

INDIANOLA

FEBRUARY 2026

# Living

MAGAZINE

# 'It Do'

Residents share  
their marriage  
proposal stories.

Shrimp spaghetti  
RECIPE

Indianola youth part of  
national hockey boom  
COMMUNITY

Beaty finds restoration  
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# ELLIS LAW OFFICES SURPASSES GOAL IN 15TH ANNUAL HAT & GLOVE DRIVE!

**We are thrilled to announce** that we exceeded our goal of 2,000 hats and gloves donated to our 15th Annual Hat & Gloves Drive! We can't thank our community enough for helping us reach this milestone.

As a bit of a backstory, on a cold winter day, back in 2009, our founder, Ryan J. Ellis, was on his way to court in Marion County when he passed by Indianola Middle School. He was shocked when he noticed the number of students walking to school with no hats or gloves. Unable to shake the sight, Ryan did not return to work after court was finished. Instead, he stopped by the school to investigate if this was a common issue that kids were facing. He quickly learned the school was desperate for hats & gloves, so his next stop was Walmart where he purchased 30 of each to donate to the school. This sparked the idea of raising awareness of the community's need and turned into the very first Hat & Glove Drive at Ellis Law Offices.

15 years later, we donated a record 2,034 hats and

gloves to local schools after our 15th Annual Hats & Gloves Drive! In late January, our team delivered the donations to schools all over Warren County, including Indianola, Martensdale, Southeast Warren, Carlisle and Norwalk.

In addition to donating the winter gear, we committed to donating \$1 to Unravel Iowa, an organization dedicated to pediatric cancer research and family support, for each hat and set of gloves we received. This year, we are proud to announce that we kept our promise and donated \$2,034 to Unravel Iowa.

We are blown away by the generosity of our community and your commitment to making a difference. Next year, we plan to set our goal even higher. Plan to join us in early December at Ellis Law Offices for our 16th Annual Hats & Gloves Drive!

***Thank you for your selfless support over the years – we can't wait to see you there!***

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Ryan Ellis, Randall Jackson, McKenzie Ellis, Wyatt Kaldenberg



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WELCOME

# A PROPOSAL in letters

It was 32 years ago when I asked Jolene to marry me. We had been dating for a few years, and we both seemed ready to tie the knot. We were not ones to travel the world or take on outlandish activities, so a simple proposal seemed fitting, at least to me. What we did do was play a lot of board games, especially during the cold winter months. That gave me an idea.

One evening, I carefully placed the engagement ring I purchased for her in the bag of letters in a Scrabble game. I asked her if she wanted to play. She didn't react positively, but I eventually talked her into it. I nervously unfolded the board and set up the racks. Then I drew my letters. She did the same.

As the game proceeded, Jolene kept drawing her replacement letters, and I kept looking at her face, awaiting her reaction when she would pull out the ring.

More rounds of play. More letters drawn. We were getting down to the end, and she still had not found the ring. Was it not there? Did I lose it? Or did she know my plan and was messing with me the entire time?

With her last draw, she felt something different in the bag and remarked, "What is in here?" Then she turned the bag upside down and shook it, bouncing the ring off the table and onto the floor. I, of course, quickly picked it up, dropped to one knee, and asked her to marry me. Fortunately, she said yes. And, fortunately, the ring was still intact.

Considering what we do in our jobs today with publishing and printing and journalism and words, maybe using the Scrabble game was a good fit. I would like to tell you I had that connection planned out, but I didn't. We simply liked playing Scrabble. And we like being married.

In this month's cover story, we share the engagement stories of local residents, telling how they gained the courage to ask for their partner's hand in marriage.

Have a great month and thanks for reading. ■



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# 'I Do'

Residents share their marriage proposal stories.



**By Rachel Harrington**

Couples often celebrate the milestones of their relationships: the day they met, their wedding, anniversaries ... And the date of their engagement is often a highlight: an event often given much thought and planning. An occasion of romance, joy and anticipation of the journey ahead.

Kyrstan and Caleb Klobberdanz were engaged at the Garden of the Gods in Colorado.



## A storybook ending

Kellie and Stephen Muldrow's proposal story comes straight out of a book. Kellie, an Indianola native, and Stephen, from Houston, Texas, met in 2011 at a small Bible college in Indiana. Over the next five years, they got to know each other among common friends. Near the end of the spring semester in 2016, they began a dating relationship.

"We were in our mid-20s by that time, and we knew what we wanted, so our relationship moved pretty quickly after that," Kellie shares.

Stephen took a job as a librarian in Chicago and was working with a church, and Kellie came back home to Indianola. They continued dating with a long-distance relationship.

"Because Stephen worked in a library, and I like reading, we would often talk about books," Kellie says. "As part of dating long-distance, we would have to get creative with dates." Stephen says, "On my breaks, I would often call her, but I felt like we'd feel a little closer if we were in similar places."

Stephen wrote letters and sent them to members of Kellie's family in Indianola. He had them take the letters and place them in specified books in the Indianola Public Library. He picked some of Kellie's favorites such as "Pride and Prejudice" and books from the "Anne of Green Gables" series. He would then have Kellie find that book, and she would discover a love letter tucked in the cover.

"He did that a few times leading up to Sept. 2, 2016, though, the first time, I didn't know that was what he was going to do," Kellie says. "After that, I had an idea of what to expect."

On Sept. 2, about six months after they began dating, Stephen put a plan in motion he had been piecing together for a month.

"That day, I went to find the book that was supposed to have a letter in it for me. This time, the note said, 'Will you marry me?' When I turned around, he was there with a ring. I said yes, and we've been happily married since March 2017," Stephen says.

"The book title that I wanted to put the proposal message in was checked out of the library, so I stopped at a Half Price Books to pick it up," Stephen says. "We got to keep that one. I loved surprising her. We talked several times that day. It was a holiday, and Kellie felt annoyed at my boss, thinking I was having to stay in Chicago to do a project. She didn't know I was already in Des Moines picking up the book."

Kellie says she was very surprised.



Kellie and Steven Muldrow were engaged in the Indianola Public Library, where Steve left love letters in books Kellie enjoyed.

"Stephen thought it all out well," she shares. "The ring was also a surprise."

The Muldrows lived in Chicago for the first year of their marriage. They both held library jobs as they finished out his apartment lease.

"After a year, we moved back to Indianola and haven't looked back," Kellie says. "We've since had two children, built a house here in town, and started a little church that currently meets at the American Legion."

## High school sweethearts

Young love can begin in almost any context. For Kyrstan and Caleb Klobberdanz, the story began at Indianola High School in a German class.

"We went to elementary school at Emerson," Kyrstan says. "We knew each other and were in the same friend groups, but, as we became teenagers, he dated other girls. We didn't start dating until our sophomore year."

Caleb and Kyrstan both had last names that began with "K," so they were seated next to each other in alphabetical order.

"It was his cousin, then me (last name Keene), then him (last name Klobberdanz)," she says.

As a self-described extreme extrovert, Kyrstan made it her mission to get the

introverted Caleb to talk. When she finally did, and they got to know each other, they began dating secretly and did not tell anyone.

"His cousin told me one day that we should start dating and that she thought we'd like each other," Kyrstan recalls. "At that point, though, we were already dating, and she didn't know it."

The couple dated for four years before Caleb decided to propose. Some of Kyrstan's family lives in Colorado, and her parents planned a trip to visit them.

"They invited us to tag along," Kyrstan says. "It was our first trip together. We walked the trails at the Garden of the Gods, and we kissed in front of the Kissing Camels rock formation."

The next year, in June of 2023, the family took the trip again to the same spot. Earlier in the year, she and Caleb had picked out an engagement ring together because she does not like surprises.

"I had a feeling that a proposal was going to happen on that trip, but I didn't know where. We went to the Garden of the Gods again, and Caleb seemed very nervous. He kept walking back and forth over the same area, and I found out later that he was trying to find the exact spot from our kiss the year before."

Once Caleb found the spot he wanted, Kyrstan's mom asked them to pose for a picture. Kyrstan was unaware that her mom was in on

the proposal plan and was trying to mask what was coming by constantly taking photos of them. Once the photo was finished, he stayed where he was.

"I wondered why we weren't moving, thinking it was odd," Kyrstan shares. "That's when he got down on one knee and asked me to marry him. It was surprising because he is nervous about doing anything in public, and he proposed in a public space with my family watching and a lot of other people. Everyone was clapping and saying congratulations."

"I liked that he chose some place for the proposal that will never change," she adds. "We can go back years from now to that same spot in front of the Kissing Camels."

She says that his favorite part of the experience is probably that it was outdoors in nature and in the mountains.

"I'd say that he is proud of the location he chose," she says. "He put in a lot of work and thought into how he would propose."

The couple got married in August 2024 and are expecting their first child in May.

## Shells, sand and a big question

Often, location can be a big difference maker in the memory of a marriage proposal. Brody and Bri Hardman were able to share a proposal memory far from home. Several years before they said, "I do," they met at the wedding of Brody's cousin with whom Bri had attended Simpson College.

"We had never met before, but we were both in the wedding as a bridesmaid and an usher," he says. "We started talking at the wedding and hit it off."

For two years, the couple dated, and Brody decided he did not want to be a guy who drug his feet dating for years before proposing. He began forming his plans when Bri's parents invited them on a trip to St. Martin.

"I asked Bri's dad for his blessing in advance after an Iowa State game once I knew about the trip," he recalls. "I knew Bri was excited and looking forward to visiting the beach and looking for shells. I wanted to make the proposal unique and personal to her, so I looked online and found a shell that a ring would fit in. I chose a basic ring with a stone, deciding that she could choose what she really wanted later, which she eventually did."

After planning for four months, the trip finally arrived. He had been worried that she would discover the ring before the time was right, especially since they had to pass through airport security, but, thankfully, that was not what happened. The day after arriving on the island, the family group headed to the beach on the north side of the island.

"The beach was big and spread out, and you could see pretty far," Brody says. "Her parents decided to go do their own thing and look for a restaurant, and Bri wanted to go look for shells. I had previously decided to just carry the shell and ring with me in case the perfect moment presented itself."

Bri began combing the sand for shells. There happened to be a lot of shells and seaweed since the tide was low, and Brody decided it was a perfect opportunity to make a lasting proposal memory.

"She started looking for shells and was distracted the other direction, so I got down on one knee and told her, 'Hey, what about this one?'"

She turned around to see Brody presenting her with a marriage proposal and an engagement ring.

"Brody's proposal was nothing short of magical," Bri says. "He



Bri and Brody Hardman were engaged on a beach at St. Martin. Photo by AV Photography

somehow turned some of my favorite things — long, sunny walks on empty beaches, searching for seashells and surprise — into one perfect moment. When I noticed that Brody was on just one knee, at that moment I realized that this wasn't a lucky discovery from the ocean. It was a fairytale moment he had created just for me."

Once the proposal happened, the two met up with Bri's parents to share the good news.

"They were so happy and excited for us," Brody says.

The Hardmans were married in September 2019. Their trip to St. Martin was not only special because of their proposal, but because it was the beginning of many trips to sunny shores in the dead of winter.

"I had never traveled outside of the U.S. before," Brody says. "It was a cool experience. I love that it was memorable. Maybe we'll go back there one day, but we love to travel to new places." ■



Brody Hardman hid Bri's engagement ring in a shell. Photo by AV Photography



## PAIR simplicity and flavor with seafood pasta

(Family Features) Some recipes come from a well-worn family card, and others are born on a busy weeknight when you need dinner to feel special without being complicated. Shrimp spaghetti falls squarely into that second category for me. It's the kind of meal that looks impressive on the plate but comes together quickly — perfect for those evenings when you want something comforting, a little indulgent, and absolutely reliable.

I love shrimp because it cooks fast and pairs beautifully with simple ingredients. Toss it with garlic, olive oil, a hint of heat, and a squeeze of lemon, and suddenly an ordinary box of spaghetti feels elevated. This is the dish I reach for when I want a break from heavy sauces but still crave big flavor. It's light enough for warmer months, yet cozy enough to enjoy year-round.

Simple, satisfying, and full of flavor. This shrimp spaghetti is proof that a good meal doesn't have to be complicated to feel special. Find more quick dinner solutions by visiting Culinary.net. ■

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



### Shrimp Spaghetti

Recipe courtesy of "Cookin' Savvy"  
Servings: 4-6

- 1 pound spaghetti noodles
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1/4 cup avocado oil
- 1 package (12 ounces) raw shrimp
- 2 tablespoons garlic powder, divided
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- 1 cup chicken broth
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/4 cup heavy cream
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 cup frozen or fresh spinach
- bread, for serving



- Cook spaghetti noodles according to package instructions. In skillet over medium heat, add butter, avocado oil and shrimp. Mix in 1 tablespoon garlic powder and paprika. Remove shrimp after they begin to turn pink; set aside.
- Add chicken broth, Parmesan cheese, heavy cream, remaining garlic powder, onion powder and spinach to skillet; mix well. Add shrimp back to skillet to finish cooking. Mix in noodles and serve with bread.



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## MEDICAL treatment for injuries

When a party is injured, a question arises concerning whether one should seek medical care (or the extent of such care). Although there is no direct relationship between the amount of medical bills incurred and the ultimate value of a case, medical treatment can make a major difference in how a case is evaluated. Some examples that insurance adjusters may use to reduce the value of a case are:



- **No reported injury at scene.** If the police officer does not report an injury at the scene, an adjuster is more likely to conclude the claimed injury was minor.

- **Lag time before treatment.** If a party waits six months hoping the pain will "go away," the adjuster may question whether the claimed injury is actually from the accident or some other intervening cause.

- **Lapse in treatment.** If a party discontinues treatment after a few days or weeks then returns five months later, the adjuster may determine that this lapse indicates a minor injury or that the later treatment is unrelated.

- **Failure to follow medical advice.** This includes failure to show up for appointments, failure to attend referral appointments or otherwise failing to follow the protocol designed to aid in recovery.

Obtaining the appropriate medical treatment is important for at least two reasons. First, it will help the injured party learn the extent of the injuries and will provide the best road to an ultimate recovery. Second, treatment provides documentation of the injuries experienced by the injured party. Often, the medical notes will discuss the complaints of pain and discomfort of the patient as well as the diagnosis, prognosis and plan of the provider.

As indicated above, the amount of the bills (or extent of the treatment) do not necessarily correlate with the value of a given case. For example, a party may lose a limb but have very little medical treatment. It is clear that such an injury may be valued at a much higher number than a neck strain involving months of treatment.

In Iowa, personal injury damages include claims for the reasonable and necessary cost or value of medical care rendered. Recently, the Iowa legislature passed Iowa Code 668.14A. This section provides that such damages shall not exceed the sum of the amounts actually paid by or on behalf of the injured person. In other words, if the billed amount was \$10,000 and health insurance satisfied the bill for \$3,000, the amount submitted is limited to \$3,000. It is also notable that, when health insurance pays, it has a right of recovery out of any settlement or judgment.

**Conclusion:** One who is injured in an accident should get the appropriate treatment in a timely manner. ■

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).

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# HIT the ice

Indianola youth are part of a national hockey boom.

The sport of ice hockey saw record numbers of participants in the United States last year. Included in the mix? Indianola.

A group of youngsters from the community have been drawn to the sport, which is predominately played at The MidAmerican Energy Company RecPlex in West Des Moines.

"It's a great multisport facility," volunteer coach Neil Reuter says. "The kids love to play there, and it brings in multiple weekend-long tournaments each year."

Reuter isn't surprised with the sport's growth spurt.

"I think hockey in general is growing due to the excitement the sport brings," he says. "There are two solid local high-level teams — the Iowa Wild (AHL) and the Des Moines Buccaneers (USHL) — that give people the opportunity to watch some high-level hockey."

A variety of Indianola area kids ages 5 to 17 lace up the skates, including Zeke Segebart, Ezra Segebart, Hunter Gustafson, Mason Reuter, Lincoln Reuter, Ben Avitt, Mikey Credidio, Jayce Kingkade, Kase Bengston, Hadley Miller, Charlie Jacobson and Bo Jacobson.

Reuter says the Des Moines Youth Hockey program has expanded its offerings, with a wide variety of programs from Learn To Skate, Learn To Play, house leagues, competitive travel teams and two high school teams that are competitive in the 14-team Midwest High School Hockey League.

"If they have never skated before, they can start with the Learn to Skate program," Reuter says. "Both my youngest have participated in that, and they can start as early as 3 years old."

The Learn To Skate program teaches skating for all levels, adults included. The Learn to Play program involves 6- and 10-week sessions in which kids skate twice a week. Full hockey gear is needed to participate in the program, but there are quite a few ways to do it affordably, according to Reuter, via Play it Again Sports, Facebook Marketplace or hockey families.

"I outfitted my 5-year-old for under \$100," he adds.

The house league program features 6u, 8u, 10u, 12u, 14u and high school teams and is an all-inclusive league that allows all levels of skill. There's even Lady Wild, just for girls.

Two high school teams — the Des Moines Oak Leafs and the



A group of Indianola area youngsters have been playing in varying levels of hockey around the Des Moines area. Front row, from left: Ezra Segebart, Zeke Segebart, Kase Bengston, Jayce Kingkade, Bo Jacobson and Lincoln Reuter. Second row: Hunter Gustafson, Charlie Jacobson and Hadley Miller. Back row: Mason Reuter, Ben Avitt and Mikey Credidio.

Des Moines Capitals —are part of the Midwest High School Hockey League, a 14-team league that would be similar to other high school sports, Reuter says. The league features both junior varsity and varsity competition.

"This is the most competitive hockey Des Moines has to offer," Reuter adds.

For adults, Mid-Iowa Beginners Hockey has sessions devoted to learning skills and then scrimmaging. Adults can join the Central Iowa D League, which offers multiple skill levels and takes everyone from beginners to people who played when they were younger. Games are played on Sundays throughout the winter.

"It's a great way to get to meet other adults that love hockey," Reuter says. "Between youth programs and adults, DMYHA has 68 different teams this year with over 1,000 hockey players."

Reuter encourages people interested in the sport to visit the DMYHA website or visit the rec plex to watch a game. All DMYHA games are free to attend.

"Hockey is so much more than just a sport," Reuter says. "Hockey builds discipline, confidence and leadership and meets kids where they are and grows with them. Hockey welcomes all skill levels, offering clear development paths, strong coaching and a tight-knit community that supports families along the way." ■

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## AGING at home

Why a broad care network matters.

Ellen, 72, has every intention of staying in her Des Moines-area home for as long as she can. She is active, social and generally healthy. Still, she is realistic. Aging well at home is not just about what you need today; it's about having the right support if change occurs.



For many older adults and families, home-based services begin with a single need: help after a hospital stay, assistance with medications, or support with daily tasks. What often gets overlooked is what comes next. Needs can evolve and health conditions can change. Care can become more complex, sometimes quickly.

That reality raises an important question: When you choose a home health provider, are you choosing a service ... or a network?

Home-based care works best when it is connected. A provider that operates within a broad network of services can help ensure continuity, coordination and confidence over time. Rather than start over each time a new need arises, a network allows care to adjust and expand while keeping the individual at the center.

A comprehensive home health network typically includes a range of services that address physical health, personal support and overall well-being. Skilled clinical care, such as nursing or therapy, may be needed for a season. Personal assistance can help with daily routines that support independence. Wellness-focused services can play a role in prevention, safety and long-term planning.

The advantage of a connected network is not just convenience; it's communication. When providers share information, align goals and understand one another's roles, care tends to be more responsive and less fragmented. That can mean fewer gaps, clearer expectations, and better outcomes for the person receiving care.

It also offers peace of mind for families. Adult children and caregivers often are balancing work, family responsibilities and concern for a loved one's well-being. Knowing that services are coordinated (and that additional support is available if needed) can reduce stress and uncertainty.

When evaluating home health options, it helps to look beyond the immediate need and ask a few key questions:

- Does this provider offer access to multiple types of services, or will I need to find new support if I need it later?
- How are services coordinated if needs change?
- Is there a focus on long-term independence, not just short-term care?
- Does the provider have experience supporting people across different stages of aging?

Aging at home is rarely a straight line; it's a series of adjustments, decisions and transitions. Choosing a home health provider that is part of a broad, well-integrated network can make those transitions smoother and more manageable.

The goal is not to anticipate every possible scenario, but to partner with a provider that is equipped to adapt alongside you. When care is connected, flexible and comprehensive, home can remain not just a place to live, but a place to thrive. ■

Aaron Wheeler is Vice President of Home and Community-Based Services for WesleyLife, which provides health and well-being services, including WellAhead — A WesleyLife Well-Being Experience, a CC@H offering. To learn more, visit [wesleylife.org/wellahead](http://wesleylife.org/wellahead).





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# THE TRUE cost of senior living in the Des Moines area

How much does senior living really cost? It is one of the first and most important questions families ask when planning care for an aging loved one. While pricing varies by location, services and housing type, understanding what contributes to the cost helps families make informed decisions.



According to LongTermCare.gov, nearly 70% of adults older than 65 will require some form of long-term care, and 20% will need it for five years or more. Whether you're planning ahead or responding to a recent health change, knowing what to expect financially is essential.

In the Des Moines area, the most common senior living options include:

- **Independent living:** Designed for active seniors who don't need daily care. Monthly fees typically cover housing, some meals, housekeeping and activities.
- **Assisted living:** Includes help with activities of daily living (ADLs) such as

bathing, dressing and medication management. Costs increase with the level of care.

• **Memory care:** Offers specialized support for individuals with Alzheimer's or other cognitive conditions. Higher staffing ratios and secured environments result in higher rates.

**What influences cost?** Several factors affect pricing: apartment size and layout (studio vs. one-bedroom); included services (meals, housekeeping, laundry); level of care required; community amenities (fitness, wellness programs, outings); and location.

Many communities charge a base monthly rate and add care costs based on a needs assessment. It is important to ask if services are bundled or tiered, and if fees increase as care needs change.

**Financial planning options:** Families in Des Moines often use a mix of resources to cover costs: private savings and retirement income; long-term care insurance (helps cover assisted living or memory care); VA Aid and Attendance benefits (for eligible veterans and spouses); home sale proceeds or reverse mortgages; and Medicaid (for those who

qualify, usually applies to nursing homes or specific waiver programs).

**Key takeaway:** The cost of senior living reflects more than rent — it reflects access to care, peace of mind and quality of life. Before choosing a community, request a breakdown of all fees and understand what is included.

For Des Moines families navigating this decision, comparing options, visiting communities, and speaking with financial advisors can help make the process less overwhelming.

Senior living isn't one-size-fits-all. Understanding the true cost helps you find the right fit — one that supports health, safety and meaningful living at every stage. The sooner you explore your options, the more prepared you will be when needs arise — and the more control you'll have over care, cost and comfort. ■

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.





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# THE NEW gold standard

Why the best import service isn't at the dealer

If you follow automotive headlines, the outlook for independent repair can seem grim. Between technician shortages and manufacturers fighting to gatekeep repair data, the challenges are real. However, for the discerning import owner, this isn't a time of decline — it is a golden age. While the industry is changing, those shifts have allowed specialized independent shops to offer a level of service that modern dealerships simply cannot match.

**The shift in the service landscape:** Thirty years ago, dealerships held the monopoly on “premium service.” They were the only destination for specialized tools and high-end customer care. Today, the tide has turned. Modern dealerships are burdened by massive overhead, skyrocketing HR costs, and the cold efficiency of corporate consolidation. In these



high-volume environments, the “customer experience” often becomes a secondary priority to managing the sheer scale of the operation.

**The specialist's edge:** Specialized independent shops have stepped into the spotlight by remaining lean, agile and focused. Here is how they outmaneuver the giants:

- **Targeted expertise:** Today's independent specialists invest heavily in brand-specific training. Your vehicle is handled by a technician who understands its specific engineering DNA, rather than a generalist.

- **Technological parity:** The diagnostic world is more competitive than ever. Independent shops now utilize high-tech tooling and software that rivals factory equipment, ensuring precision without the dealership markup.

- **Superior sourcing:** Unlike dealers restricted to a single supply chain, independents can source premium parts from multiple high-quality venues, often identifying more durable alternatives to factory components.

- **Personalized care:** Without corporate

mandates, independent owners can craft service journeys and warranties tailored specifically to the needs of the client and their vehicle.

**Protecting your right to repair:** The strength of the aftermarket is bolstered by organizations like the Auto Care Alliance (ACA). These groups are the consumer's frontline, fighting to keep repair information open and accessible. As vehicles become increasingly sophisticated, these advocates ensure that you — the owner — retain the freedom to choose a specialist you trust.

**The future is local:** The “doom and gloom” headlines ignore a simple truth: Specialized service is thriving. By embracing technological advances and prioritizing the human element, independent import specialists are doing more than just maintaining cars — they are providing a superior alternative. ■

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).



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## GARDENING

By Barry Laws

# GARDENING in this 'in between' month



February, that interesting month between the cold, dark, frigid temps of January and the warming breezes, melting and bright days of March. What to do in the garden? Many of us are ready to get outside and begin to emerge from winter hibernation, but what can we do in this "in-between" month?

Take a walk around the garden and check out your beds, trees and shrubs. Look for damage from rabbits, voles and deer. If you find damage on trees and shrubs that you may not have protected last fall, take time to put chicken wire cages around those damaged trees and shrubs now, and make a note for next year to be sure to protect them. Check any late plantings of perennials, shrubs and trees for possible frost heave. A new layer of mulch spread around these will help keep them safe until spring.

Now is a good time to prune trees and shrubs while they are dormant, but do not prune any spring bloomers, since you will be pruning off this year's blooms. Lilacs, magnolias, redbuds, azaleas and rhododendrons should not be pruned. But, maples, oaks, Japanese maples and other non-flowering trees are great candidates since you can see the structure of the tree without leaves.

While you have your pruners out, gather some stems of pussy willow, red twig dogwood and forsythia to take in and force into bloom indoors for a bright color burst. The bonus will be these stems will often begin to root in water, and you will have starts to plant out this spring or share with friends and family.

There are things to do indoors as well. Remember those elephant ear bulbs, canna and dahlia tubers you dug up and put in storage? Now is the time to inspect and make sure they are still looking good. If you find any with soft spots or showing decay, throw them away. Some loss is normal during storage, and it gives you a chance to buy some new varieties this spring.

Starting seeds for your gardens this spring? Now is the time to gather your supplies; trays, medium and seeds. Check local nurseries, garden centers, catalogs and internet for interesting new and different seeds. Get your calendar out and start marking when each needs to be started so you can plant out this spring. Remember, those cool/interesting flowers and veggies can be entered into the Warren County Fair the end of July in the open flower and vegetables classes, so try some really fun new varieties this year.

Did you bring any pots with plants that are marginally hardy into the unheated garage? Check to see if the soil is drying out. If they need some moisture, use some ice cubes instead of water. The ice cubes melt slowly and provide even moisture without running right through the pot. Check on a regular basis so they stay hydrated for the rest of the winter.

Take the opportunity this month to get outside and begin enjoying your garden. Have fun in the garden dreaming of those sunny and warm days of spring and summer just around the corner. ■

Information provided by Barry Laws, co-owner, Quilted Gardens Nursery and Landscaping, 19635 130th Ave., Indianola, 515-720-3089, [www.quiltedgardens.com](http://www.quiltedgardens.com).



# A LOOK back at 2025

2025 was a year full of economic change, market uncertainty, shifting policies and periods of volatility. Some major headlines included new tariffs, slowing job growth, higher inflation and a prolonged federal government shutdown. Regardless of these headlines and challenges, the year highlighted the importance of maintaining a long-term perspective.

Despite concerns of a possible recession, the U.S. economy continued to grow. Consumer spending remained strong, helping support economic activity. Inflation stayed elevated for most of the year, while the labor market gradually declined.

In response, the Federal Reserve eased monetary policy, cutting the federal funds rate three times for a total reduction of 75 basis points.

Job growth slowed throughout 2025, with the unemployment rate rising to its highest level in four years. Average monthly job gains fell to 124,000, down from 168,000 in 2024.

Markets experienced sharp swings during the year. In April, the largest U.S. tariff increase since the 1930s triggered a sharp global market sell-off, followed by a recovery in May. Additionally, President Trump signed a major tax-cut and spending bill called the One Big Beautiful Bill Act.

Despite periods of volatility and uncertainty, 2025 was a strong year for the markets overall.

For the full year, all major stock market indexes delivered double-digit



returns, led by the Global Dow (26.9%), followed by the Nasdaq (20.4%), the S&P 500 (16.4%), the Dow (13%), and the Russell 2000 (11.3%).

After years of historic volatility, 2025 was also a solid year for bonds. Fixed income did not match the double-digit rallies like we saw in equities; however, bonds fulfilled their traditional role of providing income and stability with most of the core indices finishing in the green.

As we enter 2026, many questions around the market naturally arise. While short-term performance in 2025 included periods of volatility, the broader picture reinforces the values of staying invested during an eventful year. ■

At City State Bank, our team of advisors are here to help provide thoughtful guidance and support while helping you navigate changing market conditions. We are here to help you plan for the future, not just the year ahead. For more information, please 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. These materials are provided for general information and educational purposes based upon publicly available information from sources believed to be reliable, we cannot guarantee the accuracy or completeness of these materials. The information in these materials may change at any time and without notice.



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## Upcoming in Indianola Living magazine:

**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](mailto:tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com).

**Celebrating heritage:** What have you learned about your family or community's heritage? How do you celebrate or honor your heritage? Let us know by emailing [tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com](mailto:tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com).

## Indianola Public Library Events

207 N. B. St., Indianola

Visit the website to register for events: <https://indianola.librarycalendar.com>.

### KIDS

- Kids Create: Saturday, Feb. 21, 2-3 p.m., grades K-5
- Chess Club: Thursdays, Feb. 26 and March 12, 6-7 p.m.
- Storytime
- Storytime with Janis: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:30-11 a.m.
- Saturday Storytime: Saturdays, 10:30-11:15 a.m.
- Storytime: Mondays, March 2 and 9, 6-6:30 p.m.

### TEENS

- Teen Hangout: Wednesdays, 2:30-4:30 p.m.
- Teen Art Cart: Saturdays, all day.
- Chess Club: Thursdays, Feb. 26 and March 12, 6-7 p.m.
- High School Book Club: Tuesday, March 3, 3:15-4:15 p.m.

### FAMILIES

- Library Playdate: Saturdays, all day.
- Family Lego Club: Monday, Feb. 23, 6-7 p.m.
- Family Snack & Paint: Friday, March 6, 5:30-7 p.m.

### ADULTS

- Morning Book Club: Friday, Feb. 13, 10-11 a.m.
- Sip & Paint: Friday, Feb. 13, 6-8 p.m.
- Native Plants & Pollinators: Thursday, Feb. 19, 6:30-7:30 p.m.
- Friends of the Library Trivia Night: Saturday, Feb. 21, 7-10 p.m.
- Evening Book Club: Tuesday, Feb. 24, 6:30-7:30 p.m.
- Mardi Gras Murder Mystery: Friday, Feb. 27, 6-8 p.m.
- Bingo: Tuesday, March 3, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

## Free Community Meal

Tuesdays, 5:30-6:30 p.m.  
Lighthouse Community Center,  
109 W. Boston Ave., Indianola

Free home-cooked meal every Tuesday. Everyone is welcome. Come and enjoy food and fellowship with individuals and organizations in our community.



## Indianola Knights Lenten Fish Fries

Fridays, Feb. 20 to March 27  
St. Thomas Aquinas Parish Hall,  
210 S. Wesley St., Indianola

The Indianola Knights Lenten Fish Fries are served from 5:30-7 p.m. with dine-in and take-out service available. Cost for adults and take-outs is \$14. Children 6-12 are \$6 and 5 and younger are free. Boy Scout Troop 123 will host a dessert table. The fish breading does not contain wheat flour.

## Indianola Parks and Recreation and Hy-Vee Special needs events

Indianola Activity Center, 2204 W. Second Ave.

Individuals with disabilities of all ages and their families, chaperones, respite providers and SCL workers are invited to attend these free drop-in events with dancing, fun and pizza provided by Indianola Hy-Vee.

• **Hy-Vee Special Friends Winter Formal:** Friday, Feb. 20, 6-7:30 p.m.

• **Hy-Vee Special Friends Let's Glow Crazy Dance:** Friday, April 17, 6-7:30 p.m.

• **Hy-Vee Special Friends Luau Dance:** Friday, June 5, 6-7:30 p.m.



## Trivia at The Groggy Dog

Tuesdays, 7-9 p.m.

The Groggy Dog, 116 W. Ashland Ave., Indianola

Grab some friends, bring an appetite and your love for knowledge and beer. Five dollar draws, prizes, fun and good competition. The place to be on a Tuesday night.

## Warren County Master Gardeners Think Spring Garden Seminar

March 7, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Simpson College, 701 N. C St., Indianola

The Warren County Master Gardeners will be hosting their annual Think Spring Garden Seminar on the campus of Simpson College in the Hubbell Hall of the Kent Campus Center. Garden enthusiasts can learn from horticulture experts, shop with local vendors, win door prizes and enjoy a delicious catered lunch. You do not need to be a Master Gardener to enjoy this event. Register at: <https://go.iastate.edu/HSILYW> or by scanning the QR code.



## CITYVIEW's Chocolate Walk

Friday, Feb. 27, 5-9 p.m.

The Breakfast Club, 5525 Mills Civic Parkway, Suite 100, West Des Moines

Like chocolate? Like chocolate drinks? Then you'll love this event. CITYVIEW and West Glen Town Center again bring the Chocolate Walk to West Glen Town Center. For a ticket price of \$25 (\$35 at the door), attendees will receive 10 drink tickets that can be redeemed for sample cocktails at participating venues and will receive a chocolate treat. Look for more details at [chocolatewalk.dmcityview.com](http://chocolatewalk.dmcityview.com).



## EVENTS IN THE AREA

Check for cancellations

### Friendly Sons of St. Patrick Pre-Party and Parade

March 14 and March 17

The Friendly Sons of St. Patrick is back with its St. Patrick's Day celebrations. Join them on Saturday, March 14, from 2-6 p.m. at The Shop DSM, 901 Cherry St., Des Moines, for a Pre-Paddy Party, featuring live music from Fat Tuesday, a live auction, food trucks and cash bar for an at-will donation. The parade is on Tuesday, March 17, and begins at noon. Participants will proceed from E. First Street, west on Grand Avenue to Eighth Street, with the parade officially ending at Eighth and Grand Avenue. The after party will be in the Des Moines Marriott Downtown Hotel. Visit [www.friendlysonsiowa.com](http://www.friendlysonsiowa.com) for more information.

### Wine, Food and Beer Showcase

Friday, March 6, 6-9 p.m.

Des Moines Marriott Downtown,  
700 Grand Ave., Des Moines

Sample the night away. The Wine, Food & Beer Showcase is one of the oldest food and beverage events in the area and has become a yearly favorite for foodies, wine lovers and beer enthusiasts alike. Featuring 30-40 of the finest restaurants, caterers, wineries, breweries and distilleries in the area, the event is the Des Moines Metro Opera's signature fundraiser. All proceeds raised throughout the evening support Des Moines Metro Opera's award-winning education and community engagement programs. Learn more at <https://desmoinesmetroopera.org/showcase/>.

### Ports of Call, Music of The Mediterranean

Sunday, Feb. 22, 2 p.m.

Valley High School Staplin Auditorium,  
3650 Woodland Ave., West Des Moines

The Des Moines Community Orchestra presents the 2026 50th Anniversary Season Winter Concert, Ports of Call, Music of The Mediterranean. With Guest Conductor Joshua Barlage and cello soloist Curtis Barr. Admission is free but donations are always welcome.

### The Iowa Files: A History Series

West Des Moines Public Library, 4000 Mills Civic Parkway

This joint West Des Moines Historical Society and West Des Moines Public Library program is free and open to the public, thanks to the generosity of West Des Moines Historical Society members, Bravo Greater Des Moines and the Friends Foundation of the West Des Moines Library. All programs are streamed on the WDMHS Facebook page and YouTube channel.

• **Feb. 15: Ako Abdul-Samad; A Life Working for Justice.** Ako Abdul-Samad has served the community in numerous capacities as an elected official, mediator and community organizer. Ako will share his thoughts on the state of equality and the fight against systemic poverty and racial injustice and his life-long commitment to the power of dialog to make positive change.

• **March 15: The Monuments Men and the Saving of Culture.** The Monuments Men (and Women) had a seemingly impossible job: save some of the world's most precious cultural artifacts and art from the Nazis, who treated Europe as their private looting grounds. Presenter Ruth Ehler's grandfather, Ralph Hammett, was one of the men. Ruth will recount stories of the amazing and frantic work that saved and returned treasures to their rightful owners and institutions. ■

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# DON'T LET hearing loss stop you from dining out

Individuals with hearing loss have particular difficulty communicating in environments with excessive background noise, such as busy restaurants. Rather than face the prospect of trying to enjoy a good meal while dealing with competing conversations, clanging silverware and dishes and distracting music, many choose to skip the experience altogether. But you don't have to consign yourself to a lifetime of Happy Meals; there are strategies you can employ to help you enjoy dining out at your favorite restaurant on occasion.

The following tips will help ensure a positive restaurant experience for those with hearing loss:

- **Choose a booth over a table.** Tables are



typically situated in the middle of the room and offer little respite from noise. Try calling ahead and requesting a booth if available.

- **Don't sit near the kitchen.** Regardless of whether you end up with a booth or table, try to avoid being seated near the kitchen or bar. These high-traffic areas tend to be the noisiest.

- **Avoid sitting near the loudspeaker or air conditioner.** A comfortable temperature and ambient music are essential to the dining experience, but sitting too close is sure to prove distracting. If you are being steered in this direction, ask your host or hostess if they can seat you elsewhere.

- **When dining with a group, position yourself in the center of the table.** This ensures you can hear all parts of the conversation without straining to hear somebody at the opposite end.

- **Maintain eye contact with the person**

**who is speaking.** Paying close attention to visual cues can help improve your understanding in noisy environments.

- **Check out the menu before you go.**

Preparing in advance by previewing the menu on the restaurant's website will ensure you know the different types of food available and how it is prepared, so you won't misunderstand or have to ask the server to repeat him- or herself. If the restaurant has daily specials available, these are usually posted in the waiting area or on a menu supplement; if not, ask for a written copy.

By following these tips, you are likely to have a positive dining experience. You might even be tempted to hang around for dessert. ■

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).

## Keep the Conversation FLOWING

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# ACUPUNCTURE and cancer treatment

Over the past two decades, acupuncture has been increasingly recognized as a valuable integrative therapy for easing the side effects of cancer treatments, offering patients a nonpharmacological option to improve comfort, function and overall quality of life.



## Acupuncture and cancer treatment side effects

Cancer therapies such as chemotherapy, radiation, surgery and targeted drugs can be lifesaving, but they often bring challenging side effects. Acupuncture — an evidence-supported modality within Traditional Chinese Medicine — uses very thin, sterile needles to stimulate specific points on the body, which activate the neurovascular and neuroendocrine-immune pathways that help restore balance and regulate symptoms. Research-driven cancer centers like MD Anderson and Memorial Sloan Kettering

now incorporate acupuncture into supportive oncology care when evidence shows benefit.

**1. Chemotherapy-induced peripheral neuropathy (CIPN).** Some chemotherapy drugs damage peripheral nerves, causing pain, numbness, tingling and weakness. Studies at Memorial Sloan Kettering show that acupuncture can improve nerve signaling, reduce pain and enhance mobility and sleep in patients with CIPN.

**2. Cancer related pain.** Acupuncture stimulates endogenous opioid release and modulates pain pathways. Clinical trials show reduction in musculoskeletal pain, postoperative discomfort and chronic cancer-related pain. Patients often report improved daily functioning and reduced reliance on pain medications.

**3. Nausea and vomiting.** Nausea is one of the most common chemotherapy side effects. The National Cancer Institute notes that acupuncture has been studied for decades as a complementary therapy for nausea.

**4. Anxiety, stress and sleep disturbances.**

Cancer diagnosis and treatment can heighten emotional distress. Research shows acupuncture can reduce anxiety, regulate stress hormones and improve sleep quality by influencing the autonomic nervous system.

**5. Fatigue and overall well-being.** By promoting circulation, regulating inflammation and supporting homeostasis, acupuncture helps many patients feel more energized and resilient during treatment. MD Anderson emphasizes its role in symptom-oriented care, targeting issues such as fatigue, dry mouth and digestive discomfort.

## A safe, integrative approach

As cancer care increasingly embraces integrative medicine, acupuncture stands out as a research-supported, patient-centered therapy that alleviates many of the burdens of treatment. ■

Information provided by Dr. Renee Dalrymple, LAc, SEED Meditation Instructor, Soaring Crane Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine, 14849 130th Ave., Indianola, 515-962-9093, call or text.

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*For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. - Ephesians 2:10*

## FAITH

By Tom Vanderbilt

## THE PASSION of Christ

As hearts, chocolates and cards fill stores this February, Valentine's Day invites us to celebrate love. For Christians, however, the day points beyond romantic gestures to the profound, unconditional love of God.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). This verse stands as God's ultimate "love letter" —

not fleeting or earned but freely given through Christ's sacrifice. Love flows from grace: We are first loved by God, then called to love others in response. Faith is active in love, serving neighbor without expecting return.

Whether single, coupled or grieving, no one is excluded from this divine affection. It reaches the lonely, the joyful and everyone in between. This Valentine's Day is just a few days before Ash Wednesday on Feb. 18. Let the passion of Valentine's Day remind you of Christ's passion ahead. Shift focus from commercial romance to acts reflecting God's love: forgive freely, serve quietly or simply share a kind word.

God's love isn't seasonal — it is eternal. In Christ, we receive the greatest Valentine ever: life abundant and unending. ■



Article provided by Pastor Tom Vanderbilt, Mount Calvary Church, Indianola.

## WELLNESS

By Jen Penisten-Clark

## SKIN resurfacing

Skin resurfacing is a popular aesthetic treatment designed to improve skin texture, tone and overall appearance by removing damaged outer layers of skin and stimulating natural cell renewal. It is commonly used to address concerns such as fine lines and wrinkles, acne scars, sun damage, enlarged pores, uneven pigmentation and dull or rough skin.

One of the key benefits of skin resurfacing is its ability to promote collagen and elastin production. As the skin heals, it becomes firmer, smoother and more radiant. Resurfacing treatments can also enhance the effectiveness of skincare products by allowing them to penetrate more deeply, leading to improved and longer-lasting results. Many patients notice brighter, clearer skin after just one session.

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Information provided by Jen Penisten-Clark, MSN, RN, NP-C, CEO/owner, Vivid Life Spa, 1951 E. 18th St., Suite 105, Norwalk, 515-850-7848, vividlifespaspa.com.

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# THE END of an era

McCoy True Value closes after 140 years.

On Jan. 31, McCoy True Value hardware store closed its doors to the public after 140 years of business. The store was first established by the McCoy family in 1885, and it was owned by the same family until the 1970s. At that time, John Piffer, a longtime employee of the McCoy's and father/grandfather to the current owners, took over the store. Piffer's daughter and her husband, Steve and Kathi Pfeifer, took over the store in the 1990s. Their daughter, Jen Pfeifer-Malaney, helps run the store, and she says she and her mom have both grown up in the hardware business.

McCoy Hardware has changed locations several times over the 140 years it has been in business. First, it was a harness shop and hardware store, and it was located where the Local Vine is currently on the square.

"When it started, they shoed horses, did harnesses and operated a hardware store," shares Pfeifer. "McCoy's was the first hardware store in Indianola."

The store next split into two separate businesses, and the hardware store moved to where the KNIA radio station now operates. With business growing and the need for more space increasing, McCoy Hardware then moved to where Professional Body Works tanning salon and Winner's Circle Trophies and Awards stand today. Lastly, to accommodate more growth, McCoy Hardware moved to its current location near the Indianola Square.

"This was the first building we owned," Pfeifer-Malaney states. "The last one had been leased to us." Though it has operated in four separate locations, the hardware store remained within a two-block area.

"When we moved to this building, we hired the Indianola High School Music Boosters to help move everything in," Pfeifer-Malaney says. "We had parents and students pushing carts full of inventory through our parking lot. I think the kids had more fun riding the carts into the parking lot than moving stuff. That was one of their major fundraisers that year."

Before Steve Pfeifer passed away, he made sure to make customers feel welcome.

"He treated everyone like family, no matter who they were," Pfeifer-Malaney says. "Everyone's projects became his projects. McCoy Hardware store was the place to come if you needed something or needed advice on how to do things."

When McCoy Hardware became a True Value, they began to carry EasyCare paint products.

"We've probably been best known for our paint products," Pfeifer Melaney shares. "Once my dad passed away, we came up with the motto 'Service with Heart.' I believe that is our legacy we leave to the community. We have been in the community, cared about it, and cared about the people in it, as well as what customers were putting in their homes."

Over the last several years, the economy has taken a major toll on the store.

"First, there was construction around us for about two years when Theisen's went in. We lost about 30% of our business during that time," Pfeifer-Malaney explains. "Then the COVID pandemic hit, and we had to change our ordering processes. We don't have a great internet presence,



Jen Pfeifer-Malaney and her mother, Kathi Pfeifer, are proud of how their family, owners of McCoy True Value, has served the community.

and online sales have taken a toll on us. It has been hard to maintain the balance between taking good care of our customers and running a successful business."

As McCoy True Value owners close out an era of serving and helping the community, they see many "lasts" in their future, including locking the door for the final time because someone else buys the business. Pfeifer-Malaney says,

"The good thing is that we'll still be active in the community and will be seeking out the best ways to still 'Serve with Heart,' " Pfeifer-Malaney says. ■

## FEBRUARY'S Iowa Living Magazines Poll of the Month

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### What do you buy most often for Valentine's Day?

- ☐ Chocolates
- ☐ Flowers
- ☐ Just a card
- ☐ Other gifts
- ☐ Nothing



# BEATY finds restoration projects rewarding

Uses his work skills for projects he enjoys



Mike and Mason Beaty with one of Mike's projects.

Mike Beaty enjoys working with his hands. He did automotive and aftermarket automotive work during his 20s and 30s. Later, he worked on electrical automation, such as control panels for robotics.

"In my teens, 20s and 30s, I learned out of necessity," Beaty says. "If something broke, I had to figure out how to fix it. I learned from others, picking their minds."

Between the jobs he has held and what he has learned from observation and asking questions, Beaty says he has developed a well-rounded skill set.

Over the years, he has enjoyed using those skills for both work and pleasure.

"I've always been into the desert buggies, but they were never really attainable for me," he says. "I found out about cross carts, which are popular to race in Europe and are gaining traction in the U.S. They are bigger than go-carts but smaller than desert buggies, and they are off-road vehicles. I found a guy you could get the plans to build them from. Eventually, he started selling kits. Last summer,

I showed my buddy the cross cart stuff, and he also liked it. We both bit the bullet and ordered kits."

Beaty and his friend get together about once a month to work on the cross carts, and sometimes his son joins him. They are almost finished with them, waiting only for a few parts. He plans to make his street legal and use it for outings such as taking his family for ice cream.

Beaty and his son also work together restoring older, small tractors.

"Most of what we get are literal old barn finds. We like to try to save them instead of them going to the junkyard. It's a way to keep busy, too. We bring them home, restore them, and either sell them or play with them for a bit."

Currently, the two are working on a smaller Kubota compact tractor.

Restoration projects don't stop with tractors for Beaty. Several years ago, he brought home an older Yamaha motorcycle from the 1980s.

"It sat around for a long time," he says. "I

have torn it down to its frame and rebuilt the motor. I have sourced a lot of parts for it from overseas. It is almost finished. I am just waiting on several parts that are harder to get."

He uses the tooling capabilities and skills he has for his personal restoration projects as well as work projects. Beaty and his wife own and operate Heritage Property Services. She handles the administrative work, and he does the labor of mowing, drainage work, regrading and sloping of yards, and landscape jobs.

"We have to maintain all our stuff to keep prices down," Beaty shares.

The skills he has for fixing things come in handy for this. Once, he had a bad bushing on an excavator and was able to machine a new one on his lathe.

"It was pretty cool," he says.

Beaty enjoys the freedom that he feels when he finds something that needs to be fixed and accomplishes restoring it to working order. He enjoys spending about 60% of his down time in his garage working on restoration and building projects with family and friends. ■



# CLASSIFIEDS

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# BASKETBALL game

A crowd gathered to watch an Indianola High School basketball game at home Jan. 27.



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## OUT & ABOUT



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Jackson Foust, Slade Koenig and Beau Spenner



Landon Olson and Brooks Pough

# MEET B. J. Weepie

## The pursuit of positive impact

About half of the eighth graders at Indianola Middle School make their way into B. J. Weepie's class each school day to learn social studies. Weepie is in his second year teaching the subject and his fourth year teaching at Indianola Middle School. Before coming to Indianola, he taught at Cedar Rapids. He began looking for another position, and several college friends sang the praises of Indianola schools.

"It seemed like it'd be a good fit for me, and it has been," he says.

As a youngster, Weepie grew up in a family of educators.

"My dad was a P.E. teacher, my P.E. teacher," Weepie shares. "My grandma was a teacher, and I have several cousins who are also teachers."

He and his dad would often watch World War II movies and war documentaries. Through this father/son time, Weepie developed a deep appreciation and interest in the history of the world from a young age. Now, as a social studies teacher, he can share that passion for history and the world with students.

"I love the content that I teach, and I really enjoy working with kids," Weepie shares. "In eighth grade, the topics are fun to teach, and I think they are important. I love covering topics I am passionate about. I also value how being an educator allows me opportunities to make positive impacts in kids' lives. That is really what has driven me."

Weepie says that the greatest challenge he finds in his job is trying new things in the classroom, especially if it is something he has never thought to do.

"I try to keep myself fresh and make myself at least 1% better each day." The typical day in Weepie's classroom includes six classes throughout the day, a study hall and a prep period. He also helps with reading support for fluency, and, on Tuesdays and Thursdays during part of the year, he offers tutoring.

Some of Weepie's favorite memories as an educator are seeing former students who are now in high school. He likes to see how they have grown as individuals inside and outside of the classroom.

"Some are way taller than me now," he chuckles. "I appreciate when former students come and talk to me. To see their growth is really rewarding for me, and I've even had some approach me to thank me for teaching them."

Weepie also invests in students outside of the classroom as a coach for the seventh-grade football team and junior high girls track team. He has coached football for the past three years, and this year will be his second year as a track coach.

"It was a tough football season, but I look forward to watching the students' athletic growth," Weepie remarks. "Last year, I had a great group of girls on the track team, and I enjoyed my year of coaching them."

For Weepie, being a teacher is one of the most rewarding experiences he has ever had. When asked what advice he would give to others considering education, he says, "I throw myself all in, and I enjoy positively impacting kids. If that is something you love doing, this is the job for you." ■



B. J. Weepie enjoys teaching social studies and coaching.

# 'THE MORE things change...'

"The world has gone crazy." You probably hear that a lot and maybe even find yourself saying it. And it is no lie that much of what we see and hear in the news seems like chaos. Maybe you feel scared, frustrated or helpless about it. While this sort of turmoil may be new in "our world" — by that I mean in our location and at this present time — there is really nothing new about it. The world is, and has been, in a constant state of chaos for all of recorded history.



King Solomon, renowned for his great wisdom, some 3,000 years ago, wrote in Ecclesiastes 1:9 "That which has been is what will be, that which is done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun." Wow, even if he is spot on with his assessment (and he seems to be), that sounds really depressing. Is there any hope in any of this?

Yes. For that we can look to the words of Solomon's dad, King David, who wrote in Psalm 61:1-2 "Hear my cry, O God; attend to my prayer. From the end of the earth I will cry to You, When my heart is overwhelmed; lead me to the rock that is higher than I." David refers to God as a rock because of God's unchanging nature.

While we're pretty much guaranteed that this world and this life will be in a perpetual, chaotic state of flux, we are also guaranteed that God does not change. God is not fickle but remains true to the promises given in Scripture to us. There is a saying that the more things change, the more they stay the same. At its core, that is true, but the focus is in the wrong place. That is a focus on the circumstances of life, and they will always be changing. The world will keep changing. Your life will keep changing. For that matter, even you will keep changing as you progress through the seasons of life. But, when our focus is on God, even in the midst of the flux of circumstances, now our focus is on the anchor of a God who doesn't change. What a great comfort that can be for us.

This coming Sunday, join with God's people in corporate worship, prayer and the teaching of God's word — things that do not change. ■

Information provided by Kevin Mayer, New Heights Church, 200 E. First Ave., Indianola, 515-442-5111.



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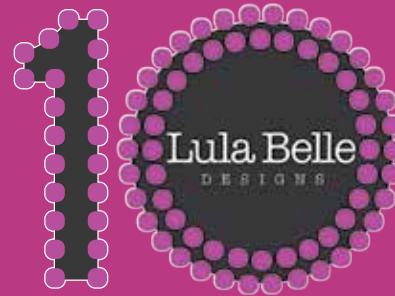
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