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JANUARY 2026

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with a watch party to remember

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WELCOME

A SUPER Sunday

What will you be doing on Sunday, Feb. 8? If you are like 127.7 million other people, you will be watching the Super Bowl on TV. That's a lot of people, many of whom don't know the difference between a touchdown and a home run. And, they don't care. Why? Because the Super Bowl is about much more than football. In fact, for many, it has become an entire Sunday tradition.

Some viewers don't catch a single football play, as they are watching only to be entertained by the advertisements. In most any other TV viewing situation, those watching TV will turn channels, lower the volume or run to the bathroom or to the refrigerator during breaks. But not during the Super Bowl. This viewing audience tunes in to the ads, and companies ante up \$8 million or more for just 30 seconds of promotion to reach them.

Yes, the Super Bowl is one of the most-watched television events in the United States. The record was set last year with the aforementioned 127.7 million, but the highest-rated Super Bowl remains Super Bowl XVI in 1982 with a 49.1 household rating. That means 49.1% of TV-owning households were tuned into the Super Bowl during its broadcast. Viewership of the Super Bowl has remained stable over the years, even as ratings for other events have declined.

My parents were in the half who didn't tune in to the Super Bowl. Football simply wasn't their thing. When I was in college, I began watching the games more seriously. And, when I made my way into the working world as a young man, I got into the Super Bowl scene even more. The food. The festivities. The fun. Oh, and the football, too.

The Super Bowl parties were aplenty, and my friends and I did our best to attend many, making Mondays a challenge. The problem continues today. "Super Sick Monday" is a real thing, as an estimated 22.6 million U.S. employees are expected to miss work due to post-game fatigue, hangovers, and the cultural significance of the event. Some have even suggested that the Monday following the Super Bowl should become a national holiday, possibly even moving Election Day to that date to help encourage more people to get to the polls. It is an interesting idea, although I am not sure it would help with voter turnout, especially for those mourning after their team lost.

I am now more comfortable lounging in my living room and watching the game with family or a few friends. But don't let me drag you down. Check out this month's cover story to see how others are celebrating Super Bowl Sunday — and be sure to get to work on Monday. ■

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Ben, Dawson and Maria Forgy enjoy football at all levels; however, since Dawson plays for Wayne State College, their favorite games to watch are the Wildcats in action.

Big game, **BIG PARTY**

Capping off the football season
with a watch party to remember

By Rachel Harrington and
Tammy Pearson

It's time for the big game, and that's the perfect reason to gather with your fellow fans around the big screen to see which team finishes the year with a championship ring. And you won't be alone. Record-breaking viewership has been reported the last two years, with 127.7 million U.S. viewers last year, according to ESPN.

Family of fans

Maria and Ben Forgy and her family enjoy football — high school, college and pro.

Though most of their support goes to their son at Wayne State College, Forgy and her family also support other teams. They are big Iowa State fans, and they have had a cousin who played for the Hawkeyes for four years as a long snapper. Ben was a Washington Redskins, now Commanders, lifelong supporter, and their son is a Cincinnati Bengals fan.

“We watch the Super Bowl every year, though I’m not a die-hard fan,” she says. “Sometimes we watch with friends, and sometimes our church has a Super Bowl party that we attend to watch the game and the commercials.”

She says she enjoys watching the underdog stories and tends to follow those.

Forgy and her family have been a part of the sports culture in Winterset for many years. The Forgy family became Wayne State College Wildcat fans about four years ago when her son, Dawson, accepted a scholarship to play football for the school. The former Winterset football player, who began his football career in flag football with Winterset Parks and Rec in second grade, is still being cheered on by his family. For the past four years, the Forgy family have not missed a game, and the siblings attend as many games as they can with their families watching Uncle Dawson.

They travel to both the home and away games to show support for their son and his teammates.

“I’m not a quiet parent,” Forgy says. “My son is a running back, and his line needs to do well for him to do well. I support the whole team. It’s important to encourage the whole team on both sides of the ball, not just one side or player. We’ve formed a family at Wayne. We celebrate the wins, and we lift each other up when needed. You don’t get that everywhere.”

At home games, Forgy and her family participate in a large tailgating group with their football family. The group of 200 to 300 gather at their special reserved spot in the home stadium parking lot. Forgy helps manage the Signup Genius list for everyone in the group to bring various food dishes, and some of the dads in the group man the smokers.

“You won’t find better food, and if you go away hungry, it’s your own fault,” Forgy says.

The parents don’t just feed themselves at the tailgates. They also feed the team and coaching staff after the games.

There is a tailgate trailer that is wrapped in a Wildcat theme with player numbers and a matching golf cart. The school’s marching band frequently comes through the parent tailgate

Simple Salami Sliders

Recipe courtesy of “Cookin’ Savvy”

Servings: 4-6

INGREDIENTS

- 1 package slider buns
- 8 slices Swiss cheese
- 8 slices salami
- 8 slices ham or other deli meat
- 1 stick butter, melted
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- everything bagel seasoning (optional)

DIRECTIONS

- Heat oven to 350 F.
- Halve slider buns, creating top and bottom portions. Set top portion aside, leaving bottom portion in original container. Place bottom portion and container in baking dish to prevent sticking.
- Layer Swiss cheese, salami and ham then cover with top buns.
- Mix melted butter, Worcestershire sauce, brown sugar, Parmesan cheese, onion powder and garlic powder. Pour over sliders.
- Cover with foil and bake 15 minutes then remove foil, sprinkle with everything bagel seasoning, if desired, and bake, uncovered, 10 minutes.



area and plays for them before heading into the stadium. At the away games, Forgy says that parents of players often get together on Friday night before the game somewhere, like a local sports bar, that can accommodate their large group for breakfast or brunch before heading to the game.

Forgy’s favorite part of being a Wayne State Wildcats fan is supporting her son, his dreams, and his goals — something she feels every football player parent would do. She enjoys being there to celebrate his achievements and watch him learn from any failures, and she says she loves to watch him excel and play the sport he loves.

Tips for a great watch party

(Family Features) Get ready to host this season’s most memorable watch party with these tips:

• **Show your colors:** Get your house game ready and show your team spirit by decorating in the colors of the team you’ll be cheering to victory. You don’t need to go all out; just grab some simple decorations like streamers, balloons and disposable tablecloths to add some energy. If you’ll have guests cheering on both sides, mix and match your decor and let guests pick their plate and cup color to root for their favorite team.

• **Take a seat:** When the game is underway,

SUPER BOWL LX

Teams: TBD

When: Sunday, Feb. 8

Where: Levi’s Stadium in Santa Clara, California, the home of the San Francisco 49ers

Ways to watch: NBC will broadcast the Super Bowl with Spanish-language coverage on Telemundo and streaming on Peacock

Halftime show: Bad Bunny

Super Bowl commercials: 30-second spots cost about \$8 million

gathering everyone around the screen can get crowded. Make sure everyone is comfortable by offering additional seating. You can use stools, chairs from other rooms and even folding chairs or camping chairs if you need to create more space. If you need to resort to floor space for seating, make it extra comfy with some pillows or blankets for padding.

• **Multiply the screen time:** Chances are high your guests will scatter throughout your home, spilling out of the living room into your kitchen and dining spaces. Set up extra screens to show the game in multiple rooms, whether that’s

extra TVs, monitors or laptops. That way, even if someone steps away from the main screen, he or she won't miss any of the excitement.

• **Make snacks that score with the crowd:** Every party needs a menu, but you can keep it simple for a watch party. Guests typically want quick bites they can grab during timeouts and commercial breaks, so stick to finger foods and apps guests can self-serve quickly. Wings are a party staple, and chips and dip are always a hit. Be sure to offer some indulgent options, as well as foods for those who have special dietary needs. You can also make your food game easier by asking everyone to bring a dish to share instead of taking it all on yourself.

Find more entertaining tips and advice at eLivingtoday.com.

Enjoy the commercials

While commercials used to be the perfect time for a quick break and filling your plate, not so with the Super Bowl. Commercials are as big a part of the experience as the kick off. How many of these do you remember?

Best Super Bowl commercials of all time (including 2025)

<https://filestage.io/blog/best-superbowl-commercials/>

1. Bud Light – Big Men on Cul-de-Sac (2025)
2. Hellmann's – When Harry Met Sally Recreation(2025)
3. Stella Artois – The Other David (2025)
4. Hellmann's – May-ow (2024)
5. Budweiser – Old School Delivery (2024)
6. Kawasaki – Business in the front, party in the back (2024)
7. Uber Eats – The Beckhams (2024)

8. Pluto TV – Couch Potato Farms (2024)
9. Oikos – “Hold my Oikos” (2024)
10. Booking.com – Book whoever you want to be (2024)
11. Apple – 1984 (1984)
12. Snickers – Betty White (2010)
13. Amazon – Alexa Loses Her Voice (2018)
14. Always – #LikeaGirl (2015)
15. Wendy's – Where's The Beef (1984)
16. Pepsi – Cindy Crawford (1992)
17. Coca-Cola – Hey Kid, Catch (1980)
18. Tide – It's A Tide Ad (2018)
19. Nike – Hare Jordan (1993)
20. Budweiser – Puppy Love (2014)

Super Bowl trivia

Enjoy getting your guests in the game day spirit with some trivia.

- The highest combined point total in a Super Bowl is 75 points, in Super Bowl XXIX (49ers 49, Chargers 26).
- The lowest combined point total in a Super Bowl is 16 points, in SB LIII (Patriots 13, Rams 3).
- The Patriots scored the fewest points to win a Super Bowl in SB LIII, with 13.
- The Eagles scored the most points in losing a Super Bowl in SB LVII, with 35.
- Only two Super Bowls have gone into overtime. The Patriots beat the Falcons in Super Bowl LI (2017), famously coming back from being down 28-3 in the third quarter, and the Chiefs beat the 49ers in Super Bowl LVIII (2024).
- According to “The Simpsons,” Homer grew up rooting for the Denver Broncos.
- The longest national anthem performance was by Alicia Keys, whose rendition clocked in at 2 minutes and 35 seconds during Super Bowl XLVII (2013).
- The Baltimore Ravens and the Tampa Bay Buccaneers are the only teams undefeated in multiple Super Bowl appearances, at 2-0 each.
- The other unbeaten teams in the Super Bowl are the Jets and Saints, both 1-0.
- The current longest period between one team's multiple Super Bowl victories is 50 years, by the Chiefs (wins in SB IV and then LIV).
- The tallest player to play in the Super Bowl was Ed Jones, whose nickname was, appropriately, “Too Tall.” The 6'9” defensive end won Super Bowl XII with the Dallas Cowboys.
- How much does the Lombardi Trophy weigh? Seven pounds
- Carol Channing (1970) was the first singer to perform at a Super Bowl Halftime Show.
- The Jets have gone the longest since their last Super Bowl appearance, at 56 years and counting (last appearance, SB III).
- Super Bowl XLI (Indianapolis Colts versus Chicago Bears) featured the matchup whose two cities were closest together.
- Only the Dolphins (SB VI), Rams (SB LIII), and Chiefs (SB LV) have failed to score a touchdown in the Super Bowl.
- There has never been a shutout in the Super Bowl.

Check out these websites for more Game Day trivia:

- <https://forgottenstars.net/super-bowl-trivia/>
- <https://greenlight.com/learning-center/fun-facts/super-bowl-trivia>
- <https://www.countryliving.com/life/entertainment/g35141413/super-bowl-facts-trivia/>
- <https://parade.com/1146474/jessicasager/super-bowl-trivia/>



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FEATURE

Serve up a game day spread

What's a watch party without the food? But who wants to spend the day in the kitchen? Chips, crackers and dips are an easy and tasty option. Try these dip recipes for a special addition to your spread. Some simple, easy-to-grab sliders are another perfect addition.

Bloody Mary Dip

(Family Features) This Bloody Mary Dip combines a pair of game day favorites — the taste of a morning libation with a savory snack — to calm nerves before the players take the field. It's made and served with Dandy Celery from Duda Farm Fresh Foods.

Recipe courtesy of Laughing Spatula on behalf of Duda Farm Fresh Foods. **Prep time:** 5 minutes. **Servings:** 8

INGREDIENTS

- 8 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 3 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 3 tablespoons pimento olives, chopped
- 2 tablespoons onions, chopped
- 2 tablespoons bacon, chopped
- 1/4 cup chopped Dandy Celery, plus additional whole sticks for serving, divided
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon granulated garlic



- olives, for garnish
- tomatoes, for garnish
- crackers, for serving

DIRECTIONS

- In large bowl, combine cream cheese, tomato paste, Worcestershire sauce, pimento olives, onions, bacon, 1/4 cup chopped celery, salt, pepper and garlic.
- Mix well. Transfer to serving dish.
- Garnish with skewered olives and tomatoes. Serve with celery and crackers to dip.

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Skinny 7-Layer Dip

A classic Skinny 7-Layer Dip layers familiar flavors like garbanzo beans, avocado and shredded cheese but pairs them with nonfat Greek yogurt in place of full-fat sour cream to create a better-for-you game day bite.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 cans (15 ounces each) garbanzo beans, drained and rinsed
- 2 teaspoons hot sauce
- 6-8 tablespoons water
- 2 ripe avocados
- 1 lime, juice only
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/3 cup Dandy Celery, minced
- 1 cup fresh cilantro, finely chopped
- 1/3 cup onion, minced
- 1 1/2 cups nonfat plain Greek yogurt, plus additional for garnish, divided
- 2 medium tomatoes, diced
- 2 packages Dandy Radish MiniSticks
- 2 cups low-fat cheddar cheese
- 1 cup sliced black olives
- 10 cilantro leaves

DIRECTIONS

- In skillet over medium-high heat, heat oil and garlic until softened and lightly browned.
- Add garbanzo beans and hot sauce. Cook 3 minutes, stirring frequently.
- Scrape contents of pan into food processor, add 6 tablespoons water and process until smooth. Add 1-2 tablespoons water as necessary to get puree to spreadable consistency.
- Transfer bean mixture to bowl to cool before assembling dip.
- Cut avocados in half and remove pits. Scoop out flesh and cut into 1-inch chunks.
- In food processor, process avocado chunks, lime juice and salt until mostly smooth. Set aside until ready to assemble.
- In small bowl, mix celery, cilantro, onion



and 1 1/2 cups Greek yogurt.

- To assemble: Using spoon or plastic bag with tip removed for piping, distribute garbanzo bean mixture evenly among 10 small containers.
- Add layer of avocado puree in same manner.
- Sprinkle layer of diced tomatoes over avocado puree in each container. Add layer of radish sticks.
- Distribute Greek yogurt mixture evenly over cups.
- Divide cheese over cups then layer black olives. Garnish with dollop of Greek yogurt and cilantro leaf. ■

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DECORATING trends

Decorating trends for 2026 focus on warmth, comfort and emotional appeal — key drivers for today's buyers. Warm, earthy color palettes are replacing cool greys, with tones like sand, clay, soft taupe, sage and muted blue creating inviting, photogenic spaces that feel calm and timeless. These colors translate well online and in person, making them ideal for listings.



Natural materials and texture are central to the look. Wood, stone, plaster finishes, woven textiles and matte surfaces add depth and perceived quality, helping homes feel thoughtfully designed rather than builder-basic. Alongside this, curves and organic shapes — arched doorways, rounded furniture and sculptural lighting — soften interiors and make spaces feel more livable.

Functionality remains critical. Comfort-forward layouts, deep seating and multi-purpose rooms reflect how buyers actually live, especially with hybrid work and flexible lifestyles. Built-ins add value without clutter.

Lighting plays a bigger role in 2026. Warm, layered lighting — table lamps, statement fixtures and soft ambient glow — creates mood and enhances listing photos far more than harsh overhead lighting.

Overall, 2026 decorating for real estate prioritizes spaces that feel welcoming, intentional and human — homes that tell a story and help buyers emotionally connect. ■

Information provided by Jennifer Stover, 515-480-3389, Madison County Realty, 65 W. Jefferson St., Winterset, jenniferstover@madisoncountyrealty.com. Licensed in Iowa.

If you need real estate assistance in the coming year, please call me! Together, we will make great things happen, whether you are buying or selling!

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GOOD car maintenance maximizes fuel economy

Poorly maintained vehicles are less efficient and use more fuel. With the price of most things rising, now is the time to be more mindful of ways to maximize your fuel economy. Here are some car care tips to help you get better fuel economy:



- Perform regular car maintenance at the intervals recommended by the vehicle manufacturer in the owner's manual or as indicated by the in-car maintenance reminder system.

- Check the tires for proper inflation at least once a month. Underinflated tires have increased rolling resistance that reduces fuel economy.

- Head to an auto repair shop for service as soon as possible if the "check engine" light comes on. This light indicates a fault that can decrease fuel economy.

- Try to avoid the use of rooftop luggage carriers. Items transported on top of the car significantly increase aerodynamic drag, which reduces fuel economy.

- Regularly track your car's fuel economy. A sudden drop in mileage may indicate a need for car service. ■

Information provided by Dawn Lauer, marketing specialist, Quality Car Care, 1012 N. 10th St., Winterset, 515-462-1035. Source: <https://www.aaa.com/autorepair/articles/how-to-maximize-fueleconomy>.

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BEAUTY

By Annie Wiseman

STYLE trends for 2026

Welcome to 2026. This is a time to embrace the new year and consider a new look. Some of the trends we can choose are fresh looks that blend timeless elegance with modern flair. One of the standout trends is the evolution of the bob — from sleek, architectural cuts to softer, wearable versions that flatter a variety of face shapes. Stylists are predicting shorter, sharper bobs paired with minimal layering for an effortlessly polished finish.



Color remains central to 2026's hair story. Rich, espresso and liquid brunette tones are on the rise, offering deep, glossy shades that reflect light beautifully and feel luxurious without high maintenance.

Alongside refined neutrals, bold color techniques like air-touch balayage and ashy tones are gearing up for wider adoption among trendsetters seeking drama and dimension.

Texture and movement are also getting attention. Styles like the long butterfly cut with bangs bring flow and personality to longer hair without sacrificing sophistication, while baby bangs and soft shag influences add edgy, face-framing detail to contemporary looks.

Finally, accessories are making a stylish comeback — hair jewelry is set to elevate hairstyles.

Together, these trends — from tailored bobs and rich brunettes to bold finishes and chic accessories — define a 2026 aesthetic rooted in versatility, individuality and high-impact style. ■

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

HEALTH

By Dr. Amanda Queck

PERMISSION to pause

We live in a world that glorifies constant motion — always producing, responding, improving, doing. Rest becomes something we “earn” — a reward for exhaustion rather than a natural human rhythm. But your nervous system wasn't built for the relentless pace modern life expects. It was built for cycles: action and recovery, engagement and retreat.



One of the most powerful gifts you can give yourself is permission to pause. Your nervous system is always scanning your internal and external world, asking one core question: Am I safe?

When you're rushing nonstop, juggling tasks, absorbing stimulation and pushing through discomfort, your body often reads that as danger. It shifts into survival mode. Your heart rate increases, stress hormones rise, your breath gets shallow and your thoughts speed up.

A pause interrupts that cascade.

These small messages help activate the parasympathetic nervous system — the “rest and restore” side of your biology. This is where digestion improves, emotions settle, creativity resurfaces and self-compassion becomes possible again.

A pause is not a sign of weakness or laziness. It is a biological necessity. Pause. Breathe. Reset. Not because you've earned it, but because you exist. ■

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

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A HEALTHY smile

This holiday season, think outside the box. Give that special someone the gift of a healthy smile.

Toothbrushes: Teeth should be brushed twice per day with a soft-bristled toothbrush for two minutes each time. When looking for a toothbrush, consider the size of the head. Children, for example, need a smaller head designed to fit their mouth. This might also be a consideration for people who have difficulty opening their mouth. You also might think about whether a powered or a manual toothbrush would be the better choice. Both types can clean teeth effectively, so consider the needs of the recipient.

Interdental cleaners: Cleaning between teeth daily removes food and bacteria from spaces that a toothbrush cannot reach and protects the health of the gums. There are several different interdental cleaners. Dental floss comes in a string that can be wound around the fingers or prethreaded onto a holder. Some people might prefer to use a dental pick or tiny brushes to get between their teeth. Water flossers use a gentle stream of water to flush debris located between the teeth.

Toothpastes: The top consideration for toothpaste is the presence



of fluoride. Fluoride helps keep the hard outer layer of teeth healthy by means of fighting cavities. Adults and children 3 years and older should use a pea-sized amount of toothpaste when brushing their teeth. Those younger than 3 years should use a smaller amount, approximately the size of a grain of rice. After brushing for two minutes, toothpaste should be spit out.

Whitening products: For people hoping to whiten their smile, there are products that can help. Stain removal toothpastes have extra polishing agents. These toothpastes do not change the color of teeth, but they remove surface stains, which can help brighten a smile. There are whitening products that contain bleaches designed to whiten teeth. Whitening strips are a popular over-the-counter option. Many dentists also offer whitening treatments that can be done at home or in the office.

Maybe you could give a gift certificate for a treatment with the dentist. Choosing a gift that surprises can be difficult. Gifts that help care for one's oral health are a clever way to put a smile on your loved one's face. ■

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

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INSURANCE

By Eric Johnson

IS YOUR home protected from cybercrime?

Why home cyber coverage matters.

Most homeowners understand the importance of protecting their house from fire, storms and theft. But, today, one of the fastest-growing risks doesn't involve broken windows or storm damage — it happens online. Cybercrime is no longer just a business problem. It is increasingly a household risk, and many families are surprised to learn that traditional homeowners insurance offers little protection.



Home cyber coverage is designed to help individuals and families recover from common online threats such as identity theft, phishing scams, ransomware and financial fraud. As more of our lives move online — banking, shopping, medical records, smart home devices — the potential exposure continues to grow.

Consider a common scenario: a homeowner receives an email that appears to be from their bank or utility company. They click a link, enter their information and, unknowingly, give a criminal access to their accounts. Within hours, money is transferred out, accounts are locked and personal information is compromised. Resolving this can take months and cost thousands of dollars in legal fees, credit monitoring and lost funds.

Most standard homeowners policies do not cover cyber losses. Even when some limited coverage exists, it may not include professional help to restore your identity, recover stolen funds or repair damaged data. Home cyber coverage fills this gap by providing access to specialists who can respond immediately and guide you through recovery.

Typical home cyber policies may include:

- Coverage for stolen funds resulting from cyber fraud
- Identity restoration services and credit monitoring
- Legal expenses related to identity theft
- Data restoration for compromised devices
- Help with cyber extortion or ransomware incidents

Another overlooked exposure involves smart home technology. Wi-Fi-connected cameras, thermostats, door locks and voice assistants can all be vulnerable if hacked. Home cyber coverage may help address these risks, something traditional property insurance was never designed to handle.

The cost of home cyber coverage is often surprisingly affordable, especially compared to the financial and emotional toll of a cyber incident. For many households, it can be added as an endorsement to an existing homeowners policy.

As cybercriminals become more sophisticated, protecting your home means more than locking doors and windows. A conversation with your insurance professional about home cyber coverage could be an important step in safeguarding your family's financial security in a digital world. ■

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



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ifgtoday.com

MEET Cortni Kirk

Impacting young learners in hometown

Cortni Kirk was born and raised in Winterset, and now she's grateful to be raising her own family in town.

Recently, she began teaching in her hometown as well.

Kirk attended Northwestern College, where she pursued her passion for education and early childhood development. There, she found her calling in teaching and mentoring young minds, and, in fall 2024, she graduated with her early childhood education degree in birth to third grade inclusive settings with an Iowa teaching license.

Kirk's journey to becoming an educator began in this small, close-knit community where the values of family and connection were deeply ingrained in her everyday life.

"From a young age, I was surrounded by a supportive and loving family who played a pivotal role in shaping the person I am today," she says. "The importance of family has always been at the forefront of my life. My parents instilled in me the values of compassion, empathy and the significance of maintaining strong familial bonds."

These experiences taught Kirk the foundational skills of communication, understanding and emotional support — skills that have been important in both her personal and professional life.

Today — and for the past 16 years — Kirk has worked for Stepping Stones Child Care Center Inc. In many ways, she was born into this role, as her mom has owned the center for 26 years.

"What drew me in and continues to inspire me is the strong family atmosphere and the focus on supporting the whole child, not just academically or socially, but in every aspect of their growth," Kirk says.

For Kirk, one of the best parts of teaching is watching children grow into themselves and seeing them learn, develop confidence, solve problems, build friendships and find their voices.

She also takes pride in seeing her coworkers continue their education and feels honored that many of them look to her own journey for motivation. Stepping Stones currently has seven staff members with their Child Development Associate credential, five staff members working toward it and one pursuing a two-year degree in early childhood education.

Some of Kirk's favorite memories in the classroom come from simple, messy, joyful moments, like creating a paint slip-and-slide with toddlers or bringing snow indoors for a snowball fight. This year, she especially enjoyed walking the school-age children to various field trips around Winterset.

Kirk started working at Stepping Stones in 2009, and this May will be especially meaningful because the first group of children she taught will be graduating from Winterset.

"It's bittersweet to see how much they've grown, but also incredibly rewarding," she says. "A few of them even stop by to visit every now and then, and it's always such a treat to catch up with them."

Most of the children in Kirk's class have been attending Stepping Stones since they were 6 weeks old, so watching their growth over just five years is remarkable.

"Watching everything click together in their minds and seeing their learning take shape is one of the best parts of my job," she says. ■



Cortni Kirk's hometown is Winterset, and now it is also her family's hometown.

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SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION

Winterset Living magazine salutes locally owned businesses. When you patronize these establishments, you are greeted by neighbors and friends — people who live in the community and invest in their livelihood here. They support local causes, are involved in area activities, and are dedicated to the success of the the town they live in. And, more of the money you spend at locally owned businesses stays in the community. Thank you, local business owners for helping to make your community a wonderful place to live.

Photo by Teddi Yaeger



QUALITY CAR CARE

OWNERS: Kyle Lauer

ADDRESS: 1012 N 10th St., Winterset

PHONE: 515-462-1035

WEBSITE: www.qualitycarcareofwinterset.com

Quality Car Care has been serving Madison County residents for over 30 years — a milestone we're proud to achieve. What started as a one-man operation by Dwight Lauer, Kyle's dad, in May 1993 quickly grew into a flourishing business that relocated to our current location off of Tenth Street in 1997.

Growing up, Kyle spent much of his time helping around the shop — cleaning, emptying trash, changing oil, and learning from his dad and all the experienced mechanics around him. He continued working as a MOC student in high school and came on full-time following a couple of years at DMACC. He continued learning and earned several Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certifications over the years. He ultimately took over daily operations in 2017 as Dwight moved into retirement.

Many things have changed over the years, but, from the beginning, it's been our mission to provide our customers with quality service at a fair price in a timely manner. We provide every customer with an estimate before starting any work, so

there won't be any surprise charges when it comes time to pick up your vehicle. We understand being without your vehicle is an inconvenience, and we take pride in promptly getting your car back to you.

As a full-service operation, Quality Car Care handles everything from essential services such as tire replacement and repair, oil changes, and brake services to more complex services such as transmission repair and replacement and complete engine repair. Our technicians have the knowledge to service and repair even the most challenging problems on all makes and models of domestic and import vehicles. We use the latest technology to assess the situation and offer you alternatives.

As a thank you to our customers, we offer a few perks, including your fifth oil change free with a purchase of four. We also provide free vehicle pickup and delivery service within the city limits, saving you a trip in the middle of the day.

We were honored to be named the 2025 "Favorite Madison County Place for Auto Service" in the Madison County Residents' Choice Poll. Thank you to our customers! We appreciate your business and look forward to serving Madison County residents for many years to come!



ROUSH COLLISION

*Locally*owned
WINTERSET

OWNERS: Joe Roush
ADDRESS: 303 E. Madison St, Winterset
PHONE: 515-468-7820
WEBSITE: Visit us on Facebook



Roush Collision & Towing: A Local Story Built in Winterset

When Joe Roush opened Roush Collision & Towing in January 2012, he wasn't just starting a business—he was investing in the same community that raised him. Both Joe and his wife, April, grew up in Winterset, going completely through the Winterset school system. Today, their roots run even deeper as they raise their own four boys—Joey, 11; Jack, 8; Johnny, 2; and another baby boy arriving in February—right here in the place they've always called home.

Roush Collision & Towing offers full-service collision repair, 24/7 towing, and convenient rental vehicles, but what truly sets the shop apart is its commitment to local talent. Joe believes in building careers, not just filling positions. Most of his technicians come directly from the Winterset High School MOC program, where students spend half

their day learning hands-on skills in the shop. The business has also welcomed a student from the Martensdale St. Marys program and is currently collaborating with Earlham schools.

For Joe, giving young technicians real-world experience—and watching them grow into skilled, confident professionals—is one of the most rewarding parts of the business. It's a way to give back to the community that shaped him and ensure the next generation has opportunities close to home.

More than a body shop, Roush Collision & Towing is a homegrown operation powered by hometown pride. Joe, April, and their team are grateful every day for the trust and support of their neighbors, customers, and the Winterset community they love.



AL'S BODY AND CUSTOMS

*Locally*owned
WINTERSET

OWNER: Al Leonard
ADDRESS: 815 E Green St, Winterset
PHONE: 515-493-1106
WEBSITE: alsbodyandcustoms.com



Al's Body & Customs: Restoring Vehicles with Care and Dedication

Al's Body & Customs, established in January 2022, has quickly become a trusted name in the auto body repair and restoration industry. Owned and operated by Al Leonard, a proud Winterset native, the shop focuses on delivering high-quality collision repair services with a personal touch. With a dedicated team of six employees, including four part-timers and two full-time staff (three of whom are family), Al's Body & Customs offers hands-on service that prioritizes customer satisfaction.

At Al's Body & Customs, the team takes pride in not only restoring vehicles to their pre-accident condition but also in building lasting relationships with their customers. They treat

each client as part of the family, ensuring that every repair is done with care and attention to detail. The hands-on approach sets them apart from larger shops, where customers may feel like just another number.

Owner Al Leonard, a lifelong resident of Winterset, understands the importance of community and the trust that customers place in local businesses. He is passionate about his work and strives to offer the best service possible to his neighbors and friends. Whether you're in need of collision repair or vehicle restoration, Al's Body & Customs is here to help you get back on the road, looking as good as new.

Stop by Al's Body & Customs today, and let the team take care of you and your vehicle.



EARLHAM FAMILY DENTISTRY: CONTINUING A LEGACY OF CARE IN MADISON COUNTY

OWNER: Dr. Carter Coppinger

ADDRESS: 110 South Chestnut Ave, Earlham, IA

PHONE : 515-758-2323

FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/earlhamfamilydentistry

WEBSITE: www.earlhamfamilydentistry.com

Earlham Family Dentistry continues to serve Madison County under the leadership of Dr. Carter Coppinger, who brings a strong connection to central Iowa and a patient-focused approach to care. Originally from Van Meter, Dr. Coppinger was drawn to practice dentistry in a small community where relationships matter and patients are treated as individuals.

In September of 2025, Dr. Coppinger purchased Earlham Family Dentistry from longtime dentist Dr. Richard Apodaca. The transition was approached with a focus on preserving the strong relationships, trust, and quality of care that patients had come to expect over the years. Familiar staff, clear communication, and individualized treatment remain central to the patient experience, reflecting a longstanding tradition of trusted care in the community.

Dr. Coppinger's approach to dentistry emphasizes listening, education, and thoughtful treatment planning. By taking time to explain procedures and options, the team works to reduce anxiety and ensure patients feel confident and informed at every visit. Creating a welcoming, low-pressure environment is a priority, especially for patients who may feel nervous about dental care.

Earlham Family Dentistry offers a full range of services for patients of all ages. Preventive care includes routine exams, cleanings, digital X-rays, and oral health education. Restorative treatments such as fillings, crowns, bridges, and dentures help patients maintain comfort and function. Cosmetic services are available for those looking to enhance their smiles. The practice also provides extractions and coordinates care with trusted specialists when advanced treatment is needed.

To help make dental care more accessible, Earlham Family Dentistry offers an in-office dental membership for patients without insurance. This option provides a straightforward and affordable way to receive routine preventive care and discounted services, helping patients maintain their oral health without the complexity of traditional insurance plans.

Outside of the office, Dr. Coppinger's ties to the area are strengthened by his family. His wife, Layken (Gurwell), is originally from Winterset, creating a meaningful connection between the communities they both call home. Together, they are raising twin baby girls, Lyla and Lindi, and are proud to be building their family and future in the region.

Earlham Family Dentistry remains focused on providing dependable, high-quality dental care in a welcoming environment. The practice is currently accepting new patients and invites individuals and families to schedule an appointment by calling 515-758-2323.

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WINTERSSET



MICHAEL'S COMPUTER REPAIR

OWNERS: Michael Eller

ADDRESS: 67 E. Jefferson St, Winterset

PHONE: 515-493-6647

WEBSITE: www.facebook.com/WintersetComputer

Happy New Year! It's 2026!

Good News! Michael's Computer Repair has recently moved to the former Madison County Medical Associates buildings on Court Ave, on the south side of the Winterset Square. I've got my own joint now!

Currently I'm located in the east building while I'm demoing all of the offices next door. The plan is to have a display area for laptops and desktop computers, stations for computer repair, as well as sell computer accessories. I'm kicking around the idea of offering classes in the future as well.

I'm really excited about this opportunity. There's so much more space. I love being able to invest in Winterset and be part of the Historic Square.

The idea of relocating the computer shop works nicely with my goal to revitalize Winterset and a bucket list item of restoring old buildings to their former glory.

I really like renovating old houses, and these 1870s building give me the chance I've always wanted with restoring historic buildings. So far, we've ripped out the dropped ceilings and torn down about 15 rooms exposing the original 1800s tin ceilings up above. I also plan to remove about 5 layers of flooring, then strip and refinish the original Fir floors. We've also painted the exteriors with Sherwin Williams historic colors to help spruce up

the Square. So much fun!

It's hard to believe all that has changed in the 5 years since starting Michael's Computer Repair. It started as something to do to keep busy in a little 14x20 shop. Now I have this huge expanse with no boundaries and all of the freedom I want.

I want to say Thank you to my customers and friends I've made along the way. You have put me on the map! I'm very grateful.

This is an amazing town, built by good people a long time ago. It's up to us to carry the baton to the next generation. We need people to step up and continue to lead by example. I encourage those that have dreams of starting a business to Challenge yourself, Dig Deep, Work harder, Believe in yourself. See it through!

The secret, as I'm often asked is to treat people right, help people out when you can, and work on believing in each other. Did you know God loves you and that you can change your outlook anytime you decide?

Thank God for the ability to turn negatives into positives!

Thank you for helping me to grow as person! Wishing you all the best luck in this new year!



TAX efficiency in retirement

Will you pay higher taxes in retirement? It's possible. But that will largely depend on how you generate income. Will it be from working? Will it be from retirement plans? And, if it does come from retirement plans, it's important to understand which types of plans will be financing your retirement.

Another factor to consider is the role Social Security will play in your retirement. When do you plan to start to take Social Security benefits? If you have a spouse, when do they plan on taking benefits? It's critical to answer key Social Security benefits questions so you have a better understanding of how it will affect your taxable income.

What's a pre-tax investment? Traditional IRAs and 401(k)s are examples of pre-tax investments that are designed to help you save for retirement.

You won't pay any taxes on the contributions you make to these accounts until you start to take distributions. Pre-tax investments are also called tax-deferred investments, as the money you accumulate in these accounts can benefit from tax-deferred growth.

For individuals covered by a retirement plan at work, the tax deduction for a traditional IRA in 2025 is phased out for incomes between \$126,000 and \$146,000 for married couples filing jointly, and between \$79,000 and \$89,000 for single filers.¹

Keep in mind that, once you reach age 73, you must begin taking required minimum distributions from a traditional IRA, 401(k), and other defined contribution plans in most circumstances. Withdrawals are taxed as ordinary income and, if taken before age 59., may be subject to a 10% federal income tax penalty.

What's an after-tax investment? A Roth IRA is the most well-known. When you put money into a Roth IRA, the contribution is made with after-tax dollars. Like a traditional IRA, contributions to a Roth IRA are limited based on income. For 2025, contributions to a Roth IRA are phased out between \$236,000 and \$246,000 for married couples filing jointly and between \$150,000 and \$165,000 for single filers.

To qualify for the tax-free and penalty-free withdrawal of earnings, Roth IRA distributions must meet a five-year holding requirement and occur after age 59. Tax-free and penalty-free withdrawals can also be taken under certain other circumstances, such as the owner's death. The original Roth IRA owner is not required to take minimum annual withdrawals.

Remember, this article is for informational purposes only and is not a replacement for real-life advice, so make sure to consult your tax, legal or financial professionals before modifying your retirement strategy.

Are you striving for greater tax efficiency? In retirement, it is especially important — and worth a discussion. A few financial adjustments may help you manage your tax liabilities. ■

1. IRS.gov, 2025. 2. IRS.gov, 2025. The content is developed from sources believed to be providing accurate information. The information in this material is not intended as tax or legal advice. It may not be used for the purpose of avoiding any federal tax penalties. Please consult legal or tax professionals for specific information regarding your individual situation. This material was developed and produced by FMG Suite to provide information on a topic that may be of interest. FMG, LLC, is not affiliated with the named broker-dealer, state- or SEC-registered investment advisory firm. The opinions expressed and material provided are for general information, and should not be considered a solicitation for the purchase or sale of any security. Copyright FMG Suite.



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Upcoming in Winterset Living magazine:

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

Rescue animals: Do you have a beloved rescue animal in your family? Share your story of how you came to find your pet — or it came to find you! Email tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com.

Indoor Walking

Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays through February, 8-10 a.m.
Redeemer Church, 200 N. 16th Ave., Winterset

Looking to get your steps in and keep warm this winter? The church building is open for community walking. Everyone's welcome. Bring a friend, get your steps in, and enjoy a cozy space to move.



Wednesday Winterset Wellness Support

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

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

Iowa Watercolor Society Traveling Show

Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays during January, 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Winterset Art Center, 224 S. John Wayne Drive, Winterset

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

Winter Play dates

Every Tuesday through February, 10-11:30 a.m.
Redeemer Church, 200 N. 16th Ave., Winterset

Looking for a warm place for your little ones to burn energy this winter? Redeemer Church is hosting Winter Play Dates for the community every Tuesday from 10-11:30 a.m., through February. Bring the kiddos to play inside while you enjoy fellowship and connection with other adults. Let the kids run, laugh and play while you stay warm and cozy together. Everyone is welcome.



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Winterset Public Library programs

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

EVENTS IN THE AREA

Be sure to check for cancellations

Des Moines Community Orchestra Concerts

• **Winter Concert:** Sunday, Feb. 22, 2 p.m., Staplin Performing Arts Center, 3650 Woodland Ave., West Des Moines. Guest Conductor: Joshua Barlage. Featured Soloist: Curtis Barr, Cello

• **Spring Concert:** Sunday, May 10, 2 p.m., Drake University Sheslow Auditorium, 2507 University Ave., Des Moines. Guest Conductor: Kara Mather Des Moines Community Orchestra. Featured Soloist: Dr. Kevin Allemagne, Clarinet.

Winter Arts Exhibits

Olson-Larsen Galleries, 542 Fifth St., West Des Moines

• Through Jan. 31: The Animal Show 2025

Ankeny Art Center, 1520 S.W. Ordance Road, Ankeny,

www.ankenyardcenter.org

• Through Jan. 14: Members Show

The Des Moines Art Center, 4700 Grand Ave., Des Moines

• Through April 19: Bill Owens: Work and Leisure: Bill Owens documented the suburbs in the 1970s, capturing the lives of prosperous, predominantly white Americans at a moment after the cultural shifts of the 1960s but before the dawn of the digital age of computers and video games in the 1980s. His photographs were compiled in the best-selling coffee table books "Leisure" (1972), "Our Kind of People" (1975), and "Working: I Do It For the Money" (1977).

Stage and Theater

Des Moines Performing Arts

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

- Jan.13-18: "SIX"
- Feb. 3-8: "Kimberly Akimbo."
- Feb. 24 to March 1: "The Outsiders."
- March 20-22: Meredith Willson's "The Music Man."
- March 28: "The Wizard of Oz in Concert" with the Des Moines Symphony.
- April 28 to May 3: "Suffs."

CITYVIEW's Fire and Ice winter bar crawl

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. ■



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WHERE I find inspiration — and a new comfort-food favorite

Today's home cooks have no shortage of inspiration. With a quick search online, we can access thousands of recipes from trusted test kitchens, community-driven platforms and individual food bloggers. While I appreciate that convenience, I still find myself reaching for cookbooks, browsing new releases at the bookstore, and checking out titles from the library — a perfect way to “test drive” a recipe before committing to it.

Another favorite source of inspiration is Family Features, a free recipe site filled with reliable dishes and beautiful photography that never fails to spark my creativity in the kitchen. This month's recipe, loaded Philly cheesesteak baked potatoes, brings together two of my favorite comfort foods: steak and potatoes — both of which also happen to be Shane's favorites. It takes the familiar flavors of a classic Philly cheesesteak sandwich and transforms them into a warm, satisfying baked potato meal. It's hearty, comforting, and perfect to enjoy for dinner, with plenty left over for lunches throughout the week. ■

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



Loaded Philly cheesesteak baked potato

Recipe courtesy of Real California Milk
Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 1 hour, 11 minutes
Servings: 4

Ingredients

- 4 large russet potatoes, washed
- 1 cup Real California sour cream
- 1-2 tablespoons Real California whole milk
- 1/4 cup Real California unsalted butter, divided
- 1 small green bell pepper, thinly sliced
- 1/2 small yellow onion, thinly sliced
- kosher salt, to taste
- freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1 pound fresh shaved sirloin steak
- 2 cups shredded Real California provolone cheese

Directions

- Preheat oven to 425 degrees F and line baking sheet with aluminum foil.
- Prick potatoes all over with fork. Bake until potatoes are tender and fork

inserted easily comes out, 45 minutes to 1 hour. Split tops of potatoes open with knife and fluff potato flesh with fork. Set aside.

- In small bowl, combine sour cream and milk, adding more milk as needed, until sour cream is pourable. Set aside.
- In large skillet or on griddle over medium-high heat, heat 1 tablespoon butter. Add peppers and onions; cook until tender, 3-4 minutes. Season with salt and pepper, to taste. Transfer to plate and set aside.
- Clean skillet then melt remaining butter. Add steak and cook until fully cooked and lightly browned, 3-4 minutes. Season with salt and pepper, to taste. Return vegetables to skillet and toss to combine.
- Evenly top each potato with 1 tablespoon butter, steak mixture and cheese. Transfer to oven and bake until cheese is melted, 2-3 minutes. Drizzle with sour cream and serve.



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Amanda and Bailey Haraldson. Photo
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Angie Day and Stephanie
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Linzi Welsh and Gracie Smith



Dancers in a live window display.



Ean Wetzel and Lauren Fick. Photo
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Bella Barrett in a live window display enjoys the holiday spirit in Winterset.



Kelli Eshelma enjoys the holiday spirit in Winterset.



Mr. and Mrs. Claus wave to the crowd in Winterset.



Jake Hall at the Winterset vs. Gilbert basketball game on Dec. 5.



Daxon Weeks at the Winterset vs. Gilbert basketball game on Dec. 5.



Jackson Baer at the Winterset vs. Gilbert basketball game on Dec. 5.



Cooper Johnston at the Winterset vs. Gilbert basketball game on Dec. 5.



Brayden Vickers at the Winterset vs. Gilbert basketball game on Dec. 5.



Bradley Hayes at the Winterset vs. Gilbert basketball game on Dec. 5.



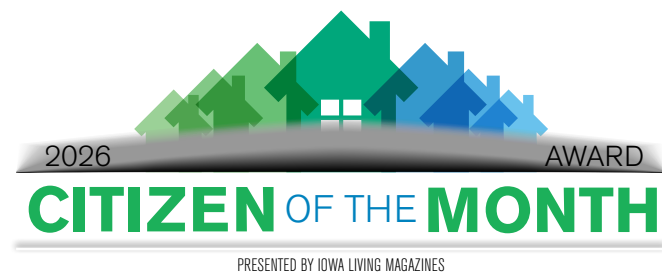
Cooper Johnston, Jace Bellamy and Jackson Baer at the Winterset vs. Gilbert basketball game on Dec. 5.



Jaxx Little, Drake McDonald, Jude Gurwell and Cael Hirsch at the Winterset vs. Gilbert basketball game on Dec. 5.

FRIENDS help the Winterset Library grow

Supporting programs and an addition



Libraries, especially in small towns, often operate on a tight budget, so they look for ways to do more with less. One common resource for funding outside of the city is a “friends of the library” group. Pam Deichmann, president of the Friends of the Winterset Library, explains how the group helps the Winterset Library.

“The Friends of the Winterset Library is a 501(c)3 organization that was formed to support the library. It’s been around a long time, and I’ve been involved the last 10 years,” Deichmann says.

Currently, the group is helping raise funds for an addition to the building.

“We’ve had a really busy year,” she says. “We have taken up the initiative to add two small meeting rooms onto the southeast corner of the library. Each will seat up to 12 people. We’re really excited about it. We’ve hired an architectural firm that is managing the process to select a contractor in January.”

According to Deichmann, this addition is something the library and its patrons have wanted for a long time.

“This request for small rooms had been around for at least six or seven years,” Deichmann says. “They have the big community room, but it’s always booked up.”

Deichmann explains the tentative timeline of the construction project.

“The bidding process will go on in January. We anticipate the construction will begin this winter,” she says. “We’ve posted the blueprints on the wall, so people can see what’s happening.”

Donations, large and small, help the Friends group support many of the programs at the library.

“We received a large endowment years ago, which allows us to do a lot of things,” Deichmann says. “We have it structured so it doesn’t go for staffing, but it can go for many other things.”

The Friends group also holds various fundraising events throughout the year. Those, along with donations, allow many fun and educational programs to be offered.

“In the fall, we do activities for the National Friends of the Library Week. We do a series of activities,” Deichmann says. “And we host the holiday event. This year we hosted Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus. We had



Felicia Weeks of Scot Clark Farm Bureau presents the Citizen of the Month certificate to Pam Deichmann and Sandee Dawdy, accepting on behalf of the Friends of the Winterset Library. Board members not pictured are: Marsha Wiese, Linda Kaysen, Jennifer Porter, Debbie Brown, Jan Kinderknecht, Cheri Grant, Rita Martens, Cindy Cooper, Karen Walter and Diane Lair.

really good attendance at that.”

Deichmann explains the makeup of the Friends group.

“Our members are from throughout Madison County. They elect a board of directors. Right now, we have 11 directors. They map out a plan each January to support activities throughout the year.”

Deichmann says her time on the Friends group has been rewarding, and members are not expected to devote large amounts of time unless they wish to.

“We have about 100 members total. We really appreciate and encourage membership. There are many volunteering opportunities, and the nice thing is, to be a member only costs \$5 a year,” Deichmann says. “Definitely everyone is welcome. They can do as little or as much as they have time for. It’s a good way to volunteer for your community.”

Although the Friends group is separate from the library, Deichmann said those connected to the library interact cooperatively.

“We’re lucky to have a very good relationship with our library board of trustees,” Deichmann says. “And the staff at the library are wonderful to work with.”

Asked about a favorite event, Deichmann recalls a popular annual happening at the library.

“We always have a book sale from the end of March to the first of May,” she says. “The joy we see at the book sale. It’s just amazing to see how many people really enjoy that.” ■

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