

# Living

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# 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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A photograph of a man and a woman sitting on a light-colored couch in a home setting. The man, on the left, is wearing a dark blue long-sleeved shirt and blue jeans, and is holding a small white dog with brown ears. The woman, on the right, is wearing a maroon long-sleeved shirt and blue jeans, and is holding a tortoiseshell cat. The background shows a kitchen with wooden cabinets and a countertop.

# A 'fur-ever' HOME

Residents share stories about the animals they rescued.

**By Joe Baumgarten**

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.

Fay and Jim Strait with Lulu and KitKat

## A life rescued, a life renewed

For Jodi Broshar, rescuing animals isn't a hobby — it's a way of life.

Her journey into animal rescue began years ago with her family's first dog, a rottweiler she and her husband brought home when they were newly married. When that dog passed away unexpectedly at 8 years old, the loss was devastating. But out of that heartbreak came a turning point. Soon after, the family discovered dogs that had been abandoned along the side of the road available for adoption at a county shelter. That moment sparked what Broshar calls their "rescue mission" — one that has never really stopped.

Over the years, her family has opened their home to multiple rescue dogs, including puppies that had been abused and animals that simply needed a second chance.

"It just became our thing," Broshar says. "Rescuing animals is part of who we are now."

That commitment continues today. Broshar volunteers regularly with AHeinz57 Pet Rescue as part of their Puppy Patrol program. Volunteers rotate through daily shifts caring for nursing mothers and young puppies — cleaning, feeding, administering medication and, just as importantly, providing socialization and affection.

"It's kind of like therapy," she says with a laugh. "You get your puppy fix, and then you go home."

The work is hands-on and meaningful. Puppies learn to interact with adults and children alike, while volunteers keep a close eye out for any health or mobility issues.

"If something seems off, we call the vet. These dogs get a lot of attention," Broshar explains. "You're not just putting them in a cage and walking away."

Her dedication to rescue runs in the family. One of her daughters began volunteering while attending Drake University and later continued fostering and volunteering while living near Detroit. Another recently adopted pet is a senior cat whose owner had moved into a nursing home.

"We're a little rescue crazy," Broshar admits. "But it feels right."

At home, Broshar's rescue success story greets her every day in the form of Noodle, a Great Pyrenees mix she adopted nearly three years ago. Noodle came into her life after being fostered by a longtime friend, Shannon. Initially hesitant because of the dog's size, Broshar quickly changed her mind.



Jodi Broshar and Noodle

"She was already kennel-trained and potty-trained," she says. "And, once I met her, that was it."

Though Noodle had been returned once for not getting along with cats, she eventually settled into Broshar's household — which includes three cats — without issue.

"Now they walk right in front of her, lay on her, and she doesn't even care," Broshar says. "They're just family."

When asked why she believes in adopting rescue animals rather than buying from a pet store, Broshar doesn't hesitate.

"You can buy a purebred dog and still end up with health issues," she says. "With rescue dogs, you know there are people watching them closely, giving them attention, and doing everything they can to set them up for success."

She also appreciates how volunteering educates families — especially children — about the responsibility that comes with pet ownership.

"Some parents volunteer because their kids want a dog," she says. "They want them to see it's not just playing. It's work."

For Broshar, the reward is simple but profound. Whether she is helping puppies in need or welcoming a rescued animal into her home, she knows she's making a difference — one life at a time.

"Anything we can do to get the word out is worth it," she says.

## Lulu and the tortie

It all began, Fay Strait explains, when she and her son went into PetSmart one afternoon.

"They have cats up in the front of the store that you can adopt," Fay said. "We saw these two little orange kittens that were really cute."

They were instantly sold. Her husband, Jim, however, wasn't so sure.

"I was the holdout," he says.

They were both concerned about how their dog, Lulu, would take to bringing home a new animal.

"Our dog is so gentle and laid-back," Fay says. "We just couldn't imagine that there would be any issues bringing home an animal, especially if it is a kitten."

One of the employees at PetSmart suggested that they bring Lulu to the store to see how she and the cats would get along. The employee showed Fay, Jim and Lulu to a small "visitation" room. In a moment, she returned with the two orange kittens and sat them on the floor. She wished them luck, backed out and closed the door. It was instant chaos.

"They were wild," Fay exclaimed. "They were literally bouncing off the walls. Lulu just sat on the floor, frozen. Then they decided it would be fun to climb on her. They weren't hurting her, but we could see that it wasn't going to work out with these two."

Disappointed, they returned home with

Lulu probably wondering if she had done something wrong to deserve such punishment.

“We waited a while and kept watching at the store to see if we could find a better match. Then we saw the tortie,” Fay says. “I had never seen a cat like that, or even knew that was what they called them. They are named that because their coloring looks like the shell of a tortoise. I knew she was the one I wanted, so we brought her home that day. She was just 6 months old and just so soft, so cute.”

The conventional wisdom when you bring a new pet into the house is to introduce them to the other pets gradually.

Fay tells the fateful tale: “We kept them apart for the first day or so. Then, one evening, we put Lulu on her leash and brought her down to the basement to meet KitKat. Lulu saw this little furry thing and started barking at it. KitKat instantly went on the defensive and hunched up her back. Then she decided flight was better than fight and ran for cover under the love seat. Lulu ran over to the couch and put her nose down to take a good sniff. Out came this furry little paw and gave Lulu’s nose a little side swipe. We couldn’t tell if KitKat

actually got Lulu’s nose or not, but it didn’t matter. That was it for the two of them being friends.”

“The dog is scared of the cat, and the cat rules the house,” Joe says.

“Torties are known for being Prima Donnas,” Fay says. “They’re the queen; they have the attitude. They’re zesty.”

“Lulu, on the other hand, is 11 years old and mostly likes to eat and sleep these days.”

### **The rescued residents of the Hartsock household**

For Urbandale retirees Nancy and Gary Hartsock, home isn’t just where the heart is — it is where the paws are. As lifelong cat lovers, the Hartsocks have turned their home into a sanctuary for felines with unique stories, proving that every “second chance” animal has a lifetime of love to give.

The senior stateswoman of the house is Lacey, a 15-year-old dilute tortie with a flair for the dramatic.

“We adopted her from the Animal Rescue League,” Nancy says.

“She went nuts over my shoelaces the

moment we brought her home,” Gary laughs. “She’s been ‘Lacey’ ever since.”

Despite a current battle with a growth under her tongue, Lacey remains the alpha of the house, still capable of jumping from floor to counter with the grace of a kitten.

Next in the hierarchy is Misty, a 5-year-old black-and-white beauty that the Hartsocks adopted from the Story County Vet Clinic. Misty was one of 100 cats living in squalid conditions in a single trailer. Despite a rough start that left her with only seven teeth, Misty is the social butterfly of the group.

“She is the sweetest cat,” Nancy says. “She loves everybody.”

In the colder months, you can often find her curled up in front of the fireplace in the living room. In the summer, Misty gets a “lion cut” at the groomers, strutting around the house with a pom-pom tail that matches her regal, sweet personality.

The youngest, Sushi, joined the family after a neighbor realized their home full of poodles wasn’t the right fit for a curious kitten. Sushi is the resident “engineer,” known for outsmarting child-proof locks and navigating the home’s air

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Sandy and Grant Hartssock with Lacey, Sushi and Misty.

duct system just to see where they lead.

Her resilience is legendary; after a year-long health scare involving swollen lymph nodes, the experts at Iowa State and Story County Vet Clinic finally diagnosed her with a rare case of bartonella (cat scratch fever). Today, she's healthy, vibrant and — on chilly mornings — the first one to demand Gary turn on the fireplace.

The Hartssocks' devotion to their "kids" is visible everywhere, from the replicas of past pets Gizmo, Ozzie and Dot on the mantle, to a custom rug featuring the names of their current trio. For Nancy and Gary, these rescues aren't just pets; they are family members who have traveled the journey of life right alongside them.

"We've always felt there are so many cats out there without homes," Gary says. "Giving them safety and security is just what we do."

### Cage to a couch

The fluorescent lights of the Animal Rescue League of Iowa were a world away from the dirty, cramped cage where Gigi had spent the first six years of her life. For Nancy Oline, walking into the ARL that Saturday morning in October 2021, the air was buzzing with a different kind of energy; it was "Take Your Dog's Picture with Santa" day. Amid the festive chaos of dogs in holiday finery and excited families, Nancy was waiting for a very specific little fuzzy face she had seen online.

Gigi was one of 168 dogs rescued by the ARL from a massive breeding operation in Southern Iowa — a place where 500 animals lived in conditions that eventually sparked the push for "Goldie's Bill" in the Iowa legislature. When Gigi was found, she didn't know what grass felt like. She didn't know how to climb stairs. She only knew survival.

The wait to see her lasted hours. Nancy watched as other families visited the timid merle-coated poodle mix, but, time and again, Gigi retreated. She wouldn't let anyone get close. But when Nancy finally stepped into the room at 2 p.m., something shifted.

Maybe it was a shared understanding of loss, or perhaps just a moment of quiet in a loud world, but Gigi didn't run. For the first time that day, she let someone pick her up. In that moment, the "timid rescue" and her new "mom" became a family.

Coming home to Urbandale was a series of firsts. Gigi joined two soft coated wheaten terrier brothers, Riley and Mickey, who took it upon



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Nancy Oline adopted Gigi, who still shows signs of being traumatized for years before her rescue.

themselves to teach her the ropes. They showed her that the fenced-in yard was for sprinting — and sprint she did.

“She was so fast, they could never catch up,” Nancy recalls.

However, the shadows of those first six years lingered. To this day, the

sight of a Swiffer or a broom sends Gigi into a panic — a heartbreaking reminder of the “sticks” used in her past life. Loud noises and barking dogs still trigger the old survival instincts. Yet, despite the trauma, Gigi’s capacity for love has only grown.

Life changed again last October when Nancy’s two wheatens, Riley and Mickey, passed away. The loss was heavy for the household, but it left Gigi and Nancy leaning on each other more than ever. Now, Gigi is a bit more “needy,” seeking out attention and comfort at every turn.

“We probably spoil her too much now,” Nancy admits with a smile. “But she is worth it.”

**From foster home to forever home**

The Brookover family — Joe, Kristin and Vivian — waste no time in singing the praises of AHeinz57 Rescue, where they adopted a rescued dog.

“We got Ozzie from AHeinz57, which is a commonly used rescue around here,” Joe says. “They have a really good social media presence. We used their Facebook link.”

“Their capacity is pretty small but they have really good following and really good community support,” Kristin adds. “They have a network of people who voluntarily offer their homes as foster homes until the puppies get adopted.”

“They didn’t know much about Ozzie and his littermates,” Joe says. “Someone brought in the mom when she was pregnant. We went to meet Ozzie at his foster home, fell in love with him and brought him home.”

“Our first two dogs we purchased from breeders, and that was fine,



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## FEATURE

but this time we decided to go a different route. We're totally a rescue family from now on, though," Kristen says. "We love talking to people about what a good experience it was rescuing Ozzie."

Vivian Brookover was only 4 years old when Ozzie was adopted, so, in many ways, they have grown up together. She enjoys helping care for him.

"Sometimes I fill up his water and put food in his bowl. And I go with my mom when she walks him."

Vivian is also proud of the many commands that Ozzie has learned.

"He knows sit, lay down, stay, kennel and jump," she says proudly. "He knows 'inside' unless it is a really nice day and he doesn't want to listen. But, when it is cold outside, he comes running in fast and lays in his little bed in front of the fireplace."

When asked to compare their experiences of buying a dog from a breeder and getting a rescue, the Brookovers are quick to reply that the rescue route is much better.

"We got our first two dogs from breeders. They were fine dogs, and we didn't have any problems, but that's not always the case with some breeders," Joe says. "At AHeinz57, there is a sort of two-way vetting process. You don't just walk in and buy a dog. Kristin had to do a FaceTime interview. They asked questions about the home, the back yard. Even after we brought Ozzie home, they sent us regular surveys to make sure it was still working out."

Kristen does some volunteer work at the Furry Friends Rescue in West Des Moines. She wonders if dogs of mixed breeds have a health advantage over purebred dogs.

"I'm not an expert in this regard," she says, "but mixed breeds can



Joe, Kristin and Vivian Brookover gave Ozzie a home.

sometimes be harder animals. There is some good research on that."

Ozzie was patiently waiting on the back porch while the Brookovers talked about his adoption, peering in through the sliding glass door with all of the eagerness a young dog has when there is something, or someone, new around.

"Can I let Ozzie in?" Vivian asks.

She opens the door and Ozzie zooms in, racing around the living room.

"Watch out for his tail," Joe exclaims. "It's his most vicious part." ■

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## INVESTMENT By Daniel Rundahl

# THE MADNESS in March for 310,000 Americans

Each day, more than 10,000 Americans become eligible for Medicare — totaling more than 310,000 new beneficiaries every month. This milestone marks an important transition into retirement and a new phase of financial and healthcare decision-making. While this season of life can be exciting, it often arrives with complexity: unfamiliar coverage options, shifting income strategies, and an influx of marketing calls and mail. The choices can feel overwhelming, but, with preparation, they are manageable.



For many, retirement follows four decades of work, family responsibilities and diligent saving. It represents both freedom and uncertainty. Two of the most common concerns are the fear of running out of money and the uncertainty surrounding taxes in retirement. These are legitimate concerns, but they can be overcome.

**1. Pause and prepare:** Retirement is a life transition, not a financial emergency. Take time to assess your income sources, projected expenses, healthcare coverage and tax exposure. Medicare alone presents multiple pathways: original Medicare, Advantage plans, supplemental coverage and prescription drug plans — each with long-term implications. Thoughtful evaluation with balance to your emotional and logical brain can prevent costly adjustments later.

**2. Seek qualified guidance:** Professional insight matters. Just as you rely on a dentist for oral health or an attorney for legal counsel, retirement planning benefits from experienced specialists. Financial advisors, tax professionals and Medicare experts work within these systems daily. Their continuing education and field experience can help clarify options, identify risks and align strategies with your goals.

**3. Build flexible income strategies:** Many retirees aim to replicate a “salary-like” income from their savings. However, markets fluctuate. Those drawing income directly from volatile accounts faced added pressure with market losses. A diversified distribution plan — combining guaranteed income sources, conservative reserves and growth investments — can help reduce vulnerability during any downturn. In retirement, having a Plan A, B and C is not excessive; it is prudent. Like my father used to say, “Sometimes it is not on the right; it’s on your other right.”

**4. Learn, adapt and adjust:** Financial habits formed when working do not always translate seamlessly into retirement. Flexibility is essential. The familiar illustration of Charlie Brown repeatedly attempting to kick the football out of Lucy’s hands reminds us that routines without reflection can lead to further disappointment. Retirement planning requires adaptability, continuous learning, and the willingness to refine strategies when circumstances change.

I continue to value the “aha” moment: the moment when clarity replaces confusion and clients feel empowered about their future. Retirement is not a single decision; it is a coordinated strategy involving healthcare, income, taxation and legacy planning.

Education is the first step toward confidence. The questions to focus on are the Why and How questions — as much as the What and When. March’s madness for retirees should feel purposeful — not perplexing. ■

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

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# MEETING needs outside the classroom

Students and community served by food pantry.

On Dec. 8, 2025, Olmsted Elementary School officially opened a food pantry in collaboration with Hy-Vee and Iowa Food Banks. However, the journey to nourish both the minds and the stomachs of students and community members began long before the ribbon cutting.



Maddy Punsalan, facilitator of Family Outreach Services at Olmsted, oversees the food pantry at the school.

“We used to do a backpack program, but we started seeing a need for more actual food in homes versus meals like microwave macaroni and cheese,” Maddy Punsalan, facilitator of Family Outreach Services at Olmsted, says.

Punsalan has served in the FFO role at Olmsted Elementary for four years.

Like many schools in the area, Olmsted Elementary School leadership had plans to start a food pantry on campus, but before they began, representatives from Hy-Vee reached out near the end of August 2025 and inquired about working together to open a food bank that they would sponsor, to which Punsalan and the leadership at Olmsted emphatically agreed. Hy-Vee has worked to sponsor school food banks around Iowa, as well in the Kansas City and Minneapolis areas.

As a sponsor, Hy-Vee covered the cost and installation of electrical work, shelves and refrigerators for the food pantry. Punsalan, who manages the food pantry, says that, because Hy-Vee sponsors the pantry, when inventory runs low, they are allowed to order from Hy-Vee to restock. The pantry carries a wide variety of food items including snack foods, canned goods, noodles, fresh vegetables, milk, butter, personal hygiene products, fresh meats and much more. Personal hygiene products are donation based, and drives will be held a few times throughout the year to replenish the stock. Donations of both food and hygiene items are welcome from the community at any time.

“Every school has their own food pantry in the Urbandale area, but Olmsted is the only one specifically sponsored by Hy-Vee,” Punsalan says. “The pantries are open to elementary students’ families as well as middle school and high school students’ families. We ask that, if possible, families visit the pantry at their kids’ school, but we know that sometimes schedules don’t work for that school’s time slot. We work together with other school food pantries to get families what they need.” Each pantry is open on a specific day of the week from 4-5 p.m.

Monday – Karen Acres Elementary

Tuesday – Valerius Elementary

Wednesday – Olmsted Elementary

Thursday – Webster Elementary

Punsalan says her team likes the one-on-one time they get when families come in to use the food pantry. ■

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# 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-

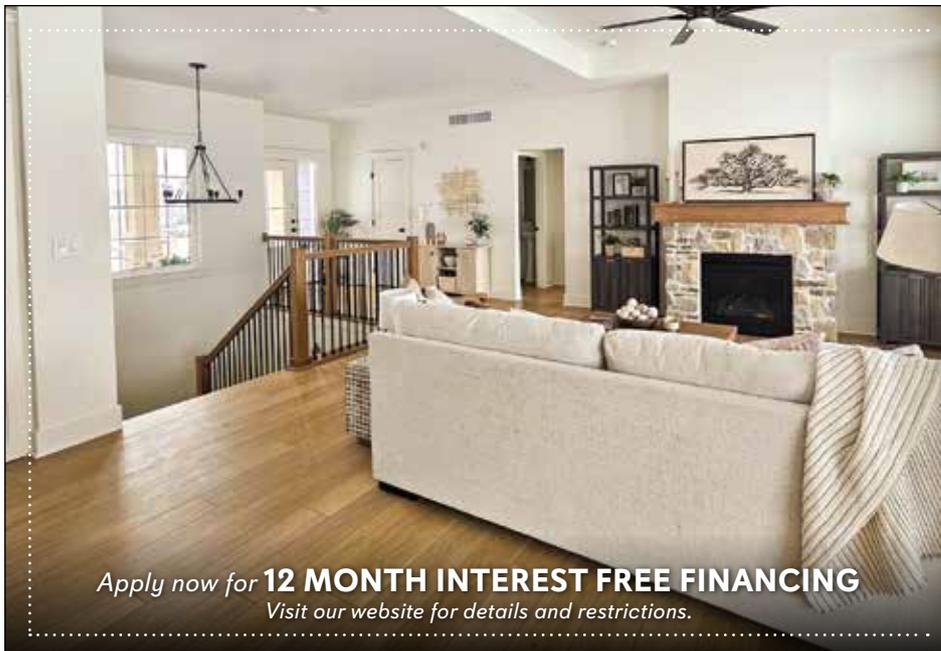
related decisions often carry emotional weight. Let your loved one know you are there to support them, regardless of the timeline.

- 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](http://wesleylife.org/wellahead).



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# GROWING a family

Rozendaals appreciate Urbandale for many reasons.

Rachel Rozendaal and her husband, Blake, moved to Urbandale in 2017 after Blake accepted a job in the Des Moines metro. At the time, the couple was preparing to welcome their first child and knew finding the right community mattered.

“We were expecting our first child at the time, so we knew we wanted a suburb with great schools,” she explains. “We looked at a few other cities but decided on Urbandale when we fell in love with our house.”

That home offered the perfect blend of what the couple was looking for, including a spacious backyard and a bike trail that runs directly behind the property — features that quickly became part of their daily life.

“It was the first house we looked at that just felt right,” Rozendaal says. “We love that we’re close enough to walk to the Urbandale Public Library and our kids’ school.”

Having walkable access to nearby parks and playgrounds has also been a major benefit for their growing family. With several green spaces just a short walk away, spending time outdoors has become a regular part of their routine. Just as meaningful, Rozendaal says, are the neighbors, who have helped make the area feel welcoming and connected.

Urbandale itself has proven to be an ideal fit, especially with amenities like the arboretum and an extensive trail system that ties neighborhoods together.

“I love all the great and supportive people we’ve met in our neighborhoods and communities, spending time at the Urbandale Public Library, and how close we are to all sorts of great businesses and services that we use regularly,” Rozendaal says.

Rozendaal has also found ways to stay engaged in the community, volunteering when she can with the Urbandale Community Action Network (UCAN). She is currently a student at Drake University Law School, which takes up much of her time, so, for now, her biggest contribution is being present at home with their children while Blake attends Urbandale City Council meetings as a city councilmember.

Together, these experiences have shaped a strong sense of belonging. From walkable amenities to supportive neighbors and family-focused opportunities, Urbandale continues to feel like the right place for the Rozendaals to put down roots and raise their young family. ■



Rachel Rozendaal and her husband, Blake, have found Urbandale to be a great place to grow their family.

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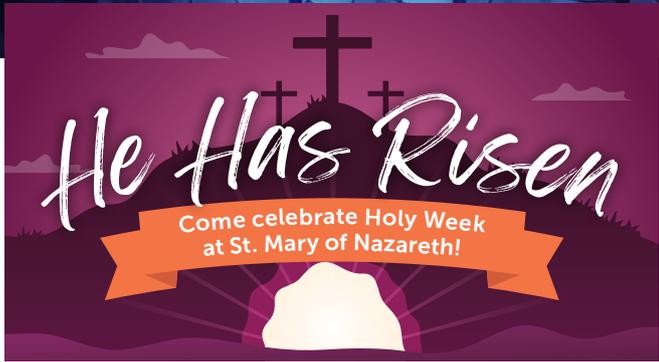
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**Thursday, April 2**  
7pm: Holy Thursday Mass

**Friday, April 3**  
7pm: Good Friday Service

**Saturday, April 4**  
9:30am: Easter Egg Hunt (Parish Hall)  
8pm: Easter Vigil

**Sunday, April 5**  
9am & 11am: Easter Mass

**St. Mary of Nazareth Knights of Columbus Friday Fish Fry**  
March 6, 13, 27 • Serving from 5-6:30pm in the Parish Hall

Menu Includes: Baked or Fried Fish • Baked or Mashed Potato or French Fries • Green Beans or Corn • Macaroni & Cheese • Cole Slaw • Rolls & Butter • Lemonade / Coffee / Ice Tea / Desserts

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# TAKE THE POLL

WHICH OF THESE FIRST SIGNS OF SPRING IS YOUR FAVORITE?

1. Birds singing
2. Thunderstorms
3. Jacket weather
4. Green grass
5. Flowers blooming



SCAN THE QR CODE TO VOTE!

## FAITH By Deacon Dan Maxcy

# FOLLOWING Christ's light in the plight of immigrants

During this current Lenten season, we look forward to celebrating Easter on April 5. We are tasked to reflect on the Resurrection and to contemplate not just Christ's victory over death, but also His life — marked by compassion, sacrifice and solidarity with the marginalized. In the Gospels, Jesus calls us to love one another as He has loved us. His words urge us to see all people as our brothers and sisters, especially those most vulnerable — today, this includes immigrants and refugees.



The story of immigration is deeply rooted in our faith history. The Hebrews, God's chosen people, endured slavery in Egypt and wandered as foreigners in search of the Promised Land. Their journey, filled with hardship and hope, is echoed in the experiences of immigrants worldwide who flee violence, poverty and persecution, seeking safety and dignity for their families. The Holy Family, Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, themselves became refugees. This reality transforms the plight of immigrants from a distant issue to a profoundly Christian concern.

Easter's promise is love triumphs over fear and hatred. Jesus' teachings challenge us to welcome the stranger, to protect the vulnerable, and to recognize in every immigrant the face of Christ. ■

Information provided by Deacon Dan Maxcy, Saint Mary of Nazareth Catholic Church, 4600 Meredith Drive, Des Moines, 515-276-7589, Deacondan@stmarysdsm.org.

## NEWS BRIEF

# SPELLING Bee winner



Caleb DeVan is the champion of the first-ever Living History Farms Spelling Bee. A 14-year-old eighth grader at Southview Middle School in Ankeny, Caleb outlasted nine fellow competitors to claim the title and earn a coveted spot at the Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington, D.C., this May. Photo by Paul Houston ■

# UPCOMING FUN IN URBANDALE!



Browse the City of Urbandale's upcoming spring and summer programs. Registration opened Monday, March 2nd! Look at our listing of Youth Programs, Adult Programs, Adaptive Programs, and Senior Programs online at [www.urbandale.org/programs](http://www.urbandale.org/programs).

## YOUTH PROGRAMS

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# WITH SPRING and summer approaching...

Are you planning for that special trip? Will you be traveling to spend time with family? Perhaps you will be traveling outside of the country.

Have you ever thought about what would happen if something unfortunate happened during the time you were away and you needed the services of a funeral home?

We don't like to think about these things, but, the truth is, they can happen. And when they do, having a plan in place can make a world of difference.

Perhaps a travel plan is something for you to consider: a plan that would take care of everything and bring your loved one back home if such an unfortunate situation occurred.

You might be surprised how affordable these plans are, and they can provide a great deal of peace of mind for those traveling.

Visit with your funeral home of choice and ask if they offer a travel plan.

Better to have a plan in place and not need it than to wish you had done something to prepare. ■



Information provided by Sarah Masteller, Advanced Planning Counselor, Hamilton's Southtown Funeral Home, 5400 S.W. Ninth St., Des Moines, 515-697-3679.

# URBANDALE Public Library news

## Urbandale Public Library

3520 86th St., Urbandale

515-278-3945

[www.urbandalelibrary.org](http://www.urbandalelibrary.org)

Monday – Thursday: 9 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Friday – Saturday: 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Sunday: noon to 6 p.m.



## Space redesign update

If you've recently visited the library, you may have noticed some changes in our collections as we prepare for the space redesign. Areas of juvenile collection and adult non-fiction have been rearranged in preparation for work scheduled to begin in March. New furniture is slated to arrive at the end of the month to provide more multi-purpose seating. Disruptions are anticipated to be minimal, and any extended periods will be posted in the library and on our website. Subscribe to our newsletter for updates: [www.urbandalelibrary.org/about-us#newsletters](http://www.urbandalelibrary.org/about-us#newsletters).

## Special Storytime Explorers: From Pollinators to Product

Join us for a special Spring Break edition of Storytime Explorers on Friday, March 20 at 10 a.m. to celebrate Read Across Iowa Month. We'll read stories about the importance of pollinators and apply what we've learned with a craft and STEM activity. This program is aimed at ages 3-6, but all ages are welcome. Registration is encouraged.

## Poetry as a Coping Tool

In celebration of National Poetry Month in April, join us on Wednesday, April 8 at 6 p.m. for a workshop with spoken word artist and page poet Kelsey Bigelow. Kelsey will walk us through methods for writing poetry as a coping tool for managing our mental health through life's heaviness. From free writing and responding to prompts to observing your situation and trying a poetic form, poetry can help you process and manage your emotions. This program is recommended for teens and adults and registration is encouraged.

## National Library Week: April 19-25

National Library Week is an annual celebration highlighting the valuable role libraries, librarians and library workers play in transforming lives and strengthening our communities. This year's theme, "Find Your Joy" is an invitation for people of all backgrounds to explore and discover what sparks joy in them at the library.

During National Library Week, the library will continue its tradition of hosting a book sale and food drive. Drop in from Thursday, April 17, through Sunday, April 26, during regular hours to find a wide array of books for different interests and ages for bargain prices.

The food drive will be held Saturday, April 18, through Sunday, April 26. Non-perishable and perishable items will be accepted for the library's community fridge and pantry. Fines will be forgiven during this time; \$1 will be waived from an account for each item donated. For full details, visit our website: [www.urbandalelibrary.org](http://www.urbandalelibrary.org). ■

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# PLAN for a smooth transition of wealth

Nobody wants to think about how their loved ones will cope when they die, but it is important to plan effectively to ensure a smooth transition of your wealth. An estate plan is the legal documents that outline who you want to be in charge of settling your affairs and where you want your assets to pass. It can include a will, powers of attorney, trusts and more.



One of the most important documents is a last will and testament. A will nominates an executor who will be responsible for wrapping up your estate: paying final bills, selling assets, and distributing your wealth to your beneficiaries.

Naming beneficiaries is one of the essential parts of a will. You might want to leave everything equally to your children. Perhaps one of your siblings is estranged from you. Maybe a child with special needs cannot receive money directly. You may want to make a special bequest to a charity. A will contains instructions for making these final distributions.

Without a will, however, state law decides who receives your assets. That can lead to a long, stressful court process. The law doesn't take personal preference or family dynamics into consideration when the

intestate statute is applied. Instead, there are broad categories of people who receive your money.

In one case our firm handled, the decedent's wife predeceased him, and they didn't have any children. In fact, he didn't have any immediate relatives at all because both he and his wife were only children. We identified 26 different remote relatives, many of whom were second cousins once- or twice-removed. Although we may be inadvertently responsible for a huge family reunion, this amateur genealogy could have been avoided by simply drafting a will.

Life events, like getting married, changing careers, or having your children leave home often mean it is time to review your plan. More serious events — the death of a loved one, inheriting a sum of money, or receiving a concerning medical diagnosis — are also good reasons to review and update.

Estate planning is easy to ignore, because it involves thinking about death and visiting a lawyer. Procrastinating is easy. Turn to a reputable attorney who practices in estate planning to help you craft the best plan for you. ■

Information provided by Ross Barnett, Abendroth Russell Barnett Law Firm, 2560 73rd St., Urbandale, 515-278-0623, [www.ARPCLaw.com](http://www.ARPCLaw.com).

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# FOR THE sake of dogs

Volunteers help pet rescue organization.



You might call Shannon Orput a “pet matchmaker” or perhaps an “adoption diviner.”

You might call Jodi Broshar Shannon’s best two-legged friend and assistant. They have known each other since high school, and both volunteer to care for dogs at AHeinz57 Rescue in De Soto.

Shannon devotes one entire bedroom of her home, and a substantial amount of her time, to fostering puppies for AHeinz57. Like most people featured in this column, she is humble and quick to point out that she is just one of a great many people who enable AHeinz57 to rescue animals and transition them into loving homes.

“There are so many other people who volunteer at the shelter. Some do medical, some marketing, some do events, some are veterinarians,



Ryan Mehalovich presents the Neighbor Spotlight certificate to Jodi Broshar and Shannon Orput, holding puppies available for adoption.

some work in our 7-day 24-hour shelter caring for the dogs there. There are a hundred other people, all volunteers, who help in one way or another to care for the animals.”

Jodi volunteers her time at the rescue center on “Pet Patrol.” There are three large rooms with anywhere from five to 11 puppies each. They need to be cleaned, fed, watered and, best of all, loved.

“I go there to get my puppy fix. It’s free therapy,” she says with a laugh.

Shannon is currently fostering five puppies at her home.

“They are Australian cattle dogs. Their names are Tank, Beau, Tutu, Puka and Rocco. They are up on the website ([www.aheinz57.com](http://www.aheinz57.com)) if you want to see them.”

While Shannon and her family have always been dog lovers, they never intentionally decided to foster rescued dogs.

“My daughter started with one dog that they fostered at their home. But there were so many more. She was saying that this dog needed a home and that dog needed a spot and these dogs are coming in. I couldn’t stand it. I couldn’t stand that there was all this need. I couldn’t take knowing that all these dogs needed a place to go, so I signed up to be a foster home that night.”

That was November of 2021, and she hasn’t looked back since. She says it has been challenging, but also rewarding.

“It’s emotional, because you get attached, right? But it’s even more emotional when I think of all the dogs and puppies that are out in the streets and the cold that never get rescued.”

AHeinz57 is always looking for help, Shannon says. You can donate money or purchase dog food. There are also many volunteer positions available with flexible hours.

“Our goal is always to make sure that puppies find good homes,” she says. ■

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# WHERE ROOTS run deep

Polson is a longtime resident.

Mary Polson moved to Urbandale in 1989, when she married her husband, Max Polson, who passed away in 2006. Polson's current husband, Kenny, moved to Urbandale when he was 11 years old. Together, they have deep roots in the community.

For Polson and Kenny, staying in Urbandale came down to the connections they have built over the years, friends and civic involvement among them. They enjoy the trails and parks and appreciate the city services.

Polson lives in the home she and her late husband built 34 years ago. It was perfect then — she wanted a house with everything on one level — and it remains just as ideal now.

There's also a large screened-in deck off the back of the house, accessible from the sunroom and the primary bedroom. The lot backs up to a creek and greenbelt area with plenty of wildlife as well.

"We spend a lot of time on the deck during the nicer months, having

a bird's eye view of the wildlife," Polson says.

The home is also unique for its two fireplaces: a gas fireplace in the living room and a log-burning fireplace in the family room.

Over the years, Polson has benefitted from living in a great area of town.

"Our neighborhood is filled with friendly people," she says. "We watch out for each other, help with lawn mowing, snow shoveling, or just touching base from time to time. If a neighbor is out in the front yard, it's not uncommon to see another neighbor stop for a chat."

Within Urbandale, Polson enjoys how easy it is to get around. The bike trails and connections stand out, too, along with the city's amenities.

"Urbandale has one of the best groups of first responders," she says. "The Public Works staff are efficient with snow plowing, street repair and weekly solid waste. We can set our watch based on the almost exact time our driver picks up our blue can every week. The annual spring clean-up is greatly appreciated, especially since it's not an extra cost to the residents even though it does cost the city."

Given her years in town and her involvement in numerous activities — currently serving as the president of the Lions Club, the treasurer of the Urbandale 4th of July Committee and liaison for the 4th of July fireworks — Polson is a familiar and friendly face around town. ■



Mary Polson has lived in Urbandale for decades and is active in the community.

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## EVENTS IN THE AREA

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

### Urbandale Historical Society Programs at the Library

3520 86th St., Urbandale

• April 12, 2 p.m. The Story of Merle Hay Mall with Liz Holland

### Des Moines Community Orchestra

Sunday, May 10, 2 p.m.

Drake University Sheslow Auditorium,  
2507 University Ave., Des Moines

Enjoy the Des Moines Community Orchestra in concert with guest conductor Kara Mather and featured soloist Dr. Kevin Allemagne on the clarinet.

To submit calendar items for consideration, send to [tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com](mailto:tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com).

### Spring cleanup

Week of April 13

On your regular collection day, the city will collect items that do not fit in your waste container. This collection is available to all Urbandale residents who are eligible for city-provided solid waste collection. The annual curbside cleanup allows residents to dispose of almost anything. The city rents large trucks and equipment and employs temporary workers to help collect all the items. Help crews by putting smaller items into tied trash bags and try not to overload bags. Don't set your items out early. Place your items out by 6 a.m. on your regular collection day or the night before.

No appliances (such as refrigerators, dehumidifiers, microwaves, water heaters, trash compactors, furnaces, freezers, air conditioners, dishwashers, light ballasts, washers, dryers, stoves or garbage disposals) accepted. Appliances are collected through a separate city program called Bulk Item Collection. Urbandale residents can also drop-off large items for no charge at the Urbandale Parks & Public Works Maintenance Facility on the second Saturday of every month. Learn more about Bulk Item Drop-Off at [www.urbandale.org/1105/Bulk-Item-Drop-off](http://www.urbandale.org/1105/Bulk-Item-Drop-off).

No construction debris or building materials accepted. All garbage must be bagged or boxed and secured. One pick-up truck load limit per household. Items must be able to be collected by a two-person crew. Be sure to fill your container first with anything that fits. Only leave items at the curb intended for city collection.

Examples of accepted items include furniture, computers and monitors, mattresses, toilets and sinks.

Consider donating your old bicycle rather than putting it out to the curb. For more information about Spring Clean-Up, or questions about accepted items, call 515-278-3950 or email [engpw@urbandale.org](mailto:engpw@urbandale.org).



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## EVENTS IN THE AREA

Be sure to check for cancellations

### Urbandale Public Library Events

3520 86th St., Urbandale

- **Baby Bounce:** Saturday, March 21, 9:30-10:15 a.m., and Monday, March 30, 9-9:45 p.m.
- **Family Storytime:** Saturday, March 21, 10:30-11 a.m., and Monday, March 30, 11:30 a.m.
- **Adult Recreational Chess:** Saturdays, March 21 and 28, 1-4 p.m.
- **Block Party:** Monday, March 23, 9:30-11 a.m., and Tuesday, March 24, 6-7:15 p.m.
- **Afterschool Fun Board Games:** Tuesday, March 24, 4:15-5:15 p.m.
- **Adult DIY: Rain Barrel Workshop:** Tuesday, March 24, 6-7:30 p.m. Polk County Water Resources Outreach Coordinator Cassie Druhl will share information about water quality in Iowa and how incorporating barrels on your property can help reduce flooding and stormwater pollution. Learn how to save money by making your own rain barrel using basic tools. There will be a live demonstration, and the demo barrel will be raffled off at the end. The Rain Campaign implements Rainscaping practices in Central Iowa by empowering people to connect with local resources, including funding assistance programs.
- **Double Booked Afternoon Book Club:** Wednesday, March 25, 1-2 p.m. Double Booked Afternoon meets every fourth Wednesday at 1 p.m. This month's title is "Intermezzo" by Sally Rooney. Stay up to date by subscribing to the Book Club eNewsletter and get a monthly email with all of our upcoming book club discussion titles, meeting dates, and any book club-related news.
- **Tween & Teen DIY: Air-Dry Clay Mini Food:** Thursday, March 26, 4:30-5:30 p.m. and 6-7 p.m. Join in on the miniature craze. We'll provide directions and air-dry clay for you to make some fabulous fast food and delicious dessert miniature models. We have age recommendations, but anyone 10-17 may choose the session that works best for you (both are the same craft): Ages 10-14 are encouraged to register for the 4 p.m. session. Ages 13-17 are encouraged to register for the 6 p.m. session.
- **Classic Cinema:** "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes": Friday, March 27, 1-2:30 p.m. (1953, Comedy/Musical, 1h 31m, NR.)
- **Toddler Time:** Monday, March 30, 10-10:45 a.m.
- **Evening Family Storytime:** Tuesday, March 31, 6:30-7 p.m.
- **Easter:** Sunday, April 5

### Urbandale Key Club American Red Cross Blood Drive

Friday, April 3

Urbandale High School, 7111  
N.W. Aurora Ave., Urbandale

Key Club President Leila Grahovic is coordinating the event for the second year in a row. The volunteers running the drive will come from Key Club as well as the other service organizations at UHS such as Leo Club, National Honor Society, CORE, Latinos in Action, German Honor Society and Student Senate. ■



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## WELLNESS

By Dr. Jody England

### SPRING allergies and sicknesses

After a long winter, most people are excited that spring is almost here. But, for some, the thoughts of allergies can be frustrating. Although we often find the root cause of allergies is not directly caused by blooming vegetation, like many think, the symptoms of “allergies” — runny nose, sneezing, itchy eyes, redness, swelling and/or pain — are from poor drainage. By reducing the toxic overload on your body and improving the health of your organs, your body can eliminate the allergens much more easily, and spring can be a time of joy. Nutritional biofeedback is a muscle testing tool that uses whole food supplements, herbs and homeopathic remedies to restore proper organ function. It takes the “luck” out of wellness and makes springtime enjoyable to allergy sufferers. When organs are healthy, these annoying symptoms can be avoided.



Chiropractic adjustments can also help alleviate the symptoms of poor drainage by restoring proper nerve flow to the organs of detoxification. Sometimes it can take time to get relief from the symptoms of allergies, but one allergy sufferer in our office stopped having the symptoms the first spring after beginning a program.

Enjoy the benefits of wellness for a lifetime. ■

Information provided by Dr. Jody England, DC, Urbandale Chiropractic, 10437 Hickman Road, 515-278-4594, www.urbandalechiro.com.

## HEALTH

By Annette Smith

### PELVIC floor physical therapy

#### What's actually causing the symptoms? (part 2)

Last month, we talked about common pelvic floor symptoms and how treatable they can be. This month, let's look at why they happen, because understanding the “why” is often the first step to real change.

Many symptoms are less about a “weak pelvic floor” and more about pressure management and coordination. For example, leaking with coughing or jumping can occur when the body can't respond quickly to a sudden rise in pressure — often tied to breath-holding, poor timing of the abdominal wall, or hips and trunk that aren't sharing the load. Urgency and frequency can be driven by a bladder that becomes over-alert, sometimes after repeated “just-in-case” bathroom trips, stress or irritation. Constipation can be a true coordination issue, where the pelvic floor doesn't relax when it needs to, even when you're trying hard.



In pelvic floor physical therapy, we connect the dots between breathing, core control, posture, mobility and daily habits. Treatment often includes strategies for timing (when muscles turn on/off), relaxation for an overactive pelvic floor, bladder retraining, toileting mechanics, and strength that supports your real-life activities.

Small changes in how your body coordinates can make a big difference in symptoms — and quality of life. ■

Information provided by Annette Smith, Mountain Laurel Physical Therapy, 974 73rd St., Suite 33, West Des Moines, IA 50265, 515-520-8037, www.mountainlaurelpt.com.



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# 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](http://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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# OUT & ABOUT



The Urbandale Chamber held a ribbon cutting for Hear Again America on March 2.



Randi Gustason, Amanda Mulcahy and Bridget Zeman at the Urbandale Chamber B.A.S.H. Feb. 10 at Exit Realty in Urbandale.



Ben Geiger and Eric Williams at the Urbandale Chamber B.A.S.H. Feb. 10 at Exit Realty in Urbandale.



Dr. Von Steck and Louis Urwitz at the Urbandale Chamber B.A.S.H. Feb. 10 at Exit Realty in Urbandale.



Ed Kirkman and DJ Fees at the Urbandale Chamber B.A.S.H. Feb. 10 at Exit Realty in Urbandale.



Sherrie Nelson, Antonio Romero, Rafael Verduzco, Gina Boakye-Danquah and Melissa Woods at the Urbandale Chamber B.A.S.H. Feb. 10 at Exit Realty in Urbandale.



Font: Linda Young and Carol Holmquist; and, back: Jim Tharp and Charlotte Saliers at Art Day Feb. 28 at the Urbandale Public Library.



Walker Kettman and Becca Kettman at Art Day Feb. 28 at the Urbandale Public Library.



Nora Boehm and Lia Smith at Art Day Feb. 28 at the Urbandale Public Library.



Clara Ranallo and Allison Ranallo at Art Day Feb. 28 at the Urbandale Public Library.

# AM Exchange

Urbandale Chamber AM Exchange was held Feb. 24 at Homemakers.



Stacy Mark, Allison Miller, Kelsey Basten, Neon McGraw, Jon Ingraham and Katie Brockmeyer



Meg Knapper and Tony Ekman



Sheena Green and Tiffany Sturmer



Gracie Stark and Theresa Rademaker



Danielle Frye and Liz Robbins



Logan Floyd and Jeremy King



Ruth Ebke and Melanie Jacobs



Susan Bonnicksen and Sandee Cook



Bridget Zeman and Connie Fiscus



Pamela Kolli and Aisha R. Syed

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