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HISTORY AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

NEW WEBSITE MAKES LOCAL HISTORY ACCESSIBLE FROM HOME.

BY GRACIE KAYKO

Adel has a robust history that many residents, past and present, don't know about. To change that, a year and a half ago, the Adel Historic Preservation Commission and Adel Historical Museum partnered to create a website, adelhistory.org, that digitizes the city's history and information that was previously scattered across the community in books, computers and memories.

The website will be "one digital source for accurate historical information about Adel. There's lots of stuff ... it's just hard to find, and I think, as time progresses, it will become harder and harder to find," Anna Phelps, assistant chair of the Adel Historic Preservation Commission, says.

The website will also serve as a marketing and communications



Connie Cooper, Aubrey Dunbar, Anna Phelps, Rich Hughes and Shirley McAdon are active members of the Adel community and have contributed to creating Adel's new history website.

tool for Adel Historical Museum. According to museum volunteer board member Connie Cooper, a lot of residents don't know the museum exists. The museum has its own page on the website where people can learn about the museum's history

and improvements. It also includes information on visiting and events.

The Adel Historic Preservation Commission and Historical Museum have worked on projects

HISTORY, CONTINUED ON BACK

ADEL WEATHER FORECAST

FRIDAY HIGH 31 | LOW 18
Cloudy, windy and colder



SATURDAY HIGH 29 | LOW 11
Partly sunny and breezy



SUNDAY HIGH 26 | LOW 12
Sunny and windy



MONDAY HIGH 33 | LOW 19
Sunny



TUESDAY HIGH 53 | LOW 32
Sun turning to clouds



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FROM THE PUBLISHER

YOU SCRATCH MY BACK, AND I WILL SCRATCH YOURS

You have likely heard the phrase in the above headline. You may have even used it a time or two. It means to do a good deed for someone if he or she does a good deed for you. It promotes reciprocity and encourages teamwork. Fair enough.

Some say this phrase has some roots in the English Navy from the 17th Century. The punishments then for sailors being absent, drunk or disobedient were known to be quite severe. At times, the offender would be tied to the ship's mast and flogged with a lash — known as a cat o' nine tails — by another crew member. Sailors would sometimes strike deals with each other to deliver only light lashes with the whip (i.e., just “scratching” the offender's back) to ensure they were treated the same in case they ever found themselves on the receiving end. Now, that is just plain smart — and it is good planning.

Another theory is that the origin of the scratching phrase is in the

concept of symbiotic relationships in nature, where certain species engage in mutual grooming or cooperation for mutual benefit.

The exact origin may be unclear, but variations of you scratch my back and I will scratch yours have been recorded in English literature dating back to the 18th century.

That's all interesting, but sometimes we really do need a good back-scratching in one of those itchy spots we just can't reach. In our younger years, this wasn't as much of a problem, as we could seemingly maneuver our arms behind our backs like skilled contortionists. Today, I have to implement effort and planning to scratch my head. My back? Forget it.

My wife scratches my back, and I scratch hers. It's a simple pleasure we both enjoy, both literally and



figuratively. The dry air during Iowa's winters makes our skin itchier, and neither one of us have figured out how to apply lotion on our own back. So, we scratch — and we smile.

We do have one of those wooden back-scratching devices, which does come in handy at times. So does the corner where the walls meet and, on a rare occasion, a wire clothes hanger. You have to be careful with that option, though. It's not a cat o' nine tails, but it could leave a mark.

How about you? Do you scratch someone's back who also scratches yours? Or do you have another solution to relieve the itch? Send me a note and let me know.

Have a great week, and thanks for reading. ■



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

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8101 Birchwood Court, Suite, D, Johnston, IA 50131
www.iowalivingmagazines.com



News contact

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



Advertising contact

Dan Juffer
515-371-2290
dan.juffer@dmcityview.com

VAN HARDEN TO SPEAK AT LIBRARY MARCH 3

The Adel Library has invited award-winning broadcaster, author and Adel favorite son, Van Harden, to speak at the Library, 303 S. 10th St. at 10 a.m. on March 3. Harden will be speaking about growing up in Adel, his 50-year broadcast career and his new book, "Jesus: The Prequel," which has recently been awarded an International Impact Award. For information, contact the library or van@vanharden.com. ■



INFORMATIONAL SESSIONS ON TUSCANY GETAWAY

Information sessions will be held March 2 and March 10 about the Adel Partners Chamber's Tuscan Getaway happening Oct. 25-Nov. 2. This trip includes airfare, 10 meals, hotel accommodations, excursions and memories to last a lifetime. Early bird pricing starts at \$3,849 per person and ends on March 29. Contact Casey at chamber@adelpartners.org for information or to reserve your spot. Hurry, this trip will sell out quickly. ■

50s PLUS MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Enjoy board games, conversation, coffee and good food at the 50s Plus meetings. They invite anyone in Adel and the surrounding area to join them the first and third Tuesdays of the month, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Adel Public Library, 303 S. 10th St. If you have just moved to the area and would like to meet new people, this is a great way to do it. The group now has programs included in its activities. Programs are open to anyone, not just seniors. ■

ADM SPORTS SCHEDULE

Friday, Feb. 20

— **Wrestling:** Varsity State Tournament @ Wells Fargo Arena - Des Moines

Saturday, Feb. 21

— **Wrestling:** Varsity State Tournament @ Wells Fargo Arena - Des Moines
7 p.m. **Basketball:** Girls Varsity Regional Semifinal vs. TBA

Monday, Feb. 23

7 p.m. **Basketball:** Boys Varsity Substate vs. Clarke



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SPREAD THE LOVE PB&J CAMPAIGN

The Dallas County Auditor and Commissioner of Elections Office is serving as a drop-off site for the Spread the Love PB&J donation drive throughout February.

Residents and businesses are encouraged to donate

unopened jars of peanut butter and jelly to support local food pantries and families facing food insecurity.

Donations can be dropped off

at the Auditor's Office at 210 N. 10th St. in Adel between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. (closed Feb. 20).

Every jar helps spread a little extra nourishment and kindness across our community. ■



CELEBRATE ADEL NOMINATIONS OPEN

Cast your nominations for 2025 Citizen of the Year and Business of the Year. Nominations are due by March 10 and winners will be recognized at the Adel Partners Chamber of Commerce Celebrate Adel event. ■

CITIZEN OF THE YEAR:



BUSINESS OF THE YEAR:



DALLAS COUNTY NEW REDISTRICTING MAP

Dallas County has finalized a new redistricting map ahead of the 2026 election as the Board of Supervisors expands from three to five members. The change, approved by nearly 67% of voters in November 2024 and confirmed by the Iowa Secretary of State's Office, reflects the county's rapid growth and improves local representation. Under Iowa's Plan 2 structure, candidates must live in the district they seek to represent, but all county residents vote in every race. The updated boundaries align with current population distribution and state requirements. Residents are encouraged to review the new district map on the Dallas County website, www.dallascountyiowa.gov/668/Redistricting-Information, before the November election cycle or contact the Auditor's Office for more information. ■



ANNUAL FIREMAN'S DANCE

Adel Volunteer Fire & Rescue will be hosting its fourth annual Fireman's Dance on Saturday, March 28, at Country Lane Lodge Event Venue, 29300 Prospect Circle, Adel. This dance will be a fundraiser to purchase needed equipment for the department. ■

RACCOON RIVER PRESCHOOL'S TRIVIA NIGHT FUNDRAISER

Raccoon River Preschool is hosting its Trivia Night on Saturday, March 7, at Country Lane Lodge, 29300 Prospect Ave., Adel. The event features dinner, cash bar, game night and a live auction. Doors open at 5 p.m. and trivia, hosted by DJ Trivia, starts at 6 p.m. A live auction follows. Registration is \$30 per person or purchase a table for up to eight people. Sign up online at raccoonriverpreschool.com under the Fundraising tab. ■

ST. JOHN'S COMMUNITY FISH FRIES

St. John's, 24043 302nd Place, Adel, is hosting Fish Fries for Lent on Fridays, Feb. 20 and 27, March 6, 13, 20 and 27, 5-7 p.m. They will be serving fried pollock, french fries or baked potato, cheese sandwich, coleslaw, and homemade tartar sauce. Assorted desserts will also be available. Feb. 20, March 6, and March 20: Children 5 and younger eat free, children 6-12 are \$7. Feb. 27, March 13 and March 27: Children younger than 12 eat free. All days: \$15 for adults, family maximum of \$50. ■

NEEDS FOR VETERANS AT THE VA

Veterans need our help when they are hospitalized or homeless. Federal funds cannot be used at the Des Moines VA Hospital or Community Resource and Referral Center for personal items. That's when the Adel American Legion Auxiliary and other groups step up to collect contributions from the community as well as provide funds from Poppy Day donations.

Current new items needed are long sleeved shirts, XL boxers/briefs, duffle bags, sweatpants/sweatshirts (M-2XL), and pullover and zip-up sweatshirts (M-XL); personal care items; and coffee and snacks. Please refer to the Adel American Legion Facebook page for a detailed list. Of note is that Branch-of-Service clothing, blankets, hats and insulated mugs are residents' favorite items.

Contributions may be dropped off at 1305 S. 15th St., Adel, or call Shirley McAdon at 515-993-4862 for pick up. ■

GARY'S RIDE

On Saturday, May 16, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Gary's Ride will be held, starting at the Waukee Raccoon River Valley Trailhead and ending in Dallas Center downtown Main Street. The event will be held to increase awareness of glioblastoma and support Richard Deming Cancer Center's terminal brain cancer patients through their integrative medicine program, Iowa Oncology Research Association for Glioblastoma Clinical Trials, MercyOne Des Moines Foundation for gift cards for terminal brain cancer patients and their families, and Gary's Compassion Fund for financial assistance for terminal brain cancer patients and their families. Help to "pedal" forward in reaching the funding goal and be the difference for these loved ones and their families afflicted by terminal brain cancer/glioblastoma. Registration and information are available at garysrideiowa.org. ■

DALLAS COUNTY CONSERVATION EVENTS

www.dallascountyiowa.gov/conservation | All programs are free and open to all ages.

- **Eagle Watch.** Sunday, Feb. 22, noon to 4 p.m., Cottonwood Recreation Area, 7400 Northwest 37th St., Ankeny. The return of the bald eagle is a conservation success story and a cause for celebration. Gather at the open waters below the Saylorville Reservoir, where these birds historically congregate. Spotting scopes or binoculars are recommended, though a limited number will be available to share. This program is a joint effort between DCCB, Iowa Audubon and the Corps of Engineers. Register on Eventbrite.
- **Voas Volunteer Day.** Saturday, Feb. 28, 9-11 a.m., Voas Nature Area, 19286 Lexington Road, Minburn. Help continue clearing invasive species out of an oak savanna at Voas Nature Area. Volunteers will be using loppers and handsaws to clear honeysuckle, cedar trees and autumn olive. Several past participants have used this to fill Master Gardener volunteer hours. No heat, mosquitoes or poison ivy. Children welcomed and encouraged. Come help liberate these smothered "wolf" oaks. Register on Eventbrite. ■

MOBILE FOOD BANK

Adel Mobile Food Bank is the fourth Wednesday of the month at New Hope Church, 25712 Highway 6, Adel, from 5-6:30 p.m. or until the food is gone. This is a drive-thru pickup for free groceries. ■



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EVENTS IN THE AREA

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TAMMY@IOWALIVINGMAGAZINES.COM**DES MOINES COMMUNITY
ORCHESTRA WINTER CONCERT**

Sunday, Feb. 22, 2 p.m.

Staplin Performing Arts Center

3650 Woodland Ave., West Des Moines

Enjoy the Des Moines Community Orchestra's Winter Concert featuring guest conductor Joshua Barlage and featured soloist Curtis Barr, cello.

**DES MOINES ART CENTER
MUSEUM HIGHLIGHTS TOUR**

Saturdays, 1-2 p.m.

Des Moines Art Center

4700 Grand Ave, Des Moines

Discover the vast variety of the Des Moines Art Center's permanent collections during the Museum Highlights Tour. This tour offers a unique journey through the galleries, featuring a selection of timeless paintings, sculptures and more. Join knowledgeable guides to uncover the stories, techniques and inspirations behind the art on view, and experience the highlights of the Art Center in a fresh and engaging way. This guided tour is perfect for art enthusiasts of all ages. Free to all, no registration required.

TEA AND TALK SERIES

Saturdays, Feb. 21, 28 and March 7, 2 p.m.

Terrace Hill Drawing Room

2300 Grand Ave., Des Moines

The Terrace Hill Partnership presents the Tea & Talk series. Guests will hear from local speakers who will cover topics centered around arts and culture, conservation and gardening, historic architecture, and book publishing and illustration. Speakers will give short presentations in Terrace Hill's Drawing Room. Tickets are \$10 per program or \$35 for a season pass. The speakers are donating their time, and all proceeds will benefit the gardens of Terrace Hill. Tickets are available on Eventbrite at <https://thteatalkseries2026.eventbrite.com> or by calling the Terrace Hill office at 515-281-7205. Tickets must be

purchased in advance.

- **Feb. 21:** Aaron Harpold, director of horticulture, Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden, A Stroll Through the Seasons at The Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden.
- **Feb. 28:** Scott Allen, historic practice leader, OPN Architects, Terrace Hill - B.F. Allen Greenhouse Reconstruction.
- **March 7:** Susan Schmid and Tara Gartin, author and illustrator of No Company for Christmas, Turning Terrace Hill into a Book.

**2026 CITYVIEW CHOCOLATE
WALK AT WEST GLEN**

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 chocolate treat samples. Make it a date night or a night out with friends. Look for more details at chocolatewalk.dmcityview.com.

**LIONEL BART'S "OLIVER! JR."**Weekends from Feb. 20 to March 8, Fridays 7 p.m.,
Saturdays and Sundays 2 p.m.

CAP Theatre, 201 First Ave. S., Altoona

The streets of Victorian England will come to life when CAP Theatre presents the musical "Oliver! JR.," based on the novel "Oliver Twist" by Charles Dickens and adapted from the full-length musical by Lionel Bart — who wrote the book, music and lyrics. This beloved production follows a trusting young orphan named Oliver Twist as he searches for a place where he truly belongs. Ticket prices range from \$12–\$18. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit www.captheatre.org. ■

RECIPE

BEAT THE WINTER BLUES WITH A CHILDHOOD CLASSIC

(Family Features) If a cold snap has you feeling blue, turn back the clock and warm up the kitchen with a kid-friendly favorite the whole family can enjoy. Mac and cheese is a staple in households across the country, and this version with made-from-scratch sauce will leave your loved ones asking for more.

To make it a full-blown meal, pair simple skillet mac and cheese with grilled or pan-seared chicken to forget about the weather with time together.

Visit Culinary.net to find more comfort food classics. ■

SIMPLE SKILLET MAC AND CHEESE

Recipe adapted from Mel's Kitchen Cafe

Total time: 30 minutes

Servings: 6

Ingredients:

- 3 1/2 cups water, plus extra if needed
- 1 can (12 ounces) evaporated milk, divided
- 12 ounces pasta shells
- salt, to taste
- 1 teaspoon cornstarch
- 1/2 teaspoon dry mustard
- 1 1/2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 1/2 cups shredded Monterey Jack cheese
- 2 tablespoons butter, cut into small chunks
- ground black pepper, to taste

Directions:

- In nonstick skillet over high heat, bring water, 1 cup evaporated milk and shells to



PHOTO COURTESY OF OF UNSPASH

simmer. Season with salt, to taste. Cook, stirring, until pasta is tender and liquid thickens, 9-12 minutes.

- In small bowl, whisk remaining evaporated milk, cornstarch and dry mustard. Stir into skillet. Continue simmering

until slightly thickened, about 1 minute.

- Remove skillet from heat. Stir in cheddar and Monterey Jack cheeses in batches, adding water to adjust consistency. Stir in butter then season with salt and pepper, to taste.

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STORYTIMES

- **Move and Groove Storytime** – Every Tuesday at 9:30 a.m.
- **My First Storytime** – Every Wednesday at 9:30 a.m.
- **Preschool Storytime** – Every Thursday at 9:30 a.m.

ELEMENTARY

- **Elementary Maker Lab: Door Handle Signs** – Tuesday, Feb. 24 from 4-5:30 p.m.*
- **Nerf Battle: Grades 2-5** – Friday, Feb. 27 at 2 p.m.*

TEEN

- **Library D&D** – Friday, Feb. 20 from 1-3:30 p.m.*
- **Teen Maker: Vinyl Stickers** – Wednesday, Feb. 25 at 4 p.m.

ADULTS

- **Exercise Group** – Meets every Monday through Thursday at 9 a.m.
- **Yoga** – Every Wednesday at 6 p.m.*
- **Evening Book Club** – Thursday, Feb. 26 at 5:30 p.m.

*Registered event, register at adelpl.org. ■

HISTORY, FROM FRONT

together before; the website, however, will truly unify the two individual volunteer organizations' partnership.

The website will house in-depth narratives about each building in Adel's Historic District, accompanied by photographs and a self-guided walking tour. Additionally, the website will have a design guideline page where property owners can apply for grants to help with preservation projects.

Residents of Adel are

proud of their community, people and places, City Council Member Shirley McAdon says. "There are many reasons to come to Adel. We want to share our history because we're proud of it. Our history shows that we fought to keep our community vibrant and that we want our community to grow. We support our businesses, and we support the government of our city as well as Dallas County." ■

See the upcoming March issue of Adel Living magazine for the complete story.