

Living



A 'fur-ever'

HOME

Residents share stories about the animals they rescued.

Meet Shelby Miller

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Sick Day Chicken Noodle Soup

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UNDERSTANDING THE IMPORTANCE OF

ESTATE PLANNING



Estate planning often feels like an intimidating task. Paperwork, legal terms, financial decisions, and the uncomfortable acknowledgment that none of us live forever can make it easy to put off. But the real question is: What happens when you are not prepared?

Having a clear, well-crafted estate plan is one of the greatest gifts you can give your loved ones. It protects your assets, honors your wishes, and ensures your family is not left making difficult decisions during an already emotional time. The good news is that you do not have to navigate the process alone.

On March 26, we invite you to an Estate Planning Seminar at The Sagewood in Indianola beginning at 6:30 p.m.

The seminar is designed to make the estate planning process approachable and easy to understand. Attorneys Wyatt Kaldenberg and Ryan Ellis, along with Financial Advisor Todd Lappe of Edward Jones, will walk attendees through the essentials of wills, trusts, powers of attorney, and other financial considerations that accompany end-of-life planning. Light refreshments will be provided. All attendees will receive \$100 off an estate plan at Ellis Law Offices. RSVP is required and can be made by calling 515-962-9080 or emailing bailee@ellislawpc.com.

Estate planning does not have to be complicated. With the right guidance, it can be one of the most empowering decisions you make.

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WELCOME

TO THE rescue

Some of you have spent a great deal of money on your cat or dog, and you have a wonderful pet. Some of you spent the same or more, and you have a lousy pet. I am convinced that getting a good pet is often the luck of the draw. Much like with children, genetics and upbringing are important, but they don't help explain how one from the same litter can be so drastically different from the next one.



Jolene and I have had six pets during our time together — two cats and four dogs. We reluctantly inherited the first cat, D.C., from Jolene's parents who went south for the winter. The other cat, Reggie, was adopted from the Animal Rescue League. Both were good cats, as far as cats go.

Our first dog, Roxy, was from a rescue league specific to the breed. It was delivered to us from Missouri, and the dog that showed up didn't look anything like the one on the website. But, that was OK, as we loved that little, chubby, tail-less dog anyway.

We adopted the next dog, Max, from a neighbor's friend who was moving out of the country. It was a purebred that he wrote a big check for. Our third and fourth dogs, Kobie and Layla, came from rescue leagues again.

These were all adult dogs when we got them, and all but one have since died. Jolene called them "short-term investments." Her words, not mine. The lone survivor is not fond of babies, so it was shipped off to Jolene's brother in Washington state for a simpler life once our grandson was born.

We didn't pay more than \$40 for any pet we had, including adoption fees. We may have paid more for the right pet, but we simply didn't see the need to do so, and we were happy to adopt rescue animals that needed a home. They certainly all had their quirks. In my experience, every pet does. For that matter, every human does, too.

Meanwhile, rescue animals have warmed the hearts of many pet-owners, and they continue to do so. We share a few of their stories in this issue in hopes that you may be inspired to open your home to a rescue pet as well.

Have a great month and thanks for reading. ■

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Shelby and Clayton Dale adopted Katrina, a cat that was huddled in the back of its kennel when they went to pick out a pet.



A 'fur-ever' HOME

Residents share stories about the animals they rescued.

By Rachel Harrington

Abandoned. Abused. Neglected. The world is full of animals — big and small — that don't know the comfort of a full belly, a warm place to sleep, and the love of a caring owner. Some people seek out these needy animals when looking to add a pet to their family. Others come across them unexpectedly and are moved to rescue them. Whatever the case, rescued pets often give their humans as much love as they receive.

A soft spot

Nealey Webster has a soft spot for animal shelters and rescue centers, especially for Kiya Koda. She owns a gym and a pet store in Indianola, and she has held several fundraisers at her businesses to support it. Her love for animals is evident, and her concern for the ones found in shelters eventually led her and her husband to find their most recent furry friend.

“My husband and I had two golden retrievers, ages 11.5 and 8 years old,” she recalls. “Soon after we added a bloodhound to our family, we lost both our goldens three months apart last year, and we were heartbroken. We wanted to fill the void we now felt with a new puppy. When I was looking for pups, I did not want a Great Pyrenees because they are very stubborn, and I did not want a herding dog for the same reason.”

She was on Facebook one day, and one of the first things that popped up was a shelter in Kansas City. She saw an ad for three puppies, and the mom looked like a black, flat coat retriever. They had been found outside of St. Louis with their mom. They had lost much of their fur due to fleas and were in rough shape. The mom’s teeth were broken, possibly indicating that she had been stuck to a chain and tried to chew through it. Webster felt like a dog of that breed would be a great running buddy, so she decided to get one of the puppies.

The Kansas City animal rescue caring for the puppies does not have a physical location. It relies on foster families to help them out.

“The lady that was fostering the puppies was planning to be in Norwalk soon and said she could bring the one I wanted to adopt,” Webster remembers. “When I got him on Dec. 12, he was about three months old, and his chest and belly were still kind of bald with leathery patches remaining. Otherwise, he was just a fluffy guy. I didn’t know what I was getting myself into.”

Webster decided to get a DNA test done on her new puppy, which she named Dierks. He did not end up having retriever DNA in him, but he had 30% Australian shepherd, 30% Great Pyrenees, 30% labrador, and 10% German shepherd. Despite not desiring those kinds of dogs, she ended up with a blend of them.

“Dierks is the epitome of stubborn, but we love him,” she says. “I think perhaps he can still be trained to run with me. He is getting long legs, but he seems to be growing at a slower pace than a Great Pyrenees does. We’ll see. For



Nealey Webster and her husband adopted Dierks, a rescued puppy that had been in bad shape.

now, we’re sticking with long walks to wear him out.”

Webster says dogs should not have to live in kennels their whole lives, stating that they need room to run.

“Shelter pets have so much love to give. Many of them get overlooked because they are older. I knew that I wanted a shelter puppy or dog so that he or she could receive the love all dogs deserve.”

Dierks has filled out beautifully in the few months that Webster has had him, and she looks forward to seeing what the future brings.

Two years in a shelter

Shelby and Clayton Dale moved to Indianola about two years ago. They had wanted to get a pet for a while, but they had debated back and forth on what and when. The Dales say adopting an animal is better because there are so many out there that need homes. They also knew they wanted to keep it local if they could.

“We decided we wanted a cat. It would be an easier option because it would be our first pet. We thought about dogs, too, but decided to just do a cat at this time,” Dale says. “We



After checking Dierks’ DNA, Nealey Webster found that the puppy was a combination of breeds that are particularly stubborn.

visited lots of shelters. We found a rescue cat at Kiya Koda that was roughly 2 years old. Her name is Katrina, and we call her Kat.”

When Dale first saw Kat at Kiya Koda, she was withdrawn in the back of her enclosure.

“She is a striped black and brown tabby color, a bigger cat, and she had a crooked pupil,” she says. “I just kept coming back to her. Kat had been at Kiya Koda for two years. When I saw her, she was shy and hunched up in the corner of her kennel but expressed a desire to be petted. She had a sweet soul with a sweet personality. That’s what made us want her.”

Dale asked her sister-in-law who works at an animal shelter in Des Moines to come see Kat with her. She soon adopted and took her home. Dale says the adoption process was easy. They filled out a little paperwork and took her home the same day. Kat has now enjoyed being loved and cared for by the Dales for almost a year.

At first, Kat was extremely shy in the Dale house and generally hid downstairs.

“It took a week before she came upstairs to sit with us,” she says. “Now, she is the biggest cuddler and a very chill and easygoing cat. Most would believe cats don’t like their bellies rubbed, but Kat will come lay on her back and fall asleep to us rubbing her tummy. She loves to walk 5 feet away from us and put her paws up, almost like a rabbit. In the middle of the night, she will hide behind our coats or something similar, wait for us to pass by, then playfully dart out at us. Sometimes she hides around a corner to do the same kind of thing.

“The Kiya Koda staff was absolutely amazing,” Dale states. “They knew all the animals so well. We had a really great experience with them.”

The Dales liked adopting versus going to a breeder because they had the chance to meet all the animals first and make connections. In the event that a bond with an adopted animal does not work out, an animal rescue or shelter will take the animal back, no questions asked. With a breeder, that is not an option.

“We will definitely adopt again in the future,” Dale says. “We have talked about a dog, and, if we ever want another cat, we will definitely adopt again.”

A dog and its companion

Ever since her mother began rescuing dogs, Lori Frederickson has cherished the practice of giving animals a second chance at life.

“My mom adopted rescue dogs from Second Chance rescue in Prole,” she recalls. “She loved smaller companion dogs. Some of them had deformities from living so long in cages.”

Though Frederickson had a history of knowing about the rescue facility, life and work kept her busy, and she did not have time to adopt herself.

However, when she retired, she decided it was time to follow in her mother’s footsteps and adopt a rescue dog herself.

“I met a friend, Kim West, here in town in a women’s group that volunteered and worked for the Second Chance rescue group. She was fostering overflow dogs in her home,” Frederickson recalls.

“She had a little white dog that no one wanted, and she sent a picture of him to me. He was a 1-year-old pom-a-poo that more than likely had been rejected because he isn’t pure white.”

Frederickson’s new friend brought Chassie to visit with her. He was extremely scared, shaking nervously. He had been rescued from a breeder



Lori Frederickson adopted a dog rescued from a breeder but found it wasn’t adjusting well — until she brought home a companion for her.

several months before. He didn’t want anyone to touch his legs, and he was very sensitive to noises.

“We worked with him quite a long time,” Frederickson says. “After a few months of having him in my home, I felt like he was depressed and not thriving. He had always been with lots of dogs. I went back to look for a companion for him.”

She found a small female dog, a full-bred havanese named Lacie that was similar in size to Chassie. Lacie had just had surgery on her back leg. She was about 9 years old and had given the breeder several litters of puppies. Because she was rehabilitating from her surgery, Lacie initially had to stay in a kennel for a few days. Next, Frederickson put Lacie in a pen so she and Chassie could get acquainted.

“They were pretty much secluded except to put their noses together through the wire,” she says.

Once Lacie’s leg healed, the dogs rarely left each other. Frederickson worked to leash and potty train them both, and now they are thriving together. Frederickson says her dogs are self-entertained most of the time.

“They love to roll around and play with each other,” she says.

“I have found that many dogs do better in pairs,” Frederickson shares. “Probably about a third of the animals at that rescue needed some form of medical care. Most needing medical care are ready for adoption within three to five months, while others are ready within a month.”

Frederickson fostered another 15 dogs from the rescue that were successfully adopted. She says the Second Chance is closed now, and she is sad because she enjoyed working with them.

“There is a huge need in Iowa for people to adopt pets from rescues and shelters,” she says. “Please, go adopt a rescue.” ■

STOP the sniffles with Sick Day Soup

(Feature Impact) Coughs and sniffles don't have to derail you for long – not with a fresh, homemade stockpot full of Sick Day Chicken Noodle Soup. Loaded with rotisserie chicken, celery and carrots, it's sure to warm you from the inside-out as a warm, comforting meal. Plus, with eight servings, this dish can help solve dinnertime dilemmas throughout the week by storing leftovers in the refrigerator and reheating on the stove.

Warm up your winter meals with more comforting ideas available at Culinary.net. ■

Sick Day Chicken Noodle Soup

Recipe adapted from Tastes Better from Scratch

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cook time: 20 minutes

Servings: 8

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 tablespoon butter
- 2 ribs celery, diced
- 3-4 large carrots, diced
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 10 cups chicken stock or broth
- 1/8 teaspoon dried rosemary
- 1/8 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1/8 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- salt, to taste
- pepper, to taste
- chicken bouillon cubes (optional)
- 4 cups dry egg noodles
- 3 cups cooked rotisserie chicken

DIRECTIONS

- In large stockpot over medium-high heat, saute butter, celery and carrots 3 minutes. Add garlic and cook 30 seconds.



Photo courtesy of Shutterstock

- Add chicken stock or broth and season with rosemary, thyme and crushed red pepper. Add salt and pepper, to taste. Taste and add chicken bouillon cubes, if desired, for flavor.
- Bring to boil. Add noodles and cook until al dente. Remove from heat once noodles are tender.
- Add chicken. Taste and adjust seasoning as desired.



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WORKPLACE injuries



Most workplace injuries are governed by Chapter 85, the Iowa Workers' Compensation Act. It is generally held to be "the exclusive remedy" against an employer or co-employee.

A very narrow exception may exist where a co-employee is guilty of "gross negligence." Recently, the Iowa Supreme Court illustrated how narrow that exception can be. In the December 17, 2025, case of *Griffeth v. Kulper*, the Court held that the estate of a worker failed to sustain a claim where the co-employee did not have actual knowledge of the peril that caused the employee's death.

In the *Griffith* case, the employee had fallen to his death from a catwalk into a surge hopper located at a quarry. After the incident, the Mining Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) conducted an investigation and cited the quarry for numerous rule violations. It was discovered that, on the day of the accident, the catwalk gate was secured with a strip of metal wire instead of the standard retaining pins. This meant that it was less secure than it could have been.

The estate of the worker filed suit against the supervisor and the quarry's safety and environmental director, alleging gross negligence on their part. At the close of evidence, the jury awarded \$2.6 million dollars to the worker's wife, child and estate and \$200,000 to the worker's father.

On appeal, the Supreme Court noted that "gross negligence" cases carry a high burden of proof. Plaintiffs must prove three elements: (1) knowledge of the peril to be apprehended; (2) knowledge that injury is a probable, as opposed to a possible, result of the danger; and (3) a conscious failure to avoid the peril. The court concluded that, in this case, there was no evidence that the two co-employees had actual knowledge of the missing linchpins that left the gate unsecured. It noted that mere constructive knowledge was not enough. Therefore, the court determined that dismissal of the gross negligence claim was necessary.

In keeping with this holding, the court discussed similar cases including one involving an injury where a machine's safety features had been disabled; a hand injury at a meatpacking plant; an injury to worker involving a metal pole; and a worker who fell from a precipitous drop off beneath an aluminum mill. Conversely, the court observed that it had allowed such a claim where caustic chemicals injured a worker who had warned his supervisor about a hole in his protective suit and where a manlift collapsed in high winds where a supervisor admitted the method used was unsafe even on windless days.

Conclusion: Nearly all workplace injuries will be governed by Workers' Compensation law in Iowa. The gross negligence exception is extremely narrow. ■

Information provided by Ken Winjum, The Winjum Law Firm, P.L.C., 1220 Sunset Drive., Suite 103, Norwalk, 515-981-5220, www.winjumlaw.com.

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V. GIRLS TRACK

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
Mar 24	3:00PM	Multiple Schools	Simpson College
Mar 30	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Simpson College
Mar 31	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Northwest High School
Apr 2	4:15PM	Hawketta Invite	Northview MS
Apr 7	4:15PM	Multiple Schools	Indianola Stadium
Apr 11	8:30AM	Jim Duncan Inv.	Drake Stadium Track
Apr 14	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	DCG HS
Apr 16	4:15PM	Ron Werling Invite	Indianola Stadium
Apr 20	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Norwalk
Apr 23-25	8:00AM	Drake Relays	Drake Stadium Track
Apr 27	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Saydel High School
Apr 30	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Clarke Comm HS

V. BOYS TENNIS

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
Apr 3	11:00AM	Multiple Schools	Indianola High School
Apr 6	11:00AM	Multiple Schools	Johnston Tennis Courts
Apr 7	4:15PM	Valley	Indianola High School
Apr 9	4:15PM	Newton	Indianola High School
Apr 13	1:00PM	Multiple Schools	Knoxville High School
Apr 14	4:15PM	Pella	Indianola High School
Apr 17	4:15PM	North Polk	Indianola High School
Apr 21	4:15PM	Pella Christian	Pella Christian
Apr 23	4:15PM	DCG	Indianola High School
May 5	4:15PM	Norwalk	Norwalk Middle School
May 8	1:00PM	Multiple Schools	North Polk High School
May 12	9:00AM	LHC Tournament	Pella Tennis Courts

V. GIRLS SOCCER

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
Apr 3	7:00PM	Nevada	Indianola Stadium
Apr 6	7:00PM	Waukee	Timberline School
Apr 10	7:00PM	Winterset	Winterset High School
Apr 14	7:00PM	Newton	Indianola Stadium
Apr 17	6:00PM	Carlisle	Carlisle High School
Apr 21	7:00PM	DCG	Indianola Stadium
Apr 23	7:00PM	North Polk	North Polk High School
Apr 28	6:00PM	Oskaloosa	Indianola Stadium
May 1	7:00PM	Ottumwa	Indianola Stadium
May 4	6:30PM	Pella	Indianola Stadium
May 12	7:00PM	Norwalk	Norwalk
May 14	7:30PM	Lincoln	Lincoln High School
May 18	5:30PM	Pella Christian	Pella Christian
May 21	7:00PM	Des Moines Christian	Des Moines Christian

V. BOYS TRACK

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
Mar 12	12:00PM	Multiple Schools	ISU
Mar 20	10:30AM	Multiple Schools	H.S. Kuyper Fieldhouse
Mar 24	3:00PM	Multiple Schools	Simpson College
Mar 26	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Northwest High School
Mar 30	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Simpson College
Apr 2	4:15PM	Indian Relays	Indianola Stadium
Apr 7	4:30PM	Urbandale Inv.	Urbandale High School
Apr 9	4:30PM	Bill Miller Invite	Van Meter School
Apr 11	8:30AM	Jim Duncan Inv.	Drake Stadium Track
Apr 13	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Norwalk
Apr 26	4:15PM	Multiple Schools	Northview MS
Apr 16	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Northwest High School
Apr 23-25	8:00AM	Drake Relays	Drake Stadium Track
Apr 28	4:15PM	Carlisle Invite	Carlisle High School
Apr 30	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Northwest High School

V. GIRLS GOLF

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
Apr 6	3:30PM	Roosevelt	Indianola Country Club
Apr 13	12:00PM	Jaguar Invite	Briarwood Club
Apr 14	10:00AM	Oskaloosa	Deer Run Golf Club
Apr 14	10:00AM	Multiple Schools	Willow Creek GC
Apr 16	9:00AM	Multiple Schools	Otter Creek Golf Course
Apr 20	10:00AM	Lamson Invite	Willow Creek GC
Apr 27	10:00AM	Multiple Schools	Veenker Memorial GC
May 7	10:00AM	Corkey Nydle Inv.	Ottumwa Golf & Social Club

V. BOYS SOCCER

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
Mar 31	6:15PM	Lewis Central	Lewis Central HS
Apr 3	7:30PM	Southeast Polk	Southeast Polk
Apr 6	7:30PM	Hoover	Hoover High School
Apr 9	7:30PM	Ankeny	Ankeny High School
Apr 14	7:30PM	Newton	CH. A. Lynn Stadium
Apr 16	7:00PM	Carlisle	Carlisle High School
Apr 18	12:00PM	Bondurant-Farrar	Indianola Stadium
Apr 21	7:00PM	DCG	Dallas Center-Grimes
Apr 23	7:30PM	Dowling Catholic	Indianola Stadium
Apr 25	2:30PM	Linn-Mar	Linn-Mar Stadium
Apr 28	7:30PM	Oskaloosa	Indianola Stadium
Apr 30	7:30PM	Johnston	Indianola Stadium
May 4	8:15PM	Pella	Indianola Stadium
May 5	4:30PM	Pella Christian	Pella Sports Park
May 12	7:30PM	Norwalk	Indianola Stadium
May 14	7:30PM	Ottumwa	Indianola Stadium



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HOME HEALTH

By Aaron Wheeler

TALKING with a loved one about care at home



Starting a conversation with a family member about at-home support can feel uncomfortable. Many people worry about saying the wrong thing, creating tension, or being perceived as overstepping.

Yet when approached thoughtfully, these discussions can become productive, collaborative moments that help everyone feel more prepared for the future. Recent national surveys tell us 93% of older adults want to remain in their homes as they age, making conversations about at-home services and care increasingly relevant for families planning ahead.

A successful conversation often begins with the right conditions. Choosing a calm, familiar setting allows both people to feel at ease and focused. While moments of frustration or struggle might feel like natural openings, those situations can heighten emotions and defensiveness. A planned, unhurried conversation is more likely to lead to understanding.

Framing also matters. Rather than positioning at-home care as a response to decline, it can be helpful to focus on what it makes possible. Many people are more receptive when the discussion centers on quality of life, independence, and support rather than on decline and loss.

As you prepare for the conversation, consider these practical tips:

- Focus on benefits, not problems. Highlight how receiving supportive services at home — such as help with grocery shopping, cleaning, cooking, organizing, and/or pet care — can support daily routines, provide companionship, and help your loved one remain safely at home.
- Research options. Gathering information ahead of time can help address concerns, while researching together can empower your loved one and keep them involved in decisions.
- Address cost and logistics openly. To decrease uncertainty, discuss pricing, financial resources, scheduling, and how care would fit into existing routines.
- Offer reassurance and patience. Aging-related decisions often carry emotional weight. Let your loved one know you are there to support them, regardless of the timeline.
- Keep the door open. One conversation does not need to resolve everything. If your loved one is hesitant, suggest revisiting the topic later after they have had time to think.
- Providing reassurance is especially important. Life transitions can bring fear, grief, or resistance, even when support is needed. Consistent encouragement and listening can help build trust and reduce anxiety over time.
- Follow-up is just as critical as the first discussion. Checking in later reinforces that the conversation was about partnership, not pressure. If at-home care eventually is introduced, ongoing communication can help ensure the care plan continues to meet your loved one's needs. ■

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.



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- 28 new independent living apartments – and reservations are currently being accepted with the remaining inventory limited!
- A community room addition to our main building
- Enhanced dining venues
- Upgraded outdoor amenities
- Revamped wellness area with weight gym and yoga room
- More "pampering" services with an improved hair salon that can also offer manicures, pedicures and massage
- Renovation to our long-term care households that includes all private suites and private half baths
- A refresh to our current Aspen independent living building common areas

Explore The Village at an upcoming event.

**Downsizing, Spring Cleaning, and an Expansion Update:
Wednesday, March 25 at 10 a.m.**

Hear from a local downsizing expert and get the latest updates on our expansion as we draw closer to completion!

**To RSVP, contact Amber at (515) 961-0878
or amcdonald@wesleylife.org.**



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UNDERSTANDING memory care

When families first consider memory care, they often focus on safety and medical supervision. While those elements are essential, quality memory care offers far more. At its core, memory care is about connection, dignity, structure and preserving meaningful moments for individuals living with dementia.



Choosing memory care is an emotional step. Families may feel uncertainty, guilt or fear about transitioning a loved one from home. Yet the right setting can improve quality of life for both the individual and their family.

What to look for in memory care

- Programs with purpose: Activities should be intentional, not simply scheduled to fill time. Purposeful programming connects to a resident's history, interests and abilities. Music, art, movement, storytelling and sensory experiences can support memory, reduce anxiety and encourage social interaction.
- Person-centered care: Strong memory care

programs tailor support to each resident. Care plans, dining approaches and daily routines are built around personal preferences and evolving needs. Family involvement is also key, ensuring communication and continuity of care.

- Thoughtful design: Effective memory care settings use natural light, simple layouts, contrasting colors and secure outdoor areas to reduce confusion and promote safe movement.
- Leadership and culture: A positive culture starts with engaged leadership and well-trained staff. Low turnover, consistent routines and visible interaction between staff and residents often reflect a healthy community environment.

What makes memory care different:

Memory care differs from traditional assisted living because it is specifically designed for people with Alzheimer's disease or other forms of dementia. Staff receive specialized training in communication, behavior management, redirection and de-escalation. They understand that resistance or agitation often stems from confusion or fear, not defiance. Structured programs have been shown to decrease agitation and anxiety when offered consistently.

- Socialization and belonging: Isolation can worsen cognitive decline. Memory care provides built-in opportunities for social connection through small group activities, shared meals and guided interactions. Even simple moments — morning coffee, music sessions or seasonal celebrations — can foster belonging and joy.

- Dining and daily support: Dining programs are adapted for cognitive changes. Staff monitor nutrition, provide cues or assistance when needed, and adjust meals to encourage participation. Support with daily activities such as bathing, dressing and mobility is available around the clock.

- A support system for families. Memory care offers more than resident services. It provides reassurance to families who may feel overwhelmed by caregiving responsibilities. Knowing a loved one is safe, engaged and supported can ease stress and restore family relationships. ■

Information provided by Ashley Bergman, Addington Place of Des Moines, addingtonplaceofdesmoines.com. Written by Discovery Senior Living, 3461 Bonita Bay Blvd., Suite 100, Bonita Springs, FL 34134.



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AddingtonPlaceOfDesMoines.com
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Assisted Living | GLOWSM Memory Care


 *Must move in by March 30, 2026. Cannot be combined with other offers. Valid for new residents only. Promotional offers are subject to change or end without notice. ©2026 Arvum Senior Living. All Rights Reserved. Prices, plans and programs are subject to change or withdrawal without notice. Void where prohibited by law. Managed and Operated by Arvum Senior Living. APDM-0053 1/26

YOUR VEHICLE'S 'internal clock': Why timing matters

Think of your engine as a perfectly choreographed dance: your pistons and valves must move at exactly the right moment so they don't crash into each other. The timing belt or timing chain is the conductor that keeps them in sync.



If that "clock" breaks, the engine can literally destroy itself in seconds. Here's how to stay ahead of the curve and avoid a massive repair bill.

Is your vehicle a "belt" or a "chain"?

Most vehicles use one of two systems. Here's the quick breakdown:

- The timing belt (rubber): These are quiet and efficient, but they wear out like a pair of sneakers. You must replace them every 60,000 to 100,000 miles, or every 10 years (whichever comes first). Otherwise, the rubber degrades and will eventually snap.

- The timing chain (metal): These are built like bicycle chains and are designed to last the life of the vehicle. However, they have two main enemies: dirty oil and low-quality oil. If you skip oil services, the lubrication fails, causing the metal to wear down and become "loose."

Red flags you shouldn't ignore. The tricky part is that your vehicle doesn't always tell you there's a problem:

- If you have a chain: Listen for a metallic rattle when you start the engine. You might also see a check engine light or experience a decrease in power.

- If you have a belt: There is usually no warning sign at all. It works perfectly until the second it breaks — which is why following the manufacturer's schedule is vital.

Why professional service matters.

Modern timing systems are incredibly precise and require specialized tools and technical expertise. When you have this service performed, a specialist will also inspect "neighbor" parts like the water pump and

tensioners.

- Smart move: Replacing these parts at the same time as the timing system saves you from paying for the same expensive labor twice later on.

The bottom line. Staying on top of your timing system gives you three big wins:

- No surprises: You won't be stranded on the side of the road with a dead engine.
- Save money: A maintenance bill is only a small fraction of the cost of a full engine replacement.
- Better resale: Buyers pay more for a used vehicle when they know the major services have already been completed.

Don't wait for a breakdown. Ask your auto specialist to check your service history and inspect your vehicle for any "red flags" today. ■

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.



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GARDENING By Barry Laws

TIME TO prepare the garden for spring



We have survived February. What a month. More than 30 degrees above normal temps, drought conditions with fire bans, and then, finally, snow. Remember, we can still get snow, and our normal temps are still in the 40s, but you can start some gardening outside.

First things first. Find all your tools and get them ready for spring. Locate pruners, trowels, gloves, shovels, saws, garden twine and wire, vegetable cages and other assorted garden necessities. Take time to sharpen and oil your pruners, shovels and saws. Getting organized now will keep you from getting frustrated in the frenzy of gardening this spring.

Starting seeds? Check for new, unique or tried and true varieties you can find. Then, to know when to start those seeds, a good seed starting chart is at johnnyseeds.com, and be sure to use May 15 as last frost date, even with the unusual temps we have had this year.

Now is also the time to start (or finish) cleaning your garden beds. Trim back ornamental grasses, any perennials that you didn't last fall, and those annuals you didn't get out should be removed now. But, often those hollow stems will be the winter homes of several beneficial insects, so don't destroy or put in the compost pile yet. Just let them lay in an out-of-the-way part of the garden until later in April or May so those insects can emerge and help you this summer. Take time to dress beds with compost, working it in to be ready for those new perennials and annuals. Work your vegetable garden beds up, incorporating compost and manure fertilizer into the soil so you will be ready for seeds and plants later in the spring. Here is one of the cautions though: Only work dried beds. Working them while wet will leave you with clumps and clods that will make working in the garden harder this summer. A simple test to see if it is dry enough to work is to form a ball of soil in your hand, push your finger into it, and, if it easily breaks apart, you are good to go. If it does not break apart, you need to wait a while longer.

The end of the month is the perfect time to put in lily bulbs, asparagus crowns, and bare root peonies. Canna tubers, elephant ear bulbs and dahlias can be started indoors, then plant out mid to late May after the chance of frost has passed and the soil is getting closer to 70 degrees, the soil temp they need to grow.

To get a jump on the gardening season inspiration, be sure to check out garden shows, garden seminars, and other talks in the next couple of months. You may find that one new and unique bulb, plant or shrub to add to your landscape. And what better way to get inspiration than listening to gardeners or nursery personnel talk about new and different plants to put in your garden?

Get your tools ready, grab some sunshine and start getting your gardens ready for spring and summer fun. ■

Information provided by Barry Laws, co-owner, Quilted Gardens Nursery and Landscaping, 19635 130th Ave., Indianola, 515-720-3089, www.quiltedgardens.com.

TAXING Social Security benefits: clearing the confusion

When the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA) was passed in 2025, there was some confusion in messaging from the Social Security Administration about taxation of benefits.¹⁻² Here is an overview to help clarify any questions you have on taxing Social Security benefits.



What does OBBBA do and not do for seniors?

OBBBA does not change the rules for taxing Social Security benefits.

OBBBA does provide an additional \$6,000 deduction for taxpayers 65 and older (\$12,000 for a married couple) for tax years 2025–2028. However, this deduction has no direct relationship with your Social Security benefits. The deduction phases out at higher income levels: \$75,000–\$175,000 for single filers, \$150,000–\$250,000 for joint filers.

Taxation of Social Security benefits is based

on income. That means the additional senior deduction should reduce the number of people who have to pay taxes on their Social Security benefits by reducing their taxable income.

According to the White House, 64% of Social Security beneficiaries did not pay taxes on their benefits before OBBBA, and the new senior deduction will increase that to 88%.³

How are Social Security benefits taxed?

The tax liability for Social Security benefits is based on your combined income, defined by the IRS as your adjusted gross income plus tax-exempt interest plus one-half of your Social Security benefits.

If your combined income exceeds a base amount of \$25,000 for single filers or \$32,000 for joint filers, you may owe federal income taxes on up to 50% of your Social Security benefits. If your combined income exceeds a higher base amount of \$34,000 for single filers or \$44,000 for joint filers, you may owe federal income taxes on up to 85% of your benefits.

Considering these rules, the only taxpayers for whom taxation of benefits will

be completely eliminated by the new law are those whose combined income drops below the \$25,000/\$32,000 base amount.

Whether or not your Social Security benefits are taxed, the new senior deduction should reduce your tax burden to some extent. Unfortunately, it comes with a long-term effect on the Social Security and Medicare programs, which are funded in part by taxes on Social Security benefits. One estimate suggests that the new deduction will move the expiration date of the trust funds that help fund Social Security and Medicare up from 2033 to 2032, unless Congress takes action to strengthen the programs. ■

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.

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CONTACT:

Ryan Williams

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Program highlights:

- ✓ 30-year fixed rate – Up to a 1.5% interest rate reduction below the current market rate for qualified homebuyers.
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- ✓ Available for purchase transactions only, primary residence, 1-4 family dwellings.



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Check for cancellations

Upcoming in Indianola Living magazine:

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.

Farmers market vendors: Do you enjoy selling your products at local farmers market. Tell us how you benefit from farmers markets and what tips you can share with others wanting to get involved. Email tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com.

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 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.

Meat Raffle

Saturday, April 11 • St. Thomas Aquinas Pastoral Center, 210 S. Wesley St., Indianola

The Indianola Noon Lions Club is holding its annual Meat Raffle and 50/50 raffle. Hundreds of items of meat will be raffled off in eight rounds with 15-plus items to win. Two rounds will have 75 items to win. Doors open at 5 p.m. with dinner at 5:30 p.m. and Meat Raffle starting at 6 p.m. Tickets are \$15 per person. Dinner includes fareway grilled burgers, sides and drinks. Tickets are available from Noon Lions members and at Avitt Family Chiropractic, 215 N. Howard St., Indianola. A limited number of tickets will be available at the door. Funds raised go toward scholarships, Leader Dog and student activities. Bring lots of \$1, \$5 and \$10 bills, a cooler for winnings and snacks for your table.



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 for more information.

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, 5:30-7 p.m.

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church Parish Hall, 210 S. Wesley St., Indianola

Dine in or take out. Adults and take-outs, \$14; children (ages 6-12) \$6; 5 and younger are free. Boy Scout Troop 123 will host a dessert table. The fish breading does not contain wheat flour.

Elks Annual St. Patrick's Day Celebration

Saturday, March 14, 5:30 p.m.

West Des Moines Elks #2752, 2060 N.W. 94th St., Clive

The Elks St. Patrick's Day Celebration will begin with the Foy School of Irish Dancers performing at 5:30 p.m. They will perform for about 20 minutes, followed by the Elks' famous St. Paddy's Day corn beef and cabbage with Irish potatoes, \$12 per serving.

Indianola Public Library Events

207 N. B. St., Indianola

Visit the website to register for events: <https://indianola.librarycalendar.com/events/month/2026/03>.



KIDS

- After School Bingo: Monday, March 16, 3:30-4:30 p.m. Grades 3-5
- Kids Create: Saturday, March 21, 2-3 p.m., grades K-5
- Chess Club: Thursdays, March 26 and April 9, 6-7 p.m.
- Storytime
- Storytime with Janis: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:30-11 a.m.
- Saturday Storytime: Saturdays, except March 28, 10:30-11:15 a.m.
- Storytime: Mondays, except March 23, 6-6:30 p.m.

TEENS

- Teen Hangout: Wednesdays, 2:30-4:30 p.m.
- Teen Art Cart: Saturdays, all day.
- Chess Club: Thursdays, March 26 and April 9, 6-7 p.m.
- High School Book Club: Tuesday, April 7, 3:15-4:15 p.m.

FAMILIES

- Library Playdate: Saturdays, all day.
- Family Lego Club: Monday, March 23, 6-7 p.m.

ADULTS

- Morning Book Club: Friday, March 13, 10-11 a.m.
- Puzzle Competition: Thursday, March 19, 6-8 p.m. Register: <https://indianola.librarycalendar.com/event/puzzle-competition-8725>
- Evening Book Club: Tuesday, March 24, 6:30-7:30 p.m. This month, we are reading "The Frozen River" by Ariel Lawhon.
- Ladies' Night Out: Friday, March 27, 6-7 p.m. Register: <https://indianola.librarycalendar.com/event/ladies-night-out-8719>
- Bingo! Tuesday, April 7, 6:30-7:30 p.m. ■

AL-ANDAS hones blacksmithing skills

Creates art, knives and more

Blacksmithing has been a hobby of Carlin Al-Andas for about 30 years. It began as a childhood curiosity with no real reason behind it other than he had an affinity for it. At first, he learned the skill by trial and error. Al-Andas moved to Iowa about 15 years ago from Arizona, and later he received some informal training in blacksmithing from J.P. Miller and Howard Clark. Al-Andas and his wife, Ashli, are both professional blacksmiths, and they created a forge for blacksmithing and blade smithing in their large shop. Together they form a business called Eastern Roadside Creations. As far as he knows, they are the only people in Iowa who regularly travel on a circuit to display their wares and skills at local gun shows.



Carlin Al-Andas has a blacksmithing workshop in which he teaches others the art of the trade.

Al-Andas obtains most of his art materials from a box factory in Cedar Rapids where they are scrapped out.

“A friend of mine up there helps me get it, and I usually trade him knives for it,” he says.

He gets the steel he uses from NJ Steel Baron, Alpha Knife Supply and Admiral Steel. Once the materials are brought to his shop, he melts, welds, and forms them into a variety of artwork. Examples of his early years’ handiwork include wire-wrapped crosses and fantasy-style axes. Now, he mostly makes knives. However, he has made unique creations such as a couple of tables edged with industrial chain. His bigger table took about two days to complete, and his smaller one took a day and a half.

He once made a treble clef out of a chain, and he makes horseshoe art. Currently, Al-Andas is working on a horseshoe boot rack. He makes a variety of knife styles, including ornate Damascus, kitchen knives and hunting knives. When he gets the opportunity to teach others blade smithing, most people learn the same kind to knife to begin with — a camp knife. It is a burly knife made from beginner-friendly steel, and students learn the fundamentals of creating a blade.

During the warmer months, Al-Andas opens his shop to let the heat escape, and, during the colder months, the forge also serves as a source of heat.

“Forging, for the most part, needs heat from 1,900-2,000 degrees Fahrenheit, but, when I’m forge-welding, it needs to be 2,200-2,300 degrees,” he says. “My wife and I work on a lot of the forging together,” he says. “She is more of the artist than me. Being a stay-at-home mom takes a lot of time now, and she doesn’t get as much time out here as she would like. Instead, she focuses more on graphic design and leatherwork.”

Al-Andas says that his hobby got “out of control” in a good way about eight years ago. Since then, his forge stays hot with projects large and small for personal use, for sale and for classes that he teaches those interested in learning the skill. ■

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WHY HEARING AIDS age quickly and when to replace them

No product lasts forever, including your hearing aids. Most will function well for three to seven years, so you'll likely need to replace them every five years on average.

Wondering why they have such a short lifespan? Several factors cause hearing aids to age quickly. Here are a few.

- **Hearing aids get a lot of daily wear and tear:** Hearing aids are exposed to moisture, heat, dirt and earwax for hours a day. Even though they are made of durable material, this prolonged exposure to a harsh environment eventually causes damage.

- **Hearing aids need proper storage:** To extend your hearing aids' lifespan, keep them in a safe, dry place when you're not wearing them. Placing them in a storage case with a dehumidifier will help dry out any built-up moisture inside them.

- **Hearing aids require regular maintenance and cleaning:** Bringing your hearing aids to your audiologist for routine checkups helps keep your hearing devices going strong. Your audiologist will check and replace any poorly performing parts and professionally clean your devices.

- **Certain hearing aid styles fade faster:** Behind-the-ear styles typically last longer than in-the-ear designs because more of the electronic



elements are outside the moist environment of your ear canal.

- **Hearing aid technology becomes obsolete:** Finding replacement parts for hearing aids older than five years can be challenging, as the manufacturer might not make them anymore. Similarly, the software used to program old hearing aids may no longer work, so if your prescription changes, reprogramming them could be impossible.

When to buy new hearing aids

Consider purchasing new hearing devices when:

- Your current hearing devices are five or more years old.
- Your hearing devices have visible damage.
- Your hearing devices have already been repaired previously.
- Your hearing loss worsens, or your current devices no longer sufficiently help it.
- Better technology for your type/extent of hearing loss and lifestyle is available.

Think it may be time to retire your current hearing aids? Contact your local audiology team to help you find new devices that fit your unique needs. ■

Information provided by Dr. Kelly Cook, Audiologist, Iowa Hearing Center, 1228 Sunset Drive, Suite B, Norwalk, 515-416-5990, www.IowaHearingCenter.com.

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HOW ACUPUNCTURE helps boost metabolism

Over the past two decades, acupuncture has rapidly gained recognition in healthcare as a service to help with many acute and chronic health conditions. Current research still does not know the mechanism of how acupuncture works, but we can now measure what effects acupuncture has on the body.



1. Stimulating energy flow and balance. In TCM, the body's energy, known as "Qi," flows through channels called meridians. A disruption or imbalance in this flow can lead to various health issues, including sluggish metabolism. Acupuncture helps restore the proper flow of Qi, which, in turn, encourages optimal function of the digestive system and energy production. By improving the body's internal balance, acupuncture can help improve metabolic processes, leading to better digestion, energy utilization and nutrient absorption.

2. Regulating hormonal balance. Metabolism is largely controlled by hormones, such as insulin, thyroid hormones and cortisol. Acupuncture has been shown to influence the release of these hormones, helping to regulate their levels. For example, acupuncture can stimulate the thyroid, which plays a crucial role in controlling the body's metabolic rate. By improving thyroid function, acupuncture can help increase the rate at which the body burns calories, which is vital for maintaining a healthy metabolism.

3. Reducing stress and cortisol levels. Chronic stress can significantly slow down metabolism by elevating cortisol levels, a stress hormone that encourages fat storage. Acupuncture is known for its ability to induce relaxation and reduce stress by stimulating specific points that trigger the release of endorphins, the body's natural pain-relieving and mood-boosting chemicals. By helping lower cortisol levels, acupuncture can prevent the metabolic disruptions caused by prolonged stress, encouraging a more efficient metabolism.

4. Supporting digestion. Acupuncture has also been found to enhance the function of the digestive system, making it more efficient in breaking down food and absorbing nutrients. A well-functioning digestive system is key to a healthy metabolism because it ensures that the body receives the nutrients it needs to function efficiently. Acupuncture will also help your liver function.

5. Promoting weight loss. Research suggests that acupuncture may help regulate appetite, reduce food cravings, and improve the body's ability to burn fat. By addressing both the physical and emotional components of weight management, acupuncture can support sustainable metabolic changes that lead to healthier body weight.

For individuals seeking a natural, holistic approach to metabolic health, acupuncture offers a promising solution. ■

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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Service at 7pm

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Services at 12pm and 7pm

EASTER SUNDAY • APRIL 6
Services at 7am and 10:30am
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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 ONLY remedy for guilt

In 1887, Friedrich Nietzsche, in his essay “On the Genealogy of Morality,” built on his famous declaration that “God is dead,” argued that guilt arises from external constraints — embodied in ideas of “God” and “Law” — imposed on us from outside. By proclaiming God and His Law obsolete, Nietzsche believed humanity would be liberated from guilt and its accompanying bad feelings.



Yet it turns out to be just the opposite. Guilt persists at high levels in modern society, but we have lost the shared religious and cultural language to name, discuss or resolve it.

The Christian faith offers the true and lasting remedy to guilt: forgiveness. Forgiveness found through the death and resurrection of Jesus. When guilt weighs on you, the path forward is simple — confess and believe. Take full ownership of your mistake, bring it honestly to the Lord, and entrust it to God. Then rest in His promised forgiveness, declared in His Word.

Soon the Christian Church will celebrate Holy Week once again, culminating in the death of Jesus on Good Friday and His glorious resurrection from the dead. These two events give us the grace to talk about our guilt and apply to forgiveness given to us in Christ. I pray that you will take the time to hear this message this year. ■

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

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WELLNESS **By Chelsea Taggart**

SPF is non-negotiable

Your glow? Completely custom.

Let’s be clear: Sun damage is not a beauty hack. That “base tan” people chase before spring break or prom? It is actually skin trauma. UV exposure breaks down collagen, accelerates fine lines, triggers pigmentation and creates long-term damage that no highlighter can fix later.



If you care about youthful, smooth, even skin, SPF is your daily power move. Broad-spectrum SPF 30+ protects against premature aging, dark spots and loss of elasticity. And yes, you need it even when it is cloudy. Even when you are “just running errands.” Even when you “don’t burn.” Protection now means better skin in five, 10, 20 years.

Here’s the good news: You can skip the sun and still get the glow. Custom spray tanning gives you that flawless, camera-ready bronze without sacrificing your skin’s health. Unlike laying out in the sun, a professional custom tan is tailored to your undertone, event and outfit. Whether you want soft golden warmth for prom or a deeper beachy bronze for spring break. No streaks. No orange. No peeling regrets.

Think of it this way: SPF preserves your skin. A custom spray tan perfects it.

This season, protect your collagen, skip the damage, and let your glow be intentional, not incidental. Healthy skin is always in style, and confidence looks better when it is built on smart choices. ■

Information provided by Chelsea Taggart, L.E, Vivid Life Spa, 1951 E. 18th St., Suite 105, Norwalk, 515-850-7848, vividlifespaspa.com.

BUILDING a home together

Blooms customize to meet their family's needs and wants.

After Tyler and Kyle Bloom met each other, Tyler moved from Waukee to Indianola to be with Kyle and his teenage boys.

"I had an 800-square-foot house, and it wasn't quite big enough for our family," Kyle says. "We decided to build a house together."

The Blooms met with Cassi Sinclair with New Era Homes to find a home for sale in Indianola, but the housing market was sparse, and they could not find a house that fit their needs. Cassi's husband, Cody, approached them with an offer.

"Cody asked us if we would be open to building a house if he could build one that fit our needs and budget," Tyler says. "We then toured homes they had previously built to help come up with a plan. They provided us the footprint of the home based on what they had previously built, then we collaborated to customize it to fit our specific wants and needs."

Kyle wanted to have an open and welcoming kitchen and living room so his boys could have plenty of space when friends were over. He also wanted each son to have his own space. For Tyler, it was important to have a home that suited their needs as a family but, because their sons are older teenagers, would work for them once the boys were grown and no longer living there. He also wanted a three-car garage and a nice primary bedroom and en-suite.

Kyle's favorite part of their finished house is the en-suite.

"I had dug in my heels about it, but now that it is done, I love it," he admits. "Also, with the upstairs being open, the boys are up in the kitchen and living room more than in our old house."

Tyler's favorite part is the kitchen.

"I do the cooking and meal prep for everyone for the entire week," he says. "This kitchen allows me to do that and still be around everyone."

While their house was being built, the Blooms lived with Kyle's parents in Indianola.

"Though it was hard, I don't know what we would have done without them," Tyler says. "They were great."

Having lived on a three-acre property prior to their move, it was important to still live in a quiet neighborhood. They chose a lot on the



Tyler and Kyle Bloom enjoy living in Indianola and having a home that meets their family's needs.

east side of town at the end of a cul-de-sac that would have minimal to no through traffic and is close to Kyle's parents.

"Cassi and Cody made everything so easy and streamlined," Tyler says. "They helped us sell our previous home, helped us look for new homes, and, if it wouldn't have been for both of them, we would have most likely ended up in a house that we were just settling for. Keeping our Realtor and builder local was extremely important to us, and they helped make the entire building process simple and stress free.

It is because of them that we ended up with a home we completely love and why we would consider building again sometime in the future."

Indianola has been a great location for their family with an easy work commute for Tyler. And, during open periods at school, their sons can come home if they want. The boys are cross-country runners and can easily access the trails for runs. They moved in at the end of October and have enjoyed their home ever since. ■

SEEING IOWA through a different lens

Campbell explores the state through photography.

Tina Campbell is a self-taught photographer, and she has been enjoying learning the art of photography for the past 12 years, finding the niches she enjoys, especially landscape photography. Near the end of 2019, Campbell worked up the nerve to participate in a few art shows. Her first one was in February 2020, and she was able to do one more before everything shut down due to COVID-19.

As Campbell delved deeper into landscapes and photography, her perception of the state she lives in shifted.

“Growing up in Iowa, I always felt it was dull, flat and boring,” she says, “but photography helped me see it differently.”

She was able to be an artist in residence at Waubonsie State Park near Hamburg, at the southern end of the Loess Hills. During that residency, Campbell decided she wanted to do something more than sell pictures at art shows; she wanted to encourage people to go outdoors.

“I decided it would be neat to go to all 99 counties of Iowa and capture the beauty in our own backyards,” she says. “My goal is to bring light to places that are less known.”

Campbell started her photography project in March 2024. In Warren County, she has photographed locations such as Lake Ahquabi State Park and Hickory Hills County Park.

“Warren County has a lot of small, natural pockets like Otter Creek Park and Blue Flag Marsh,” Campbell says. “I try to focus on places many people don’t know about.”

In Madison County, she has photographed locations such as Pammel State Park, where she was an artist in residence for a week, and Clanton Creek. Campbell also photographed Guye Woods County Park, a completely natural park except for a suspension bridge.

“To hike there, you follow deer trails,” she shares. “It is an easy place to get lost, and I know that from experience.”

A wanderer by heart and by choice, Campbell is not bothered by getting lost and turning around.

Campbell likes to appeal to different kinds of outdoor people through her photography. She snaps photos of intimate scenes, trees, water features and trails that she finds beautiful. These spots range from places with modern amenities to primitive spaces outdoors, and they highlight the



Tina Campbell is working on a project to capture photographs of the natural beauty in all 99 Iowa counties.

beauty that can be found by spending time in nature.

“The idea is to slow down to see things you might otherwise miss,” she explains.

Her first printing of the Iowa’s 99 project was for the Artist Avenue pop-up by Kristy Evans.

“I picked several pictures I felt were worth printing from the first eight counties I visited,” Campbell says. “I loved the experience, and it helped me get a clearer picture of what this project could look like. The last year and a half I have been sorting out how I want to reveal the project and how I want it to look. I have learned more about telling the story of each community by reaching out and talking to its residents. In some ways, it has become more about the journey than the destination.”

Thus far, Campbell has finished 27 of Iowa’s 99 counties, the latest being Guthrie County, her current favorite. She has a website that she also writes a blog for, and examples of her first eight counties’ pictures are on the site. Her end goal will be a book and an Iowa-shaped quilt, each county shape represented by a photograph. ■

Suggest a teacher
for an Iowa Living education column!

Send an email to
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IOWA Living MAGAZINES

SPIFFY the Squirrel

Does anyone remember Spiffy the Squirrel? Spiffy visited People's Bank (the one that used to be on the square) in the early 1950s and started sending messages to elementary students telling them about his two brothers, Squiffy and Biffy, and his sister, Terrify. He describes how he saves his acorns and how they should save their money. Children were occasionally invited to come see him at the bank and watch the coin machine count their money. In return, the students would sometimes write back to Spiffy. These young people had interesting ideas about why saving was important.

Carolyn Perkins thought children should save money in the Peoples Bank so their brothers and sisters wouldn't get into the money and spend it. Paul Speer wanted Spiffy to know that he was in second grade and Mrs. Sharr was his teacher. "And a wonderful teacher she is."

According to Sidney Eaton, the way to save money is to put it where you won't spend it.

Connie Kubli had several questions for him. "Do you have a family? What kind of tree do you live in? What foot do you write with? What color are your eyes? What do you want for Christmas?" Merlin Morris wanted Spiffy to know that it was funny when he could not find his stash of acorns. Patty Oxenreider's mother gave her quarters to save when she got the eggs and watered the hens. Patty was also hoping for a 4-H calf when she was 10 years old.

Some of the students had savings accounts at Peoples Bank. Steve Chambers especially liked the suckers handed out when he deposited money in his account. News about a baby brother came from Michele as well as a reminder to say his prayers so God would watch over him.

Spiffy had some interesting stories in the letters he wrote back to the kids. He described being chased up a tree by Buster, the neighbor's fox terrier. Spiffy decided to make friends by sharing his acorns. Although Buster wasn't impressed, he tried to share a bone with Spiffy. So, they decided to help each other bury the acorn and the bone. Of course, Spiffy proceeded to remind the children that it is much easier to take your pennies and nickels to People's Bank for saving rather than bury them.

Another time, he told about being frustrated at having to work so hard to find and dig up an acorn he had buried deep. Spiffy wished squirrels had a bank like People's Bank so they could save their food supply the way people save money. It would certainly be easier to find food when they needed it.

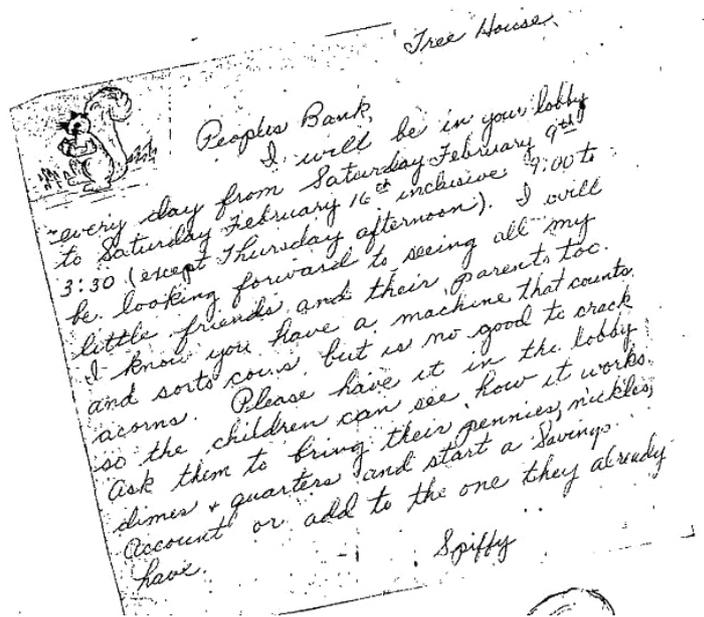
Memories like these abound on the shelves and exhibits of the Warren County Historical Society. Bring your children, grandchildren and friends to discover ways the past connects to the present and leads to the future.

Museums are more than places where forgotten objects go to enjoy their final years.

"Museums are the guardians of our collective memory, the storytellers of human achievement, and the catalysts for future innovation. Their importance lies not just in preserving the past, but in shaping our understanding of the present and inspiring the possibilities of tomorrow."

– Amy Hawkins.

Visit us on Facebook or www.warrencountyhistory.org. ■



Why Children

SAVE . . .

Here is one of a group of letters from Warren county youngsters to Spiffy.

I Think Children should save their money in the Peoples Bank, so their brothers and sisters wouldn't get into the money and spend it.

CAROLYN PERKINS

Carolyn is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. M. F. Perkins, Rt. 4, Indianola.

Spiffy is a squirrel who visited our bank last spring and has been writing Warren county youngsters telling them how he saves his acorns, the same as you can save money in the Peoples Bank.

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CHAMBER Banquet

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OUT & ABOUT



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Noah Zwanziger and Kris Bolten



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Gretchen Schrock, Josh Baker and Katelyn Burnett



Sean Cullen, Kayci Cullen, Brooke Mason and Mike Mason



Donna Jones and Anna Childress



Keigan Kitzman and Brooklynn Ecklin

MEET Shelby Miller

Lessons in Montessori

Shelby Miller has served as a licensed teacher in Iowa, North Carolina and Taiwan. She started working at a Montessori preschool right out of college.

“I was surprised at what that age group is capable of learning,” she recalls. “I then went on to teach elementary grades, but I never forgot the experience.”

When her son was born in 2016, she knew she wanted him in a Montessori program in his early childhood. She began putting Montessori principles into practice with him at home because she did not find many local Montessori programs. In 2019, Miller opened Bluebell Montessori, LLC, in her home and offered her expertise and teaching to others in the community.

“I am a home-based preschool Montessori program,” she shares. “I follow state-registered guidelines. My registration process is similar to most preschools and daycares, and the quality and safety are the same as well.”

An average day at Bluebell Montessori begins with circle time, up to 15 minutes, where Miller and her students might sing some songs together. She then sometimes teaches a grace and courtesy lesson on skills like kindness and manners, often including role play and incorporating new letter sounds. The students then have work time. Miller will show individual students how to do certain tasks or skills they are interested in or show readiness for, and then they are allowed to work on them.

“In a Montessori environment, once a teacher has shown students how to do something, they are then given as much uninterrupted work time as possible,” Miller states. “That gives them time to develop how to concentrate. I minimize interruptions as much as possible. The kids get space and respect to choose what they want to work on, and that builds their confidence.”

Snack time follows within a certain time frame, about halfway through work time. The students clean up their own snacks, and then they are allowed to go back to their work. During this time, Miller gives one-on-one attention to each student in turn. Miller takes her students outside to learn as often as possible.

“They tend to gravitate toward natural things they find outside versus toys,” she says. “We also have active time, like dance activities or yoga, and we play outside at least half an hour.”

The afternoon is much the same as the morning, and the students have a long “work” period. Sometimes food prep work is part of their learning time. Once a student has had a presentation on an activity, he or she has the freedom of choice, within limits, of what to work on.

Miller follows the Irving Elementary School year calendar.

“My kids go there, and I have had several kids with older siblings at Irving. That calendar worked well for our family, so that’s what I follow,” she says. “A year-round learning schedule seems to work well with this age group, and it breaks up the school year for them.”

Miller can take up to 12 students, and eight students is the limit in pre-K and under. Students must be potty-trained to attend, and she currently has one opening. ■



Shelby Miller is the teacher and owner of Bluebell Montessori.

ENDURANCE

“Experience is something you don’t get until just after you need it,” is an all-too-true statement attributed to Stephen Wright. It is funny, but it is kind of depressing, too. Are our lives doomed to be nothing but a series of “if only” moments? “If only” I had done that differently, things would have turned out OK.

Sometimes we try to flip this around by imposing some positivity onto the situation.

“Well, if life gives you lemons, just make lemonade.” But that’s really pretty unrealistic and, to be honest, of little help to someone facing a major hardship in life — a relational loss, a financial misfortune, a health obstacle, or something like that.

James 1:2-3 is an often quoted passage from Scripture: “Consider it a great joy, my brothers, whenever you experience various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.” It is very easy to forget the last part of that sentence, thinking we just need to choose to be happy in the middle of a difficult circumstance. And yes, it is very true that our mindset makes a great difference in a situation, but the last part gives us meaning and purpose. During any and all trials, our beliefs will be tested, no matter what that belief is in. Will we continue to believe?

In this passage from James, he is, of course, talking about faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (as James had just stated in the previous verse). And that faith, when tested, will produce a greater ability to endure for the one who belongs to Christ. Why? Because the object of that faith will not fail.

We need to remember what is not promised in this. James does not say, “And then everything will be all unicorns and cute puppies from then on.” No, they are called hardships for a reason. (Because they are “hard,” in case I wasn’t clear.) We’d love for it to be that way. “Just hold on and everything will be wonderful.” But this doesn’t track with reality. In life, there is sometimes great loss. To deny that this is the case is to ignore the hurt and pain of others, and even ourselves.

And yet... James gives us a great hope in what comes next. “But endurance must do its complete work, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking nothing.” Faith that is tested repeatedly to the point of endurance actually produces something in us — spiritual maturity. ■



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



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