttons that made her think of her favorite character, Coraline. She requested a Coraline Teddy bear for Christmas."

Hegwood set to work planning the project.



Though Roslyn was often over to hang out with her aunt and help with Teddy bears and likely knew her aunt was working on it, the special gift Hegwood was making for her was worked on completely in secret.

Hegwood wanted Roslyn, who was 8 at the time, to have a big, snuggly bear that she could carry around and keep with her. She made the bear 22 inches tall from head to foot, the largest of three sizes she often makes.

"This time, I went to the fabric store to pick out what would fit the character best instead of having fabric handed to me, which is a lot of fun for any seamstress," Hegwood recalls. "The yarn I picked for its hair is typically used for making dish scrubbies and has a sparkle to it. The little rain jacket and shoes are removable, so I was making my own patterns for those. I loved adding all the intricate details. After making over 1,000 Teddy bears, it was fun to do something unique and different. It broke into my artistic aspect, and I loved it. My favorite part of the process was laying out all the pieces in front of me when I had them ready."

Hegwood handmade the dragonfly clip that now rests in the Teddy bear's hair, and she put

a rouging blush on the bear's cheeks from her daughter's makeup stash. Each strand of hair was hand sewn. The bear took about eight to 10 hours to complete, much longer than the typical four to five hours for the other bears she creates.

When the Coraline Teddy bear project was done, Hegwood found great joy watching Roslyn open the gift on Christmas Eve at their family's big gathering.

"Getting to show her the finished bear was the best part for me," Hegwood says. "She was shocked and hugged it tight. She understands the work that goes into making one of the bears, and she appreciates it. She set the bear up beside her as she opened her other gifts, and from there carried it around often."

## Gifts at work

Carol Renfro has worked alongside Tracy Creason for the past four years. During the holidays each year, she has been one of many recipients of small, handmade Christmas ornaments from Creason in their department at work.

"Tracy brings in small, handmade ornaments for each person in our department around

Christmas each year and places them on our desks," Renfro states. "Since we work in the same department, we have learned that we are close to the same age and have a lot in common."

Working together has allowed Creason to learn a lot about Renfro and their fellow colleagues. Though the small ornaments and gifts are not overly personalized, she puts a lot of thought into making them and chooses colors she knows her recipients like.

"It is a surprise each year what kind of gift she will bring," Renfro shares.

Each one is unique. Renfro says that Creason has wonderful crafting skills. Creason shares that she has been making crafts for more than 50 years and has gifted similar items to other coworkers over the years.

Renfro displays the three gifts she has received from her co-worker all year round at her desk at work. Two are small gnome ornaments, and one is a rosy, macramé heart with fringe around the edges. The purple-colored gnome is made with felt, and the bigger Christmas colored one is made with yarn with a toilet paper roll under its hat. The gnomes hang on her cubicle wall, and she uses the heart as a type of coaster.

**Science is fun**  
until it gets  
**messy,**  
then it is  
**awesome**  
**DARE?**  
TO JOIN US

**SCI**  
**SCIENCE**  
**CENTER**  
**OF IOWA**

[sciowa.org](http://sciowa.org)



*Your Holiday Headquarters!*

Fresh Flower Arrangements,  
Plants, Christmas Ornaments, Candles,  
Home Decor and More!

*Bellflower*  
FLORIST & GIFTS LLC

Veteran Owned

**For Any Occasion!**

**515-410-2397**  
2251 Sunset Drive Suite C  
Norwalk, Iowa 50211

[bellflowerfloristandgifts.com](http://bellflowerfloristandgifts.com)



*Family Owned & Operated for*  
**Over 50 Years!**

Residential or commercial; big,  
small or somewhere in between -  
we can help! Did you know we  
also offer hauling, recycling, and  
concrete barricades?

**LEARN MORE HERE**  
**515.981.0631**

**NORWALK READY MIX**  
**CONCRETE INC.**  
Norwalk • Indianola • Grimes • Ankeny • Elkhart • De Soto








Carol Renfro, right, enjoys the handmade gifts given to her by her coworker Tracy Creason. She decorates her workspace with them.

"Each small trinket takes a couple of hours to make. The time of year that she starts making them depends on what she is making. I know she has already started crafting something for Christmas this year," Renfro shares. "Tracy brought something really special with her crafty generosity when she came to work with us."

Renfro has a family history of giving and appreciating handmade gifts.

"My mom sewed, and my dad did woodwork. My dad was even featured in a local news story in which they called him a type of modern-day Santa Claus. My father made wooden cars to go in Christmas boxes for children to send all over the world. My mom and dad gave those kinds of gifts us, too. It's kind of embedded in me. The small gifts are special to me because they are handmade by Tracy," Renfro says. "That means

that there has been a lot of thought put into it. Anybody can go out and buy something, but it takes time, thought and creativity to make something for someone."

Besides small gifts, Renfro appreciates a variety of handmade items. She, her daughters, daughters-in-law, sisters and nieces get together each year and have a baking day. They make candy and cookies to give to others.

WE HAVE YOU COVERED THIS  
**HOLIDAY SEASON**  
FOR ALL OF YOUR GET TOGETHERS!  
Let us do the work & save you time & stress.

*Veggie, meat, cheese and dessert trays, custom made for your event!*

**12" TRAY** SERVES APPROX 15 TO 20 PEOPLE  
**16" TRAY** SERVES APPROX 20 TO 30 PEOPLE  
**18" TRAY** SERVES APPROX 30 TO 40 PEOPLE

**FAREWAY®**  
**MEAT & GROCERY**

2200 Sunset Drive, Norwalk  
STORE 515-981-4420

OPEN 7AM to 9PM MONDAY — SATURDAY • CLOSED SUNDAYS

Find our weekly ad, promotions, recipes and more at [www.Fareway.com](http://www.Fareway.com)  
Online Ordering and Curbside Pick Up Available.

**Serving Warren County  
& the Surrounding Area  
FOR OVER 150 YEARS!**

- Real Estate
- Wills & Trusts
- Probate
- Personal Injury
- Family Law
- Criminal Defense

**Now Open in Norwalk!**

Robert L. Stuyvesant Joseph K. Strong Terry Krapfl Nicholas A. Carda

**CONTACT US TODAY!**

**STUYVESANT, STRONG, KRAPFL AND CARDIA, PLLC**  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW • [WWW.SSKCLAW.COM](http://WWW.SSKCLAW.COM)

515-981-5401 • 801 N. Avenue • Norwalk, IA



When you suffer a serious injury, you need experienced representation.


# Hire KEN WINJUM

- ✓ Ken has over 30 years of experience and knowledge in Iowa law
- ✓ Ken has effective representation and communication with the insurance company
- ✓ Ken can get you maximum compensation
- ✓ Ken does a thorough investigation

★★★★★  
Ken's compassion and knowledge was clear right away. I was extremely pleased with the outcome of my case? -Jane C.

**The Winjum Law Firm, P.L.C.**  
Attorneys at Law

515-981-5220 | 1220 Sunset Dr. N, #103, Norwalk  
Call or Scan Today for Your **FREE CONSULTATION**  
**GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR CASE!**



## LEGAL

By Ken Winjum

# OPEN meetings and records law

Our nation and state were founded on the principle that it is the government that serves and reports to its citizens. In keeping with that principle, Iowa has laws mandating that governmental meetings and records be open to the public. The Open Meetings Act is found at Iowa Code Chapter 21, and the Open Records Act is found at Iowa Code Chapter 22.



### Open Meetings Act

The intent of this act is to ensure that the basis and rationale of governmental decisions are easily accessible to the people.

The act applies to governmental bodies, which are generally defined as a board, council, commission or other governing body of the state or political subdivisions. A meeting is defined as a gathering of a majority of the members of a governmental body where there is deliberation or action upon any matter within the scope of the body's policy-making duties.

The act requires public notice of each meeting and that it be held in open session. There are some exceptions which allow a body to go into closed session upon an affirmative public vote of two thirds of the members.

It is notable that the public may use cameras or recording devices at any open session.

### Open Records Act

The Iowa Supreme Court has observed that the act is designed to open the doors of government to public scrutiny and to prevent government from secreting its decision-making activities from the public, on whose behalf it is its duty to act.

The act applies to governmental bodies, defined as the state as well as any county, city, township, school corporation, political subdivision, tax supported district and some others. The act provides that every person shall have the right to examine and copy a public record and to publish or otherwise disseminate its contents. The cost of copying records can be recovered by the governmental body.

Also, a government body shall not prevent the examination or copying of a public record by contracting with a nongovernment body to perform any of its duties or functions.

Of course, there are many exceptions to this. The act details a list of at least 75 types of "confidential records" (with subparts) which are not to be released absent a court order.

### Iowa Public Information Board

Iowa Code Chapter 23 created a board to decide cases involving the Open Meetings Act and Open Records Act. As an agency, its decisions can be reviewed by the district court.

Transparent government is reflected by Iowa's open meetings and records laws. As is often the case, there are numerous exceptions to these laws, and a careful reading may be necessary in any given situation. ■

Information provided by Ken Winjum, The Winjum Law Firm, P.L.C., 1220 Sunset Drive., Suite 103, Norwalk, 515-981-5220, [www.winjumlaw.com](http://www.winjumlaw.com).

# Use it or Lose it!

Have you taken full advantage of your Year-End Dental Benefits?

**It's Time, Contact us Today!**



Appointments are available! Scan or call today to schedule!

**Weekend & evening appointments available!**

General Dentistry • Pediatric Dentistry • Extractions • Wisdom Teeth Implant Surgery • Orthodontics • Endodontic Treatment • Sleep Apnea TMJ & Migraine • Botox and Dermal Fillers • Oral Sedation Dentistry



**JONES FAMILY DENTAL**



**Dr. Aaron Jones**  
Yo hablo español!



**Dr. Richard Worsham**  
Yo hablo español!

**Scheduling online is easy!** [jonesfamilydentalnorwalk.com](http://jonesfamilydentalnorwalk.com)

1315 Sunset Drive, Norwalk • 515-850-2255



## MAYOR'S MOMENT

I hope you had a wonderful Thanksgiving this year. My wife and I loved hosting our family and had a great time eating some delicious food and reminiscing.

### The Season of Giving

Christmas is, in my opinion, a time to give back and share those blessings we've received throughout the year. I encourage you to find someone to bless with a gift of kindness this holiday season. There are quite a few opportunities to do this right here within our community. You can donate to the Norwalk Food Bank, fulfill a need hanging on one of our Norwalk churches' giving trees, and put money in a Salvation Army kettle when you're shopping. Want to make an immediate impact? You can also help someone out with their water bill. All it takes is a quick call to the Norwalk Water Department or stop by City Hall. It's amazing when we give to others, the joy and blessing we receive is sometimes greater than we could have even imagined.

*Season's Greetings!*  
Mayor Tom Phillips



Tom Phillips,  
Mayor

## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT!

### Emily Donahue, Economic Development and Library



Meet Emily Donahue, a talented dual-department team member who splits her time between the Norwalk Library and the Economic Development Department—bringing creativity, curiosity, and community spirit to both roles. She has spent four years at the Library and just over one year in Economic Development, and she loves the variety that comes with serving two very different departments. At the Library, she assists patrons at the front desk, manages and troubleshoots technology, supports collection management, creates social media content for the new library campaign, and handles a range of administrative tasks. In Economic Development, she helps manage development projects from start to finish, conducts research, maintains critical databases and spreadsheets, and creates promotional materials—including websites—to highlight Norwalk's development areas and attract new businesses.

What she enjoys most varies beautifully between her two roles. At the Library, she enjoys interacting with patrons and witnessing how library services positively impact their lives. Many people are surprised by the wide range of free resources and programs available, and she finds joy in being part of a space that serves as a meaningful "third place" in the community. In Economic Development, she enjoys being part of bringing new businesses and experiences to Norwalk—projects that enhance the quality of life for residents and contribute to the city's ongoing growth.

One of her most rewarding memories comes from her work as a technology assistant. Patrons often schedule one-on-one sessions with her to get help with technology, and it's incredibly meaningful for her to teach someone a new skill or help them solve a problem that makes a real difference in their daily life.

She brings a strong creative foundation to her work, holding a Bachelor's degree in English and Creative Writing from the University of Iowa, with specialized coursework in publishing and editing. That background sharpened her attention to detail and analytical skills—tools she uses every day across both departments.

Outside of work, she lives in West Des Moines with her fiancé, Jack. She loves antique shopping, refurbishing vintage furniture, traveling, reading, puzzling, and indulging in her favorite reality competition shows. A fun fact: being a vegetarian has turned her into quite the foodie, always on the hunt for restaurants with unique vegetarian options. And one of her favorite pieces of advice—something she strives to embody daily—is simple but powerful: "Be a little kinder than you have to."

## IMPORTANT LINKS FOR NORWALK!

### City State Bank Norwalk Fieldhouse

View amenities, hours, rates and more.



### Final Countdown 2-Day Camp

Dec. 29 & 30 | 9-11am  
Grades 1st-5th grade



### Winter Youth Tennis

Kindergarten-5th grade.



### Adult Men's Basketball League



### Winter Adult Fitness Programs

Sign up for the new year!



## Norwalk Public Library News

### Howlidays at the Library - FREE!

December 9 from 4-7 pm

Library mascot Scribbles is inviting Santa and Clifford the Big Red Dog to the library! Meet and take your own photos with Scribbles, Clifford, & Santa. Enjoy refreshments, crafts, & activities!

### It's a Wrap Fundraiser

December 11 & 12 from 4-8 pm at Fairfield Inn lounge

Lights of Love is a cherished holiday tradition at the Bring your unwrapped gifts for Santa's helpers to wrap for you while you wait! All supplies & labor provided by the Norwalk Easter Public Library Foundation whose volunteers will wrap your gifts for a small donation per gift.

### Noon Year's Eve - FREE!

December 31 from 10:30 am-Noon

Ring in the new year without staying up late with dancing, crafts, and kids activities. At noon, we'll gather to count down to the "Noon Year" together.

## City State Bank Fieldhouse will be closed December 24-25, 31\* and January 1.

Thank you for your understanding!  
\*Closing early at 6:00pm



See what is happening at the public library!

# THIS is what Christmas is all about

We started out on the wrong road — again. In my mind, I began to doubt that we would remember the right way. Would we recognize their little shop? Would we find them? As the three of us from our church made our way down the narrow, black-topped road, these were my thoughts. Each of us were riding a 125cc motorbike heading south out of a small town in central Laos. We had been here before. Two years ago, we had traveled the same pot-holed road — one of the main highways in Laos, believe it or not. We had stopped at a small store along the road. In a previous trip, our team leader had met a family with two young children and, in spite of the major language barrier, had managed to communicate with them with just a few words, hand-motions and smiles. Those two children had stolen his heart. Now, we were visiting for the third time, only this time we had something more than our cameras and some candy. One of our team members had written and published a children's book about the love of God in their language. We came loaded with these books to share with them. We were desperate to remember the way and see their smiling faces again.



As we drove we were constantly being forced to slow down, pull around or dodge something along the way. We never rode faster than 40 miles per hour for fear of crashing. All along the road, cows grazed, sometimes straying out onto the road. In addition, chickens, dogs, cats, other motorbikes, walkers, farm implements, semi-trucks and everything in-between jostled for positions on the narrow road. I vowed that, if I lived through this, I would never do it again.

Of course, I had already broken that vow. Finally, there it was — abandoned. Our hearts sank. Where did they go? Were they gone for good? Then the neighbors pointed down the road about a hundred yards. We drove a little further and, to our great pleasure, we were reunited with the whole family. The two children had grown a lot, but they still remembered us — they all did.

In spite of the language barrier, they opened themselves up to us with hospitality rarely seen even here at home. We passed out the books and, as they read them aloud in their language, it could not have been any more rewarding. We had come to the other side of the world and spent thousands of dollars, and it was worth it all. Then I remembered again why we were here: God sent His Son a long way, too. Jesus came to earth, was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, then died on the cross for the sins of the world. His death and resurrection made salvation possible for everyone in the world — Americans, Laotians, everyone. This “Good News” is worth sharing — with people across the street and people around the world. Now that I think about it, isn't that what Christmas is all about? ■

Pastor Rob Jones is the senior pastor of Fellowship Community Church in Norwalk. The church was founded under his leadership in 1995.

# 2025 financial review list

As the year comes to a close, now is a great time to meet with your financial advisor and make sure you are taking advantage of year-end strategies.



## IRAs and retirement plans

If you are participating in an employer-sponsored 401(k) or 403(b) plan, think about contributing the full pre-tax amount allowed to your retirement accounts by the end of the year. For 2025, the annual limit is \$23,500 (\$31,000 if you are age 50 to 59 or 64 and older; \$34,750 if you turn age 60, 61, 62 or 63 during the year). If you have a traditional or Roth IRA, you can contribute up to \$7,000 for 2025, \$8,000 if you're age 50 or older.<sup>1</sup> Traditional IRA contributions may be deductible, but Roth contributions are not.

## RMDs

Individuals 73 or older generally must take their 2025 RMDs by Dec. 31, 2025. An excise tax of 25% is taxed on the missed RMD amount. Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs) from IRAs may count toward RMDs for eligible individuals.

## Roth conversions

Year-end is a good time to evaluate whether it makes sense to convert a tax-deferred savings vehicle like a traditional IRA or a 401(k) account to a Roth account. When you convert a traditional IRA to a Roth IRA, the converted funds are generally subject to federal income tax in the year that you make the conversion.

## HSA accounts

Increasing or maximizing your contribution can help reduce your tax bill. For 2025, the contribution limits are \$4,300 for individual coverage and \$8,550 for family coverage.

## Tax harvesting

If you experience capital losses on securities and no longer want to hold the securities in your portfolio, consider selling these underperformers to offset gains from other investments. Losses above the amount of your gains can offset up to \$3,000 of ordinary income (\$1,500 if your filing status is married filing separately). Unused losses can be carried forward to future years. Watch out for the wash-sale rule, which precludes taking a capital loss deduction if you repurchase the same investment within 30 days before or after selling it.

## Charitable giving

For 2025, you must itemize deductions to deduct charitable contributions, but starting in 2026, you'll be able to deduct up to \$1,000 in cash donations (\$2,000 for married joint filers) to qualified charities.

In 2026, taxpayers who itemize, qualified charitable donations will only be deductible to the extent they exceed 0.5% of AGI. For example, a taxpayer with AGI of \$100,000 can deduct the amount of their qualified contributions minus \$500. ■

For more information, contact Kourtne Klocko with City State Bank Trust & Investments at 515-981-1400. Not FDIC insured. Not deposits or other obligations of the bank and are not guaranteed by the bank. Are subject to investment risk, including possible loss of principal. City State Bank does not provide legal advice. Each taxpayer should seek independent advice from a tax and/or legal professional. These materials are based upon publicly available information that may change at any time without notice.



# WHY is it so dry in here?

Is it your heating system? Let's talk facts and solutions.

During winter, the moisture level in the air drops as increased water vapor gets pulled out of the air outside. Dry conditions are often considered helpful in the summer, as it makes it easier for us to cool off from our air conditioners. However, dry air during the rest of the year threatens not only our comfort but also our health.



Furnaces and forced-air heat pumps are often blamed for causing the air to be dried out even more, but is this really the case? The issue is a bit more complicated than a simple, "Yes, your heater dries out your air." Technically speaking, heating up the air doesn't directly cause the air to become drier. What does happen is that older furnaces — known as atmospheric combustion furnaces — draw air from the home into their combustion chambers, which allows combustion to occur. This causes a bit of a deficit in the air in the home, and outdoor air moves in to replace that deficit. Since the outdoor air is drier during the winter than the indoor air, this can lead to a drop in relative humidity levels.

"But wait, it sounds like you basically just said, 'Yes, my furnace is drying out my air.'"

Well, newer furnaces can be, and are, constructed as sealed combustion furnaces. Their combustion chambers are shielded from the inside of the house and draw the air they need for combustion through a pipe that leads to the outdoors. This prevents the furnace from pulling in indoor air and creating that deficit — so, in this case, the dry air you feel indoors is not coming from your heater.

In conclusion, yes, dry air is a problem in the winter — the relative humidity level in homes often drops below 30%, which is considered too dry. But, this isn't caused by your furnace; it's caused by our climate.

Alright, so your furnace isn't causing your dry air, but that doesn't mean you like it — and we don't blame you. After all, dry air dries out our sinuses, making us more susceptible to colds and other illnesses since we can't fight off germs as well. It also dries out furniture, wooden floorboards and even precision instruments like pianos if you have one in your home.

The solution here isn't to stop using your heating system but rather to add a whole-house humidifier to your home. These systems are installed directly into your HVAC system and help keep humidity at a reasonable level as your heater runs. Or it can even be run independently of your heater. ■

Do you still have questions? Visit [www.tripleahomeservices.com](http://www.tripleahomeservices.com) for additional information. Dale and Natasha love to answer questions. Give them a call at 515-868-2779.

## Don't Wait On Winter Maintenance.

# Call Today!

### IOWA'S FIRST DUCTLESS ELITE DEALER

#### Triple A Home Services

is a full-service heating and cooling company serving residential and commercial clients throughout the Greater Des Moines area and Central Iowa.

We deliver nothing less than top-notch service, prompt performance, and affordable pricing.

#### Services:

- ✓ Cooling & Heating
- ✓ Boilers & Multi Unit Housing
- ✓ Indoor Air Quality
- ✓ Refrigeration
- ✓ Ductless Mini Split Heat Pumps



"Josh and Dale were amazing. They completely cleaned up and fixed the awful job of a previous business. I can't recommend them enough for all your heating and cooling services. Truly amazing service!"  
- Nate S.

MERRY  
*Christmas*  
AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

**Triple A**  
Home Services LLC



SEE WHY WE ARE THE  
RIGHT FIT FOR YOU!

**515-868-2779**

4604 20th Avenue, Norwalk



## Q: Should I start now?

**A:** With New Year's resolution season coming up, here is a quick reminder. Change doesn't wait for a perfect plan, and you don't need the "right" routine, equipment or timing. The moment you start moving, your body and mind begin shifting in ways you can feel almost immediately.

One of the fastest changes happens in your mood. Even 5-10 minutes of light movement, a short walk or simple stretching can release tension and boost your brain's feel-good chemicals. By 20-30 minutes, endorphins, dopamine and serotonin start improving your focus, lifting your mood and easing stress. With consistency over a few weeks, exercise becomes a powerful long-term stabilizer for anxiety, energy and emotional balance.

Physical changes take a bit longer, but beginning now sets you up for real progress. A healthy pace for weight loss is 4-8 pounds per month, enough to make a noticeable difference without sacrificing muscle or energy. At the same time, strength training can help you build 0.5 to 2 pounds of muscle per month, depending on your experience. These steady changes can dramatically reshape your body over time — but only if you start.

Waiting another week or month only delays the results you could already be seeing. Every small step compounds. A short workout today becomes a healthier routine tomorrow, which becomes physical change in a month, and a stronger, more confident version of you in a year. The best time to start is now. ■

Information provided by Dani McManus, certified personal trainer/head coach at Anytime Fitness in Norwalk. To submit a question for future articles, contact her at [norwalk@anytimefitness.com](mailto:norwalk@anytimefitness.com).



1101 CHATHAM AVENUE, NORWALK  
NORWALK@ANYTIMEFITNESS.COM  
515-953-0004

SCHEDULE  
YOUR TOUR!



STAFFED HOURS: MON-THU: 11AM-7PM • FRI: 9AM-5PM

## MEET Kelly Burkett

Enjoys finding new ways to teach.

Kelly Burkett grew up knowing she wanted to become a teacher. Her grandfather taught at the University of Northern Iowa, and she knew she wanted to teach as well. Now, Burkett has just entered her first year teaching special education at Orchard Hills Elementary School, and she enjoys that every day is different.

"I love finding new ways to teach students who may struggle to learn to help make learning fun and help them find success," Burkett says.

Burkett graduated from the University of Northern Iowa with a degree in elementary and early childhood education. She began her teaching career at the Des Moines Public School District as a second grade teacher. During this time, she also worked to obtain her master's degree in education at Drake University.

While at the Des Moines Schools, Burkett switched from teaching general education to special education, and taught kindergarten through third grade special education for six years. When her family relocated to Winterset, Burkett wanted to work closer to where her daughters were, especially when they were young.

Prior to joining the Norwalk Community School District, Burkett became a special education coach, a behavior interventionist, and a level three special education teacher in Winterset. Now, as a new teacher to the district, Burkett says that her favorite part about working in Norwalk so far has been the people.

"Everyone — from the teachers, families and administrators — have been incredibly supportive and welcoming. It makes coming to work very enjoyable," she says.

Burkett likes working with students at the elementary level because she enjoys the innocence of elementary students. She says her students are eager to learn, enjoy being at school, and still think their teachers are cool. Although she and her students are not currently working on any unique projects, she works to incorporate her students' interest into everything they learn.

"The best reward as an educator is helping students learn new skills, whether academically or socially. Seeing the joy and pride they have once they master something that was once a challenge for them is the best feeling," Burkett says.

This school year, Burkett is excited to work with administrators and teachers she has heard wonderful things about so that she can grow as a teacher. She is also excited to collaborate with a team that she says values one another, shares ideas and trusts one another. She says she is looking forward to working in a school with a culture that makes students, teachers and families want to come to the building. ■



Kelly Burkett says her favorite part about working in Norwalk so far has been the people.



## A HEART for helping

Travi keeps a full plate with volunteer work.

When Andrea Travi moved to Norwalk in 2011, she didn't expect volunteering to become such a defining part of her life.

Through the Norwalk Area Ministerial Association, she has served as a food rescue driver for five years and the food rescue lead for the past 18 months. As the food rescue lead, she maintains relationships with the Food Bank of Iowa retail coordinators, communicates with retailers in the community (Fareway, Kwik Star, Maverik and Mega Saver), creates monthly schedules for the food rescue volunteer team and generates reports on the amount of food rescued.

As a food rescue driver, Travi picks up food from retailers, weighs the items and works with the team to sort and distribute them across various communities in Norwalk.

As if that doesn't keep her busy enough, Travi has also been active in other NAMA initiatives, like the Shoe Love program, Joyful Giving, Purge Your Pantry and more.

"When I started volunteering with NAMA, it was initially during 2020, and I was looking for a way to utilize my extra time and make an impact in the community," she explains. "With NAMA's ministries, the impact a volunteer makes can be seen immediately. Whether it's filling a refrigerator with food and it being taken, putting new shoes on a child and their face lighting up, or taking Christmas gifts out to a family's vehicle and seeing the gratitude on their faces and in their words."

In addition, Travi volunteers within the schools through the Norwalk Elementary PTO, where she has helped with in-school activities such as Warrior Dash, Teacher and Me photos, Warrior Stores and hearing screenings. She also volunteers in classrooms and attends field trips as a chaperone.

"This volunteering helps me to become more connected to those teaching my children as well as provide them support to better focus on education," Travi says.

Her list of involvements continues with the Norwalk Easter Public Library, where she helps to set up the library's various festivals throughout the year.

"The library has had a huge impact in connecting me to many of my friends within the community," Travi says. "Often, when someone asks how I met a friend, the answer is at library story times when my children were young. We've enjoyed so many of their festivals and activities and supporting them as a volunteer is my way to thank them for all they have done for my family."

In the past, Travi served as secretary for the Serendipity Preschool Board for seven years and has volunteered as a coach for teams her kids have played on through Norwalk Parks and Recreation as well.

For Travi, volunteering began simply: Her kids were in school, she had the time, and she wanted to make an impact in her community.

"It has evolved to help me be more empathetic and aware of what others' needs are," she says. "I truly enjoy connecting and learning from others while knowing what we are doing makes a difference."

She encourages others in the community who may be interested in volunteering to reach out to an organization and learn more.



Jason Siemens of Edward Jones presents the Neighbor Spotlight certificate to Andrea Travi.

"There's likely a volunteering opportunity out there that is perfect for you," Travi says. "If volunteering with the food rescue team appeals to you, please reach out to [food@norwalkhelp.org](mailto:food@norwalkhelp.org) to learn more." ■


[edwardjones.com](https://edwardjones.com) | Member SIPC



### Invest in a way that shares your values.

Our process? We listen. Really listen. Stop by.



**Jason Siemens, CFP®, AAMS®**  
Financial Advisor  
1327 Sunset Drive, Suite 500  
Norwalk, IA 50211  
515-981-1117

EJB-19325-A-E-DA-4 AECSPAD 26953092



## Retirement Confidence, All Year Long.

As another year ends, our team is here to help you stay on course and ready for what's next.

Let's plan for a confident, new year together.



**RUNDAHL**  
FINANCIAL CONSULTANTS

**Dan Rundahl**  
8230 Hickman Rd, Suite 300 Clive, IA 50325  
Cell: 641-512-8597  
Office: 515-355-3892  
drundahl@rundahlfinancial.com

Securities and Advisory Services offered through CreativeOne Securities, LLC Member FINRA/SIPC and an Investment Advisor. LLP Financial Services and CreativeOne Securities, LLC are not affiliated.

**WWW.RUNDAHLFINANCIALCONSULTANTS.COM**

## OUT with 2025... in with 2026

As the year ends, many of us are reminded of how quickly time passes. Wrapping up 2025 offers a welcome chance to reset, refocus and prepare for a productive year ahead. Before officially welcoming 2026, it's important to pause and assess your financial picture. Addressing a few key planning items now can set the stage for a strong start to the new year.



### Maximize your retirement contributions:

Year-end is an ideal time to evaluate your retirement savings strategy. If you participate in an employer-sponsored plan, confirm you are contributing enough to receive the full employer match. If you have already captured the match or don't have one available, consider increasing contributions to an IRA. Thanks to the SECURE Act, individuals may continue contributing to a traditional IRA beyond age 70½ if they have earned income, and contributions may be tax-deductible depending on income.

If you're required to take a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD), be sure it's completed before year-end. RMDs were waived in 2020 and 2021, but they are fully reinstated. Missing one can result in a substantial 25% penalty, making timely planning essential.

**Consider a Roth conversion:** A Roth IRA offers tax-free growth and flexibility in retirement. For those who don't qualify for direct Roth contributions, a "backdoor" Roth conversion — contributing to a traditional IRA and converting it — may be worth exploring. However, conversions increase taxable income for the year and aren't suitable for everyone. A financial advisor can help determine whether this strategy fits your overall goals and tax plan.

**Review your FSA and HSA balances:** Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs) often follow a "use-it-or-lose-it" rule, so check your balance and use remaining funds on eligible expenses before year-end. Health Savings Accounts (HSAs) roll over annually and offer triple-tax advantages, making them strong long-term savings tools. This is a good time to review 2026 contribution plans and anticipate upcoming medical needs such as orthodontics, vision care, or scheduled procedures.

**Update key estate planning documents:** Recent years have encouraged many people to revisit their estate plans. Make sure your medical and financial powers of attorney are up to date and that those named still reflect your wishes. Review your Last Will and Testament as well. Beneficiary designations are important, but a will helps prevent gaps and ensures your intentions are carried out.

**Reassess your financial goals:** Revisit the goals you set at the start of 2025 and evaluate your progress. If adjustments are needed, your advisor can help refine your plan to reflect new priorities or changing circumstances.

**Prepare for 2026:** Lastly, review insurance coverage, benefits elections and any expected life events in 2026. Whether related to employment, family, housing or education, proactive planning brings clarity and confidence as you enter the new year.

From my family to yours, I wish you a blessed Christmas season and a prosperous New Year. ■

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



## Season's Treatings

Downy Woodpecker

**Your Certified  
Bird Feeding Specialists**

Connect with your local experts

- Feeders
- Food
- Bird Baths
- Hardware
- Expert Advice

**Free Shipping For Norwalk  
Residents On All Online Orders\***

*\*use coupon code 50211 at checkout, No minimum purchase required!*

Shop Online or In Store Today!



801 73rd, Ste. H, Des Moines • 515-222-1234  
[www.mywbu.com/desmoines](http://www.mywbu.com/desmoines)



# FIRE & ICE

WINTER BAR CRAWL

SATURDAY, JAN. 24

1-4 P.M. IN VALLEY JUNCTION

*Break the winter blues, get out  
and have fun on a Saturday  
afternoon in Valley Junction!*



**GET YOUR  
TICKETS TODAY!**

*\$25 in advance, \$35 at the door*

[fire-and-ice.dmcityview.com](http://fire-and-ice.dmcityview.com)



Check for cancellations

## Upcoming in Norwalk 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](mailto: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](mailto:tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com) to share your story!

## Norwalk Easter Public Library Events

1051 North Ave., Norwalk

For registration links, visit <https://norwalkeaster-ia.whofi.com>.

### KIDS

- Tinker Club: Monday, Dec. 15, 4:30 p.m.
- Noon Year's Eve: Wednesday, Dec. 31, 10 a.m. to noon

### TWEENS

- Tween Special Ugly Sweater Party: Monday, Dec. 22, 3:45-4:45 p.m. Registration required.
- Tween Hangout: Mondays, Dec. 29 and Jan 5, 3:45 p.m.
- Tween Boba & Books: Tuesday, Dec. 30, 3:45 p.m.

### TEENS

- Fall Writing Challenge Open Mic Party: Tuesday, Dec. 16, 3:30-5 p.m.
- Teen After Hours Dungeons and Dragons: Friday, Dec. 19, 5:30-8:30 p.m. Registration required.
- Teens Exclusive Laser Tag Session: Saturday, Dec. 20, 9-10:30 p.m. Registration required.
- Super Smash Bros. Tournament: Monday, Dec. 29, 12:30-2:30 p.m. Registration required.
- Books, Bites, and Boba: Tuesday, Dec. 30, 6-7 p.m. Registration required.
- Teen Takeover Hangout: Thursday, Jan. 8, 3:30 p.m.

### ADULTS

- Forever Fit: Monday, Dec. 15, 9 a.m. and 10 a.m.
- From Page to Plate Cookbook Club, Baking Yesteryear: Tuesday, Dec. 15, 6:30-8 p.m. Registration required.

### EVERYONE

- Freakier Friday Winter Break Movie: Friday, Jan. 2, 1:30-3:30 p.m.

## Middlebrook Mercantile Events

4125 Cumming Ave., Cumming

- Saturday, Dec. 13, 5-8 p.m. Live Music: Gina Gedler Holiday Show
- Thursday, Dec. 18, 6 p.m. Event: Trivia
- Friday, Dec. 19, 6-9 p.m. Live Music: Kelsie James
- Saturday, Dec. 20, 6-8 p.m. Event: Music Bingo
- Wednesday, Dec. 31, 7-10 p.m. Live Music: The Get Down New Year's Eve Party

## Coffee and Camaraderie

First Tuesdays of the month, 10 a.m. to noon

Norwalk United Methodist Church, 1100 Gordon Ave.

All veterans and service members are invited for a morning of coffee and camaraderie, a morning of connection and community. Whether you're a veteran, active-duty member, spouse or caregiver, everyone is welcome. Enjoy coffee and come together to form new friendships and share stories and experiences.



## CITYVIEW's Fire and Ice

Saturday, Jan. 24, 1-4 p.m.  
Valley Junction

CITYVIEW brings back its legendary Valley Junction area pub crawl. Fire and Ice is a hockey-themed liquor sampling event that will be sure to warm up your winter blues. With your event ticket, you will receive 10 individual drink tickets to sample some of the best winter cocktails from establishments in the Valley Junction area. Tickets are \$25 in advance and \$35 at the door. Follow the QR code for tickets.



## Fundraisers for the Norwalk Easter Public Library Foundation

• **It's a Wrap Fundraiser, Dec. 11 and 12, 4-8 p.m., Fairfield Inn lounge, 2100 Hughes Drive, Norwalk.** Bring your unwrapped gifts for Santa's helpers to wrap for you while you wait. All supplies and labor provided by the Norwalk Easter Public Library Foundation whose volunteers will wrap your gifts for a small donation per gift.

• **Trivia Night fundraiser, Jan. 22, 6-8 p.m., St. James Celebrations, 9774 G24 Highway, Indianola.** Trivia Night fundraiser will be Jan. 22. The cost is \$25 per person, or you can form a team of up to six for \$125 or come solo and we'll place you on a team. Mark your calendar and join us for a night of fun and good food (included in the price). Watch for more details via email or Facebook.

• **Step into the Glamour of the Gilded Age! Thursday, Feb. 5, 6-9 p.m.** Join us for an unforgettable Murder Mystery Night fundraiser for the Norwalk Easter Public Library. This year's thrilling theme: Murder on the Continental Express. Will you play the role of a suspect (\$30) or a clever detective (\$20)? Either way, intrigue awaits. Enjoy delicious snacks and refreshing mocktails as you unravel the mystery. Tickets go on sale in January. Follow Norwalk Easter Public Library Foundation on social media for updates to secure your spot before they vanish. All proceeds from these events benefit the Norwalk Easter Public Library Foundation.

## 14th Annual Synchronized Lights and Live Nativity event

Saturday, Dec. 13, and Sunday, Dec. 14, 5:30-8:30 p.m.

Fellowship Community Church, 225 North Ave., Norwalk

The church property will be covered in 70,000-plus lights synchronized to Christmas music. A live nativity with real animals will also be a part of the event. Take in the sights and sounds of this event from the comfort of your vehicle as free cookies and hot chocolate will be brought to you. Fellowship would like to extend a heads-up to the Norwalk residents on Linden Street, Knoll Drive and Redwood Drive of the increased traffic in their neighborhood during this time frame and appreciates their patience. Cast members of the live nativity will be in the neighborhood to greet those heading toward the event and will be giving out free candy canes. Donations will be accepted for the Love Norwalk fund, which is invested locally to assist individuals, families and organizations for community betterment. For more information and to view footage from last year's event for a glimpse of the fun, visit Fellowship Community Church's website at [fellowshipnorwalk.org](http://fellowshipnorwalk.org). ■



# KEEPING pets safe during the holiday season

The holiday season brings joy, decorations, gatherings and plenty of festive treats. It also introduces hidden hazards for our four-legged family members. From twinkling lights to rich foods and cold winter weather, December can be



a risky time for pets if we are not mindful. Here are some simple, practical tips to help keep your pets safe, healthy and stress-free this season.

**1. Watch the decorations:** Holiday décor can be irresistible to curious pets, especially cats and playful dogs. Avoid common hazards: Tinsel, ribbon, and garland can cause serious intestinal blockages if swallowed. Ornaments can shatter and injure paws or mouths. Holiday plants like poinsettias, mistletoe and holly can be toxic.

Safer options: Use pet-safe ornaments and place fragile items higher on the tree. Skip tinsel entirely. Choose artificial or pet-friendly greenery when possible.

**2. Be careful with holiday foods:** Those

extra goodies can be tempting to share, but many seasonal foods are dangerous for pets.

Foods to avoid: chocolate, grapes and raisins, onions and garlic, fatty scraps and cooked bones, alcohol and sugar substitutes like xylitol. Stick to a consistent diet and offer pet-safe treats in moderation. If guests are visiting, remind them not to feed your pets table scraps.

**3. Secure the tree and cords:** Pets love to explore, and a Christmas tree can look like the ultimate toy. Anchor the tree securely to prevent tipping. Cover or hide electrical cords to prevent chewing and potential burns. Unplug lights when you're not home.

**4. Keep calm during gatherings:** Busy holiday gatherings can overwhelm pets, especially those sensitive to noise or unfamiliar faces.

Helpful tips: Create a quiet escape space with their bed, toys and water. Keep doors closed to prevent escapes. Maintain routines as much as possible.

**5. Winter weather awareness:** Cold temperatures can pose real risks, especially for small, elderly or short-haired pets. Limit time

outdoors in extreme cold. Wipe paws after walks to remove ice melt and salt. Provide warm, dry shelter and avoid leaving pets in cars or garages.

**6. Travel smart:** If you're traveling or hosting visitors, ensure your pet's environment stays predictable. Use trusted boarding or pet-sitting options. Make sure ID tags and microchips are up to date. Keep emergency contact information readily available.

## A safe season is a happy season

With a little preparation and awareness, you can eliminate many holiday hazards and enjoy the season alongside your beloved pets. By keeping their environment safe and maintaining routines, you ensure they remain healthy, calm and comfortable throughout the festivities.

This December, a little extra care goes a long way in protecting your furry companions and preserving the joy of the season for everyone. ■

Information provided by Sam Patterson, Operations Director, Iowa Veterinary Specialties, 24/7 emergency hospital for pets, 6110 Creston Ave., Des Moines, 515-280-3100.

## When Holiday Surprises Turn Serious, We're Ready

**Available 24/7 – even on holidays – to handle any pet emergency that arises.**

### PREMIER EMERGENCY VET CARE.

Check-in and see wait times online. **Medical Boarding Now Available!**

**Surgery | Exotics | Veterinary Pain Management**  
**Endoscopic Foreign Body Removal | Computed Technologies (CT)**

**IOWA VETERINARY SPECIALTIES**

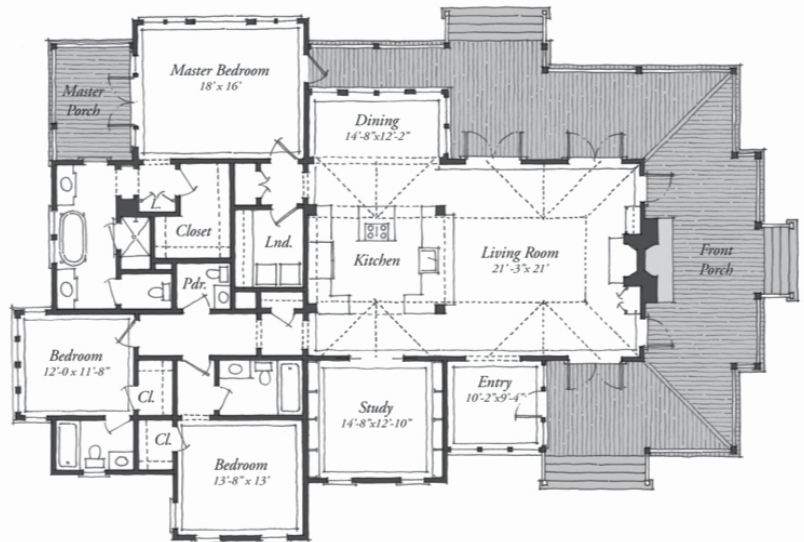
**6110 Creston Avenue,  
Des Moines | 515.280.3100**  
[iowaveterinaryspecialties.com](http://iowaveterinaryspecialties.com)

PROUDLY ASSOCIATED WITH

**IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY**  
COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

## NEW Tideland Haven

The New Tideland Haven blends timeless charm and modern comfort, featuring three bedrooms, 3.5 bathrooms, and 2,622 square feet of single-level living. A grand wraparound porch welcomes you inside, where vaulted ceilings and an open floor plan create an inviting, airy space for everyday living and entertaining. ■



**Floors:** 1  
**Bedrooms:** 3  
**Bathrooms:** 3.5  
**Foundation(s):** Pier  
**SQUARE FEET**  
**Main Floor:** 2,622  
**Total Conditioned:** 2,622  
**Front Porch:** 923  
**Rear Porch:** 104  
**DIMENSIONS**  
**Width:** 80'-10"  
**Depth:** 57'-2"  
**Height:** 23'-0"  
**HOUSE LEVELS**

**Level Name** Ceiling Heights  
**Main Floor** 9'-0"  
**CONSTRUCTION**  
**Wall Construction:** 2x6  
**Exterior Finish:** Lap Siding, Board & Batten  
**Roof Pitch:** 10:12  
**FEATURES**  
**Kitchen:** Island, Snack  
**Primary Bedroom:** Tub, Double Sink, Shower, Porch, Private Toilet, Walk-in Closet  
**Additional:** Fireplace, Porch, Screened Porch, Home Office/Study

Photography by Laurey W Glenn. Designed by Our Town Plans, LLC.  
 Plan number SL-1824. [houseplans.southernliving.com](http://houseplans.southernliving.com)





NEW! \* NEW! \* NEW! \* NEW!



# THE HOTTEST HOLIDAY ITEMS *for 2025*

NEW FOR 2025, this Digital Holiday Gift Guide is packed full of the hottest gifts and services offered by your **local small businesses!** Find the perfect gifts for your friends and family.

SHOP HUNDREDS OF LOCAL ITEMS. SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW!

SHOP NOW!



SHOP NOW!

[www.iowalivingmagazines.com/holiday-gift-guide-2025](http://www.iowalivingmagazines.com/holiday-gift-guide-2025)



# INSURE your home-based business

A home-based business may not be covered under your home insurance policy. More than half of American businesses are home-based, according to the U.S. Small Business Administration. But setting up headquarters in your home doesn't mean your homeowner's insurance will adequately protect your operation.



"A typical homeowner's policy provides about \$2,500 of coverage," says Loretta Worters, vice president of communications for the Insurance Information Institute. That usually will cover equipment, but it won't offer liability protection or cover you for lost data or income.

Do your research to protect yourself and your home business. That includes having the right type and amount of insurance coverage.

**Option 1: Homeowner's policy with business property increased limit.** Most

homeowner's policies will cover some business personal property such as a desk or merchandise held as samples up to a set limit. This coverage is intended for business use while the property is on the residence premises. You can add an endorsement to your homeowner's policy to increase coverage on business use while property is on the residence premises. You can add an endorsement to your homeowner's policy to increase coverage on business personal property and liability for protection in the event someone, say a delivery person, is injured on the property.

You might consider this option if you:

- Only plan to have less than your policy's limit worth of business property kept at your home-based business location.
- Don't invite customers to your homebased business location.
- Only have a small amount of personal property intended for business use outside your home.

**Option 2: Business insurance policy.**

While your homeowner's insurance policy

comes with liability protection for incidents that happen inside your home, this coverage does not extend to home-based business-related activities. For example, if a customer comes to your home to exchange payments for goods or services and suffers an injury, they may not be covered. This coverage gap can easily be fixed with a business insurance policy, which also provides loss of income coverage.

You might consider this option if you:

- Offer services in your home, such as tax preparation or hair services, which may require additional specialized liability coverage.
- Plan to have more business property kept at your home-based business location than your policy limit.
- Rely on the income from your business to support your household. ■

Lane Insurance would be happy to help examine your risks and suggest the best coverages for you and your family. Feel free to request a quote online at [laneinsurance.com](http://laneinsurance.com) or give us a call at 515-981-4614. Information provided by Mike Lane, Lane Insurance Agency Inc., 1225 Sunset Drive, Norwalk.



Home *for the* Holidays?  
**Keep It Protected.**



**Mike Lane**  
515-981-4614

**For your Home, Family  
and Business Call today!**

1225 Sunset Drive, Norwalk  
[www.laneinsurance.com](http://www.laneinsurance.com)

**Auto-Owners**  
LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY  
LIFE • HOME • CAR • BUSINESS

**LANE**  
**INSURANCE**  
AGENCY INC.



# HOLIDAY visits can reveal concerns

Is it time for more support for your aging loved one?

The holiday season brings joy, tradition and togetherness. For many families in the Des Moines area, it's the one time of year when everyone gathers under one roof. Along with the laughs and warm meals, these visits offer a valuable — and often eye-opening — opportunity to check in on aging relatives.



What makes the holidays special also makes them the ideal moment for a quiet, caring assessment: Is your loved one still safe and thriving living alone?

**Signs that suggest a decline in independent living.** During your holiday visit, pay close attention to your loved one's living environment, physical appearance and daily routines. The following indicators may signal they need additional support:

- Poor hygiene (unwashed clothing, strong

body odor, unkempt hair)

- Noticeable weight loss or gain
- Visible bruises or injuries that could

suggest falls

- Messy or unclean home (dishes piled up, spoiled food, excessive clutter)

- Unpaid bills or unopened mail

- Empty or misused medication bottles or confusion about dosages

- Mobility issues, like trouble getting up from a chair or holding onto furniture to walk

- Frequent forgetfulness, including missed appointments or repeating the same stories

If you notice one or more of these signs, it doesn't mean immediate action is required — but it is a clear signal to explore options.

**Winter makes these risks even more**

**serious.** Iowa winters are beautiful — but harsh. Snow and ice increase the risk of falls, cold snaps can lead to frozen pipes or power outages, and poor road conditions can make daily errands impossible.

Assisted living communities in the Des

Moines area offer a safer, more connected alternative. Residents benefit from warm meals, daily wellness checks, social opportunities and on-site support.

**A compassionate next step.** The idea of change can be hard, but it does not have to be rushed. Start by talking with your loved one about what you have observed and how you want the best for their health and happiness. Tour local assisted living communities, ask questions, and explore care options that match your loved one's needs.

Your holiday visit is a chance not just to reconnect, but to protect. If you notice signs of struggle, you're not alone. Supportive solutions are available in the area, helping your loved one stay safe, healthy and surrounded by care this winter and beyond. ■

Information provided by Ashley Bergman, Addington Place of Des Moines, [addingtonplaceofdesmoines.com](http://addingtonplaceofdesmoines.com). Written by Discovery Senior Living, 3461 Bonita Bay Blvd., Suite 100, Bonita Springs, FL 34134.



## Warm Up To CAREFREE LIVING Before WINTER SETS IN

*Enjoy Worry-Free Living and a Cozy Winter Season Surrounded by Friends*

When winter weather hits, shoveling snow, navigating icy roads, and dealing with freezing temperatures can make daily life challenging and isolating. At **Addington Place of Des Moines**, residents enjoy warmth, friendship, and peace of mind all season long. Maintenance-free living, chef-prepared meals, and on-site support make every day safer and more enjoyable than living alone in your home.

Moving before the snow falls means avoiding winter worries and embracing a season filled with comfort, connection, and care.

**MOVE IN NOW**  
and enjoy the rest of December  
**RENT-FREE**  
plus **TAKE \$2,026 OFF**  
your January rent\*

**ADDINGTON PLACE**  
**OF DES MOINES**  
An Arnum Senior Living Community

**515.992.2877 | [AddingtonPlaceOfDesMoines.com](http://AddingtonPlaceOfDesMoines.com)**  
5815 SE 27TH Street, Des Moines, IA 50320  
Assisted Living | Memory Care



\*Cannot be combined with other offers. Valid for new residents only. Promotional offers are subject to change or end without notice. ©2025 Arnum Senior Living. All Rights Reserved. Prices, plans and programs are subject to change or withdrawal without notice. State where prohibited by law. Managed and Operated by Arnum Senior Living. APTM 5051 1/2025.

# DMOS breaks ground in Norwalk

DMOS Orthopaedic Centers (Des Moines Orthopaedic Surgeons P.C.) announced the groundbreaking for its newest location at the corner of Highway 28 and Turnberry Drive across the street from City State Bank in Norwalk. This expansion will provide critical musculoskeletal care, walk-in orthopedic urgent injury clinic as well as physical/hand therapy services, sports medicine and performance training to the Norwalk area and surrounding communities. The new space for the DMOS Norwalk and Urgent Injury Clinic will allow for improved access, patient experience and flow for those with orthopedic needs.

“Our team is honored to continue to provide musculoskeletal care to the people of Central Iowa whether they have an acute injury or a chronic condition,” said Dr. Nick Honkamp, DMOS Board President. “The new Norwalk clinic will give us the opportunity to serve even more patients in this growing



community and continue the tradition of DMOS that started 70 years ago with the innovation that keeps us looking toward the future. We look forward to seeing this project

of our sixth location move along with the help of our partners including the city of Norwalk, the Norwalk Chamber, Estes Construction and Invision Architecture.” ■

# HAMMER graduates from Law Enforcement Academy

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

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

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

Officer Hammer will serve with the Norwalk Police Department. ■





# IMPORT auto myths

Don't let misinformation cost you

Owners of imported vehicles — from reliable Japanese models to high-performance German cars — often hear exaggerated and costly advice. Separating fact from fiction is key to smart, efficient ownership.



## The top three import auto myths busted

• **Import parts are always impossible to find and expensive.** False. Most major brands (Toyota, Honda, BMW, VW, Audi) have established and excellent parts networks. Only genuinely rare or exotic models pose a significant parts challenge.

• **Only a dealership can service your specific import.** False. Specialized, independent shops offer dealership-level expertise, often at a lower cost and with more personalized service. Seek out shops with proven, brand-specific training.

• **European cars need less frequent (7,000-10,000 mile) oil changes.** This depends. Modern European engines utilize high-quality synthetic oil designed for long intervals, but this is often

based on light-duty driving and manufactures' desire to market low cost of maintenance. States with harsher weather conditions or stop-and-go traffic, like Iowa, may be considered heavy-duty environments where oil service intervals should not exceed 5,000 miles to properly protect your engine.

## Smart ownership starts here

While your owner's manual is a good guide, it's not the final word. Never rely on folklore. Visiting a qualified brand specialist with the intent to protect your investment and schedule a proactive maintenance plan is in your best interest. When faced with a repair, always ask your specialist to show you the data via a Digital Vehicle Inspection and full technical details like specific diagnostic code (DTC) for your check engine light. Staying informed ensures your import runs optimally without unnecessary expense. ■

Information provided by Chris Werner, owner and lead technician, Werner's Elite Auto, 506 1/2 E. Euclid Ave., Indianola, 515-259-0122, [www.wernerseliteauto.com](http://www.wernerseliteauto.com).



# ELEVATING THE STANDARD










+MORE!

## IMPORT AUTO SPECIALISTS



515.259.0122
| 506 1/2 Euclid Ave. Indianola, Iowa
| [www.WernersEliteAuto.com](http://www.WernersEliteAuto.com)

# Accredited

ASSOCIATE ADVERTISING  
EXECUTIVE



## Martha Munro, AAE

Martha Munro completed a series of industry training courses with the Association of Community Publishers and has earned the title of Associate Advertising Executive.

### What does this mean to her customers?

It means Martha is accredited with industry knowledge in current advertising and marketing services to help turn our readers into their customers.

Contact Martha today at  
[martha@iowalivingmagazines.com](mailto:martha@iowalivingmagazines.com) or 515-321-5246.



Your family of locally owned lifestyle publications focusing on the people, places and events of the communities we serve.



## HOME HEALTH

By Aaron Wheeler

# THE SUPPORT you need

How adult day services make caregiving sustainable.

Caregiving sits at the intersection of devotion and endurance. The work is meaningful, yet the constant coordination — appointments, safety concerns, daily routines — can leave even the most organized families stretched thin. During the colder months, when days feel shorter and schedules feel fuller, many caregivers turn to adult day services to help their loved ones stay engaged while preserving their own energy and balance.



- **How adult day services work.** Adult day services offer daytime support for people who benefit from supervised activity, structured engagement, or the chance to spend time with others. Participation can follow a once-a-week routine or a full weekday schedule, based on what fits each family's needs. Many participants live with dementia, but a diagnosis isn't required; the emphasis is on safety, connection, and consistency.

- **A reliable source of stability.** Adult day settings are designed to feel warm, dependable, and secure. Participants follow a familiar rhythm of conversation, activities, and meals. Families know their loved ones are in good hands. As one caregiver, Joni J. of Waukee, explained, "Before my dad started attending, our days could swing in any direction. The consistency he has now gives me room to be a better daughter."

That reassurance is common. Karen T. of Ankeny, whose mother visits an adult day program, said, "Mom comes home more relaxed — and that makes me feel relaxed as well. I didn't realize how thinly I was stretched until I saw how much calmer she was at the end of the day."

- **What a strong program offers.** Well-designed adult day services support whole-person well-being through:

- Social interaction that encourages meaningful connection
- Nutritious meals and snacks
- Activities that promote cognitive and physical health
- A safe, familiar environment supported by caring professionals

- **Why families turn to these services.** Many people explore adult day services only after they're overwhelmed, yet engaging earlier can prevent fatigue and strengthen family relationships. Participants enjoy routine and companionship. Caregivers regain time, steadiness, and the reassurance that their loved one is thriving.

- **If you're considering next steps.** Adult day services can become a dependable part of your caregiving plan, offering structure, safety, and engagement for your loved one while helping you maintain balance. Why not take a few minutes to browse services in your area? You'll be glad you did. ■

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





## The Village

A WESLEYLIFE COMMUNITY

Dear Indianola,

The Village is growing! We're investing \$49.5 million in a major redevelopment, expanding living options, wellness spaces, and on-site restaurants — all while keeping jobs local and creating new opportunities.

This transformation is designed with you in mind. You'll enjoy a host of new amenities that make it easier to connect with friends and family, pursue your interests, and focus on your well-being. From wellness spaces to inviting gathering areas and so much more, life at The Village will offer more ways to live fully.

When it comes to dining, you can still enjoy cooking at home — or choose from multiple restaurants offering chef-prepared meals that residents rave about.

And with a full range of supportive services on-site, you'll have peace of mind knowing that if your needs change after an illness, surgery, or injury, you won't need to relocate or rely on family for care.

For 35 years, The Village has been part of the fabric of Indianola. With this redevelopment, we're proud to continue our commitment: *We're all in for Indianola.*

Call (515) 961-0878 to schedule a visit.

Love,

*Your friends at The Village*

Independent Living • Assisted Living • Memory Care • Short-Term Rehabilitation • Long-Term Nursing Care

1203 North E Street | Indianola, IA 50125 | (515) 710-9334 | [wesleylife.org/the-village](http://wesleylife.org/the-village)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.







**vivid**  
Life Spa

Feel Confident. Glow. Live vivid.

*Give Glow - Get Glow*

This holiday,  
give the glow that lasts.  
Purchase a gift card in  
December  
and receive a free gift card  
for yourself.

Call or order online today!

Buy \$100 - Get \$10  
Buy \$250 - Get \$30  
Buy \$500 - Get \$75

[www.vividlifespaspa.com](http://www.vividlifespaspa.com)  
515-850-7848

## WELLNESS By Chelsea Taggart

### SLAY the season: Treat yourself

The holidays are a beautiful mix of joy, celebration and, let us be honest, a fair amount of stress. Between shopping, traveling and squeezing in every festive event, it is easy to forget to pause and take care of yourself. This year, we are encouraging a different kind of holiday tradition: putting your well-being at the top of your list.

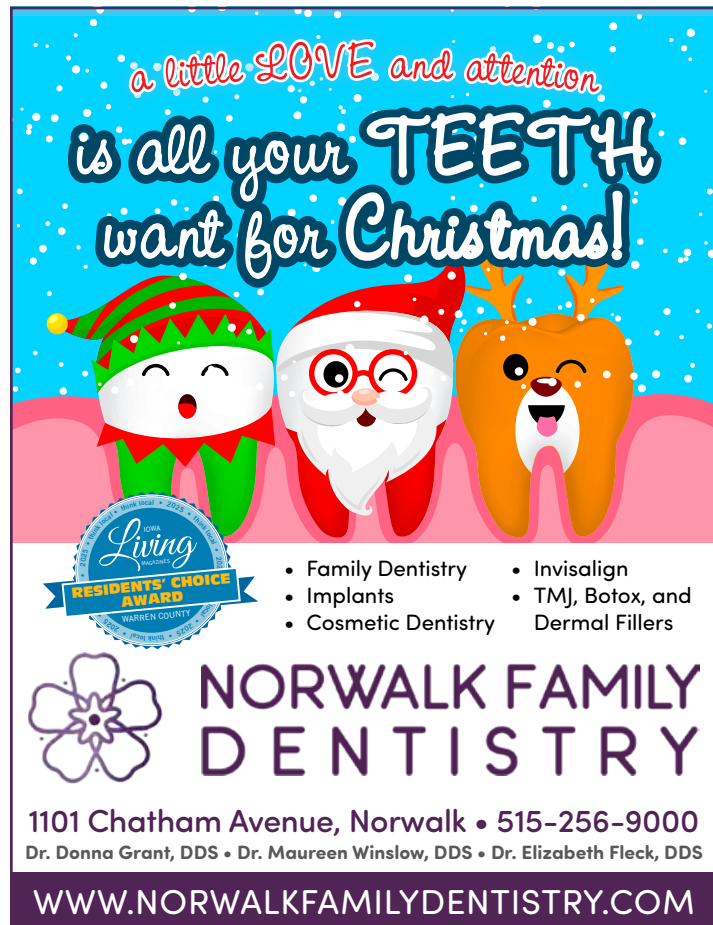


Self-care does not have to be complicated. Sometimes it is as simple as taking 10 quiet minutes with a cup of tea, saying “no” to an extra obligation, or treating yourself to something that makes you feel genuinely refreshed.

If you are ready for a little extra rejuvenation, there are treatments designed to help you look and feel your best through every holiday photo and gathering. Hydrating facials are perfect for combating dry winter skin and restoring a dewy glow. A gentle chemical peel can brighten dullness and give your complexion a smooth, radiant finish just in time for festivities. For those wanting a quick confidence boost, wrinkle relaxing injections or subtle fillers can soften fine lines and enhance your natural features without downtime. And, if you are hoping to feel more toned and sculpted, ultrasonic cavitation can help reduce stubborn areas, while Emsculpt offers a powerful way to strengthen and define muscles for a firmer look.

This season, remember that caring for yourself isn't an indulgence. It is a gift that keeps you feeling centered, confident and ready to enjoy everything the holidays bring. Here's to a calmer, brighter, more radiant you. ■

Information provided by Chelsea Taggart, L.E, Vivid Life Spa, 1951 E. 18th St., Suite 105, Norwalk, 515-850-7848, [vividlifespaspa.com](http://vividlifespaspa.com).



*a little LOVE and attention*  
is all your **TEETH**  
want for Christmas!

**NORWALK FAMILY DENTISTRY**

1101 Chatham Avenue, Norwalk • 515-256-9000  
Dr. Donna Grant, DDS • Dr. Maureen Winslow, DDS • Dr. Elizabeth Fleck, DDS

[WWW.NORWALKFAMILYDENTISTRY.COM](http://WWW.NORWALKFAMILYDENTISTRY.COM)

**RESIDENTS' CHOICE AWARD**  
NORWALK COUNTY  
HARREN COUNTY

- Family Dentistry
- Implants
- Cosmetic Dentistry
- Invisalign
- TMJ, Botox, and Dermal Fillers

## HEALTH By Dr. Maureen Winslow

### COLD weather, hot drinks and sensitive teeth

As temperatures drop, many people notice a familiar sting when stepping into the cold air or sipping a hot drink. Tooth sensitivity is common in winter and can make even your favorite seasonal comforts — like coffee or cocoa — unpleasant.



When enamel, the tooth's protective outer layer, wears down or gums recede, the underlying dentin becomes exposed. Dentin contains tiny tubules that connect to the tooth's nerve, allowing hot, cold or sweet sensations to reach it directly — causing that sharp, sudden discomfort. Cold weather can also make teeth contract slightly, amplifying existing sensitivity.

Fortunately, there are ways to find relief. Switching to a toothpaste formulated for sensitive teeth can help block those nerve pathways over time. Using a soft-bristled toothbrush and gentle brushing technique prevents further enamel wear and gum irritation. If you grind your teeth (especially at night), a custom nightguard can protect your enamel.

Persistent or worsening sensitivity should be checked by your dentist — it could signal cavities, worn fillings, cracked teeth, or gum recession that needs attention. With the right care, you can enjoy your favorite hot drinks and the crisp air of fall and winter — without the wince.

Take care of your smile this season. It deserves to feel as warm and comfortable as your favorite mug. ■

Information provided by Dr. Maureen Winslow, Norwalk Family Dentistry, 1101 Chatham Ave., Suite A, Norwalk, 515-256-9000, [www.norwalkfamilydentistry.com](http://www.norwalkfamilydentistry.com).



## SHOCKWAVE therapy

A proven game changer for auto accident recovery

Car crashes leave behind more than dents. They cause whiplash, neck pain, lower back injuries, muscle spasms and stubborn soft-tissue damage that traditional treatments often struggle to resolve. Shockwave therapy is rapidly becoming a first-choice solution for thousands of accident victims.

This non-invasive treatment delivers high-energy acoustic waves deep into damaged tissues, triggering powerful biological responses. Within minutes, it dramatically increases blood flow, breaks down scar tissue and calcifications, reduces inflammation, and stimulates collagen production — exactly what traumatized muscles, tendons and ligaments need to heal.

Patients with post-accident chronic neck pain, lumbar strains and myofascial pain report 60-90% pain reduction after just three to six sessions, often avoiding months of opioids or risky injections. Whiplash-associated disorders respond especially well: shockwave accelerates tissue regeneration, restores range of motion and shortens recovery time significantly compared to physical therapy alone.

Best of all, there is no downtime. Safe, drug-free, and covered by many auto insurance plans, shockwave therapy helps you reclaim your life faster after an accident. ■

Information provided by Dr. Jesse Stumbaugh, Norwalk Chiropractic, 1300 Sunset Drive, 515-981-9208, [www.norwalk-chiropractic.com](http://www.norwalk-chiropractic.com). Norwalk Chiropractic is a provider with most major insurance companies.



# DON'T LET WHIPLASH WIN.

## Heal Better, Faster.

Ongoing pain, weakness, or tingling could indicate an underlying issue.

We can help address the root cause and restore proper function.

PRESENT THIS COUPON FOR

# \$37 EXAM

Includes: X-Ray, Report of Findings, and One Complimentary Shockwave Treatment.



LEARN ABOUT  
SHOCKWAVE  
THERAPY!

CALL US TODAY! 515-981-9208

1300 Sunset Dr, Norwalk • Mon-Fri 7am-7pm

Dr. Jesse Stumbaugh & Dr. Dan Blohm

WE ARE DEDICATED TO IMPROVING THE HEALTH AND WELL BEING OF ALL OUR PATIENTS.

## Q: What is glaucoma?

**A:** Glaucoma is a group of eye diseases that damage the optic nerve, which is the part of the eye responsible for transmitting visual information to the brain. This damage is usually associated with elevated intraocular pressure (IOP), which occurs when fluid in the eye does not drain properly. Over time, increased pressure can lead to gradual and irreversible vision loss, often beginning with the peripheral (side) vision. Because early glaucoma typically has no noticeable symptoms, many people are unaware they have it until significant damage has occurred. Regular eye exams are essential for early detection.

Treatment focuses on lowering eye pressure to slow or prevent further optic nerve damage. The most common first-line therapy is medicated eye drops that either reduce fluid production or improve fluid drainage. If medications are insufficient, doctors may recommend laser procedures, such as laser trabeculoplasty, which helps fluid drain more effectively. In more advanced or unresponsive cases, surgical options — including minimally invasive glaucoma surgery (MIGS) or traditional filtration surgery — may be used to create new drainage pathways. Lifestyle measures, such as adhering to prescribed treatments, protecting the eyes and maintaining overall health, can support medical care. While glaucoma cannot be cured, timely diagnosis and consistent treatment can significantly preserve vision and quality of life. ■

Information provided by Jonathan Anderson, O.D. of Optometric Associates of Warren County, P.C., 1228 Sunset Drive, Norwalk, 515-981-0224.



# Give Yourself the Gift of Better Vision This Holiday

*When was your  
Last Eye Exam?*

SET UP YOUR  
APPOINTMENT  
TODAY!



SEE ALL OUR  
SERVICES WE  
HAVE TO OFFER!

## ACCEPTING NEW PATIENTS!

Craig A. Winjum, OD • Jonathan P. Anderson, OD • Michael J. O'Meara, OD

OPTOMETRIC



ASSOCIATES

OPTOMETRICASSOC.COM

THREE CONVENIENT LOCATIONS

1228 Sunset Dr. #A, Norwalk • 515-981-0224

225 W. Ashland, Indianola • 515-961-5305

55 School Street, Carlisle • 515-989-0889

# Season's Greetings

## FROM YOUR NEW HOME!

FOR SALE

IOWARealty  
Iowa's Largest

Whether you're buying, selling, or dreaming of a fresh start in the New Year, I'm here to guide you every step of the way.

**Make this season merry and bright by finding the perfect place to call home.**

IOWARealty  
Iowa's Largest

200 Army Post Rd. #60, Des Moines



**VONNIE POTTER**

Realtor • (515) 710-3722  
Your NORWALK Neighbor



**SEE ALL  
CURRENT  
LISTINGS!**

## REAL ESTATE

By Vonnie Potter

## HOW TO choose the right Realtor

Choosing the right Realtor is one of the most important decisions you make when buying or selling a home. The right professional can make the process smoother, less stressful and more successful. Here are a few key factors to consider when selecting a Realtor who is the best fit for you.

Start by looking for experience and local expertise. A knowledgeable Realtor understands neighborhood trends, pricing and inventory, which can help you make confident decisions. Don't hesitate to ask how long they have been in the business and what areas they specialize in.

Next, consider communication. A great Realtor should respond promptly, keep you informed, and explain each step of the process in a clear and friendly way. Buying or selling a home can move quickly, so working with someone who keeps you updated is essential.

It's also helpful to meet with a few Realtors before committing. A consultation gives you a chance to ask questions, discuss expectations, and make sure your personalities and goals align. Trust and comfort are important — this is someone who will guide you through a major financial and emotional decision.

Finally, choose a Realtor who genuinely listens to your needs and advocates for your best interests. With the right partner by your side, your real estate journey can be both exciting and rewarding. ■



Information provided by Vonnie Potter, SRES, MA "Advocating Smart Home Choices for Our Community," Iowa Realty, 200 Army Post Road, Suite 60, Des Moines, Iowa 50315, 515-710-3722, [www.vonniepottor.com](http://www.vonniepottor.com), [www.vonniepottor.com](mailto:www.vonniepottor.com).

## PLAN AHEAD

By Buffy Peters

## GRIEF and the holidays

When grief comes along for the holidays, the absence of someone special can feel even more amplified. Holiday traditions can bring up memories from the past, which perhaps now feel painful and in direct opposition to the holiday cheer that seems inescapable this time of year.

What about the proverbial "elephant in the room"? Someone is missing this year, but if we talk about it that might make people sad, or worse, cry, reminding them of the loss. It might feel like it is better to not say anything and pretend it isn't there.

What I have learned from grief is that, when you acknowledge the elephant, it allows us to walk alongside one another together instead of being left alone in our grief. Yes, tears may come, and that's OK. But you know what else might come? When the elephant has a seat at the table, it is no longer fighting for our attention, using all of our energy to pretend we aren't grieving. That acknowledgement makes room for grief, love and joy to coexist. It's not an either/or; it certainly can be a both/and.

You can be grieving and find glimmers of joy this season. Allow yourself to feel however you are feeling (with no judgement) and make room for the things that bring you joy. It is not dishonoring your loved one, and it won't make your grief disappear, but it might just make this time of year a bit more bearable. ■



Information provided by Buffy Peters, Director of Hamilton's Academy of Grief & Loss, 3601 Westown Parkway, West Des Moines, IA 50266, 515-697-3666, [www.HamiltonsFuneralHome.com/academy-of-grief-and-loss](http://www.HamiltonsFuneralHome.com/academy-of-grief-and-loss).

## PLAN AHEAD FOR PEACE of MIND

**Plan & Protect before  
the need arises.**

There is very little that can take away the pain when someone we love dies. However, the emotional stress that often accompanies a death can be lessened by Advanced Planning before the need arises.



**Contact Hamilton's to start your plan.**

[www.HamiltonsFuneralHome.com](http://www.HamiltonsFuneralHome.com) 515-243-5221



**HAMILTON'S**  
FUNERAL & AFTER LIFE SERVICES

6 Area Locations • Funerals • Cremation • Advanced Planning  
Academy of Grief & Loss • Pet Services • Memorial Gift Shop



# TRAVEL tips for hearing aid users

Going on vacation soon? Before you head out, keep these tips in mind to make traveling with your hearing aids a breeze.

## Book the right accommodations

When reserving a hotel, request a hearing-accessible room for a more comfortable stay. By law, hotels must provide rooms with visual notification devices, TDDs and telephone amplifiers for individuals with hearing loss.

## Pack smart

Add your daily hearing aid essentials to your suitcase, including your hearing aid case and dryer, a charger for rechargeable devices (with an adapter for international travel), domes and wax guards, extra batteries for non-rechargeable devices and a cleaning kit.



## Consider your mode of transportation

• **Air travel:** Unless the airport staff tells you otherwise, you can keep your hearing aids on when you go through security. It's also smart to connect to the airport's loop system to hear announcements more clearly and sign up for airline text message alerts to stay informed about gate changes or delays. Wearing your hearing aids on the plane will allow you to communicate more easily with the flight attendants.

• **Public transportation:** Take advantage of loop systems in subway and bus stations. Preplanning will also help. Purchase tickets online and map your route in advance for greater peace of mind.

• **Car travel:** Keep your hearing devices on while driving. To stay focused on the road, reduce distractions by keeping windows up to minimize wind noise and avoid playing loud music. All these steps will help ensure you arrive at your destination safely.

• **Navigate cruises easily:** Did you know that most cruise ships offer assistive listening devices for live shows and public announcements? Inquire about these when booking or with guest services once onboard.

## Enjoy outdoor adventures more

If your plans include hiking or beach days, consider using a hearing aid sweatband to keep your hearing aids secure and protect them from moisture. Also, bring a waterproof case with you — you can pop your hearing aids in it during a rainstorm or if you want to go swimming.

Getting a clean-and-check for your devices before you leave is another way to ensure a hassle-free vacation. Call your local audiologist today to schedule one. ■

Information provided by Dr. Kelly Cook, Audiologist, Iowa Hearing Center, 1228 Sunset Drive, Suite B, Norwalk, 515-416-5990, [www.iowaHearingCenter.com](http://www.iowaHearingCenter.com).

# Travel Smart, Hear Clearly



Travel Without Limits—Explore the Newest Hearing Aid Technology!  
Call (515) 416-5990 to schedule an appointment today!




**IOWA HEARING  
CENTER**

1228 Sunset Dr., Ste. B  
Norwalk, IA 50211

[www.iowaHearingCenter.com](http://www.iowaHearingCenter.com)



**Kelly Cook, Au.D., CCC-A**  
*Doctor of Audiology*

We proudly fit  
**oticon**  
life-changing technology

## 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. 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.

# NORWALK WARRIORS

*Norwalk High School is part of the Lincoln High School swimming & diving team. Lincoln provides middle school and high school swimming & diving to South Des Moines, Norwalk & Carlisle.*

## VARSITY BOYS SWIMMING

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
Dec 4	5:30PM	Des Moines Hoover	Hoover High School
Dec 9	5:30PM	Des Moines Roosevelt	Roosevelt High School Pool
Dec 11	5:30PM	Ames	Lincoln High School Pool
Dec 16	5:30PM	Newton	Newton YMCA
Jan 8	5:30PM	Marshalltown	Lincoln High School Pool
Jan 13	5:30PM	Carroll	Carroll Recreation Center
Jan 15	5:30PM	Ottumwa	Beach Ottumwa
Jan 20	5:30PM	Mason City	Lincoln High School Pool

GOOD LUCK WARRIORS!

## Start your morning off right with an update from the **daily**umbrella

Brief updates on local news, weather, events, career opportunities and the morning chuckle — for free!

**Delivered Mondays through Fridays for FREE to your inbox.**

SCAN HERE

or subscribe at [dmcityview.com](http://dmcityview.com)

Brought to you by the publisher of CITYVIEW and the Iowa Living magazines.



# THE PROGRESS in 2025

This past year has been an exciting chapter for the Norwalk Area Chamber of Commerce, marked by measurable growth, increased visibility and an ever-strengthening sense of unity among our members.



As we reflect on the accomplishments of 2025, it is clear our collective effort has elevated not only the chamber, but the entire business ecosystem within our community.

One of the most tangible indicators of progress is our membership growth. This year, the Chamber proudly welcomed 43 new members, each contributing fresh ideas, expanded opportunities and a renewed enthusiasm for what is possible when businesses support each other. With every new business that joins, we expand our network, deepen our partnerships and enhance the resources available to those who call our area home.

We celebrated ribbon cuttings with 26 of

our member businesses. These events are far more than ceremonial photo opportunities; they reflect the courage, dedication and vision of business owners who are actively shaping our local economy, whether by launching new ventures, expanding existing operations or completely remodeling established businesses to breathe new life into them.

Our online presence also experienced incredible engagement. The chamber's website recorded 16,742 views, proving that businesses and residents alike look to us and our Business Directory as a trusted hub for connection and information. On Facebook, our page and its content received a combined 348,768 cumulative views, an impressive testament to the visibility and reach of our digital communications. Meanwhile, Instagram helped us extend our storytelling even further, with our content viewed by 28,846 people, spotlighting our members and initiatives to a broad and engaged audience.

This was also the year we proudly

launched Enjoy Norwalk, our official tourism brand designed to highlight local attractions, accommodations and the many fun places to eat, gather and explore. Since going live in May, the website has already been viewed 1,713 times, a fantastic result for a platform that has been active less than six months. The early response confirms what we already knew: that our area has something special to offer.

As we look ahead, 2026 promises even more momentum with the introduction of Bags for Business, a new community bags tournament, increased tourism investment and the launch of the Norwalk Area Volunteer Network.

Most importantly, we have cultivated a culture of support, collaboration, camaraderie and joy. Serving as your director has been an honor, and I cannot wait to see what we accomplish next. ■

Information provided by Mel Guanci, Executive Director, Norwalk Area Chamber of Commerce.

Promote. Connect. Grow.

View the business directory



Connecting Businesses.



Strengthening Community.



Building Success.



Connect with the  
Norwalk Area Chamber  
and Join Today!



## OUT & ABOUT



DMOS Orthopaedic Centers held a groundbreaking ceremony for its new facility in Norwalk Oct. 30.



Norwalk Area Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for IMARA Performance Physical Therapy on Nov. 17.



Norwalk Area Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Monarch Medical on Nov. 17.



Norwalk Area Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Vivid Life Spa on Oct. 9.



Norwalk Area Chamber of Commerce hosted RUNorwalk Oct. 25.



Laura Rizer, Mackenzie Duffy, Jen Penisten and Chelsea Taggart at the Norwalk Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Vivid Life Spa on Oct. 9.



Happy Holidays from Casey Bright, Cole Bright, Caitlin Kohls, Tessa Grinder, Kayleigh Meneough and Lauren Whitaker - Amore Pets



Happy Holidays from Steph Bintner, Lizanne Eggers and Nikki Huetter - Bellflower Florist & Gifts



OUT & ABOUT

# HAPPY Holidays

from businesses in Norwalk.



Jaimee Dupage, Cheryl Jackson and Shelley Heckert -  
Rock Valley Physical Therapy



Alex Arpy and Rebecca Lenguadoro -  
Optometric Associates



Judy Evans - Gregg Young  
Chevrolet of Norwalk



Alec Lawrence - Hotworx



Becca Sharpe - Nutri Smoothie  
& Cafe



Cody Bingham - Fairfield Inn



Callie Buchanan and Shonna Joss - Tru Bank



Katie Plagge and Harshee Phillips - Medicap of  
Norwalk



Tony Onstot and Anthony Onstot - Ted's  
Used Cars & Auto Repair



Makayla McKenzie - Sincerely  
Saige Salon



Allee Clark - Xcite Nutrition



Deana Brumm - Wendy's Ice  
Cream



Laura Starkweather - Iles Funeral  
Home



# 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.

## WANT TO BUY

WANT TO BUY your manufactured or mobile home 1990 and newer CENTURY HOMES of OSKALOOSA 641-672-2344 (mcn)

## AUTOMOBILES

GOT AN UNWANTED CAR??? DONATE IT TO PATRIOTIC HEARTS. Fast free pick up. Patriotic Hearts' programs help veterans find work or start their own business. Call 24/7: 1-833-485-1046. (mcn)

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)

## CABLE/INTERNET

AFFORDABLE TV & INTERNET. If you are overpaying for your service, call now for a free quote and see how much you can save! 1-833-472-7954. (mcn)

**DIRECTV-** All your entertainment. Nothing on your roof! Sign up for Directv and get your first three months of Max, Paramount+, Showtime, Starz, MGM+ and Cinemax included. Choice package \$84.99/mo. Some restrictions apply. Call DIRECTV 1-866-296-1409. (mcn)

## 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)

## HEALTH & MEDICAL

**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)

**PORTABLE OXYGEN CONCENTRATOR** May Be Covered by Medicare! Reclaim independence and mobility with the compact design and long-lasting battery of Inogen One. Free information kit! Call 844-716-2411. (mcn)

**STOP OVERPAYING FOR HEALTH INSURANCE!** A recent study shows that a majority of people struggle to pay for health coverage. Let us show you how much you can save. Call Now for a no-obligation quote: 1-888-772-8454. You will need to have your zip code to connect to the right provider. (mcn)

**ATTENTION OXYGEN THERAPY USERS!** Discover Oxygen Therapy That Moves with You with Inogen Portable Oxygen Concentrators. FREE information kit. Call 1-833-650-5916. (mcn)

## HOME SERVICES

**Don't Pay For Covered Home Repairs Again!** Our home warranty covers ALL MAJOR SYSTEMS AND APPLIANCES. We stand by our service and if we can't fix it, we'll replace it! Pick the plan that fits your budget! Call: 1-833-816-2128. (mcn)

**WATER & FIRE DAMAGE RESTORATION.** Our trusted professionals will restore your home to protect your family and your home's value! Call 24/7: 1-833-879-1480. Mold Remediation services are also available! (mcn)

## MISCELLANEOUS

Reach over 1.4 million homes for just \$249! Advertise your business or item with a classified ad in the Midwest Free Community Papers. Simple, cost-effective, and powerful. One call, and you're done! Boost your visibility now! 888-899-6327. (mcn)

**NEED NEW FLOORING?** Call today to schedule a FREE in-home estimate on Carpeting & Flooring. Call Today! 1-833-641-6323. (mcn)

**INJURED IN AN ACCIDENT?** Don't Accept the insurance company's first offer. Many injured parties are entitled to cash settlements in the \$1000's. Get a free evaluation to see what your case is really worth. 100% Free Evaluation. Call Now: 1-833-879-1534. (mcn)

Prepare for power outages today with a Generac Home Standby Generator. Act now to receive a FREE 5-Year warranty with qualifying purchase. Call 1-877-228-5789 today to schedule a free quote. It's not just a generator. It's a power move. (mcn)

**NO MORE CLEANING OUT GUTTERS.** Guaranteed! LeafFilter is backed by a no-clog guarantee and lifetime transferrable warranty. Call today 1-855-577-1268 to sched-

ule a FREE inspection and no obligation estimate. Plus get 75% off installation and a bonus \$250 discount! Limited time only. Restrictions apply, see representative for warranty and offer details. (mcn)

**THE BATHROOM OF YOUR DREAMS** in as little as 1 day. Limited Time Offer - \$1000 off or No Payments and No Interest for 18 months for customers who qualify. BCI Bath & Shower. Many options available. Quality materials & professional installation. Senior & Military Discounts Available. Call Today! 1-833-618-1178. (mcn)

Replace your roof with the best looking and longest lasting material steel from Erie Metal Roofs! Three styles and multiple colors available. Guaranteed to last a lifetime! Limited Time Offer- up to 50% off installation + Additional 10% off install (for military, health workers & 1st responders.) Call Erie Metal Roofs: 1-844-907-2386. (mcn)

## REAL ESTATE

**WE BUY HOUSES** for Cash AS-IS! No repairs. No fuss. Any condition. Easy process: Call, get cash offer and get paid. Call today for your fair cash offer: 1-888-715-0513. (mcn)

## WANT TO BUY

**CASH PAID FOR HIGH-END MEN'S SPORT WATCHES!** Rolex, Breitling, Omega, Patek Philippe, Heuer, Daytona, GMT, Submariner and Speedmaster. Call 1-833-641-6646. (mcn)

**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)

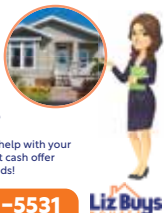
## We Buy Houses!

Liz Buys Houses Connects Home Sellers with Legitimate Cash Buyers Nationwide!  
**No Repairs. No Fuss.**

- Fair Cash Offer
- Quick Closing
- No Realtor Fees
- No House Repairs
- Simple Home Sale

We work fast and are ready to help with your sale. Call today to see if our fast cash offer aligns with your home sale needs!

CALL (877) 791-5531



**LIFE LINE SCREENING.**  
The Power of Prevention

## Peace of Mind or Early Detection

Now, More than ever, it's important to get screened for **Stroke and Cardiovascular Disease Risk**

It's simple and painless.

833-970-4172

**Jacuzzi Bath Remodel**

**Safety. Style. Stress-Free Installation.**

CALL NOW  
1.866.753.9521

**SPECIAL OFFER**  
**Waiving All Installation Costs!**

Additions apply. Offer subject to design and vary by dealer. Expires 12/31/25.



**Transform Your Bathroom and Change Your Life.**

**FREE TOILET + \$1,500 OFF**

For your FREE information kit and our Senior Discounts, Call Today Toll-Free  
**1-855-417-1306**

**safestep**

\*Free toilet with purchase and installation of a walk-in tub or walk-in shower only. Offer available while supplies last. No cash value. Must present offer at time of purchase. Cannot be combined with any other offer. Market restrictions may apply. Offer available in select markets only. CALL 1-855-417-1306. 12/31/25.

**ERIEHOME**  
Erie Roofing Since 1976

**Trust the Nation's #1 Roofing Contractor**  
Award-Winning Roofing and Customer Service

**LIMITED TIME OFFER**  
**50% OFF**  
Installation

**FREE ESTIMATE**  
**SCHEDULE TODAY!**  
Call 1.833.370.1234

**CALL TODAY! 1.833.370.1234**

New orders only. Does not include material costs. Cannot be combined with any other offer. Minimum purchase required. Other restrictions may apply. This is an advertisement placed on behalf of Erie Construction Mid-West, Inc. ("Erie"). Offer terms and conditions may apply and the offer may not be available in your area. If you call the number provided, you consent to being contacted by telephone, SMS text message, email, pre-recorded messages by Erie or its affiliates and service providers using automated technologies notwithstanding if you are on a DO NOT CALL list or register. Please review our Privacy Policy and Terms of Use on homeservicescompliance.com. All rights reserved. License numbers available at eriehome.com/erielicenses/

Stop cleaning-out your gutters this season

**LeafFilter**  
GUTTER PROTECTION

EXPIRES: 11/30/2025

AN ADDITIONAL

**15% OFF + 10%**  
**LeafFilter®**

Discount For  
Seniors + Military

Get a FREE full gutter inspection and estimate: **1-855-595-2102** Promo: 285

\*See Representative for full warranty details. \*Promotional offer includes 15% off plus an additional 10% off for qualified veterans and/or seniors. No obligation estimate valid for 1 year. †Subject to credit approval. Call for details. AR 366920923, AZ ROC 344027, CA 1035795, CT HIC 0671520, FL CBC056678, IA C127230, ID RCE-51604, LA 559544, MA 176447, MD MHIC111225, MI 262300173, 262300318, 262300328, 262300329, 262300330, 262300331, MN IR731804, MT 226192, ND 47304, NE 50145-22, 50145-23, NJ 13VH09953900, NM 408693, NV 86990, NY H-19114, H-52229, OR 218294, PA 179643, 069383, RI GC-41354, TN 10981, UT 10783658-5501, VA 2705169445, WA LEAFNNW82232, WY W056912.



# HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



NORWALK COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2025

**As 2025 draws to a close,** I want to take a moment to recognize the importance of this season for our Norwalk community. December reminds us that learning and growth happen both inside and outside the classroom. It's a time to slow down, reflect on how far we've come, and appreciate the people who make our district what it is, our students, staff, and families. Whether your plans include long held traditions or a quiet few days at home, I hope this month brings rest, connection, and a renewed sense of gratitude.

Throughout the past year, our schools have continued to thrive thanks to the dedication of our staff and students. Every day, I see our Portrait of a Learner in action, students who are self-aware of their progress, self-directed in their learning, strategic in their thinking, socially aware in their interactions, and deeply connected to one another and their community. These attributes form the foundation of our classrooms and prepare our learners for success beyond graduation.

As we look to 2026, our focus remains clear, ensuring every student grows academically and socially in a supportive environment. The progress we've made this year through improved student outcomes, strong attendance, and a positive school culture reflects that shared commitment.

I also want to express my thanks to Kate Baldwin for her two years of service on the Norwalk Board of Directors. Kate's insight and dedication have made a meaningful difference to our district. We also welcome Nathaniel Tagtow as our newest board member. His perspective and leadership will be valuable as we continue advancing our mission of Growing Learners and Leaders.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the November 2025 elections. Your involvement in local decision making is essential to the success of public education. This same spirit of civic engagement will be especially important as we look ahead to the 2026 Bond Referendum. I'll be sharing more details about the bond proposal in the coming months and look forward to continuing this important conversation with our community.

As we prepare to welcome 2026, I hope this holiday season brings time for reflection, laughter, and connection.

Shawn Holloway  
Superintendent, Norwalk Community School District



## WINTER WEATHER DAYS

The Norwalk School Board has approved these winter weather rules for the 2025-26 school year.

### STAFF WORK DAYS

**Virtual Work Days**  
For every second snow day (when school is closed due to weather conditions), certified staff will have a virtual workday. There is a limit of three virtual work days for certified staff.

### SNOW DAYS FOR STUDENTS

**Student Makeup Days**  
Half of the days missed due to weather will be required to be made up at the end of the school year. The other (up to a maximum of three days) will coincide with the virtual workdays for certified staff.

### MULTIPLE CLOSURES

**Severe Winter Weather**  
Depending on the severity of the winter weather, the school board may decide to waive additional makeup days for students. This decision will be based on the district's needs and the potential impact on the school year's end date.

### END OF YEAR

**Final Makeup Days**  
The school board will make decisions regarding the forgiveness of additional student days at their regular board meeting in April.

*\*All virtual work days will be communicated by the superintendent.*



**BECOME A WARRIOR SPONSOR!** Call 515-981-4007. Sponsors are featured at Warrior activity events.

Norwalk Community School District [www.norwalkschools.org](http://www.norwalkschools.org) 380 Wright Road, Norwalk (515) 981-0676



*"Suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel, praising God and saying: 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to people he favors!'"*

**Luke 2:13-14**

*Norwalk,  
we invite you!*



**CHRISTMAS EVE AT FELLOWSHIP**

**December 23RD, 7:00PM**

**December 24TH, 3:00 & 5:00PM**

- **3 Identical Services with an Inspiring Christmas Message**
- **Choir & Classic Christmas Carols by Candlelight**
- **Children's Gift & Activities**
- **You're Invited to Come 30 Minutes Early to Enjoy Treats, Hot Cocoa, & Family Photo Area Before Services**

**S** TO VISIT US  
**C**  
**A**  
**N**   
**ONLINE!**

 **Fellowship**  
COMMUNITY CHURCH

225 North Avenue, Norwalk • (515) 981-0699  
[fellowshipnorwalk.org/christmaseve](http://fellowshipnorwalk.org/christmaseve)  
fellowshipnorwalk fellowshipnrwlk