

Living

MAGAZINE

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that connect them to home

Meet Quinn Linkvis

EDUCATION

The comfort of a savory lasagna

RECIPE

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WELCOME

CELEBRATING my heritage — a wee bit

“My people” celebrated March 17. If you are Irish, chances are you did, too. If you are not Irish, there is still a good chance you celebrated anyway. That seems to be how St. Patrick’s Day works.

I say “my people” in the most affectionate way possible, mostly because I am reasonably confident I am Irish. I am also told I am German. And French. And possibly a little Native American. But, thanks to my mother’s side of the family, Irish is the one that tends to show up the loudest.

Mom and her siblings fit the Irish profile quite well: short in stature, red-haired, light-skinned, Catholic and full of vinegar. And by “full of vinegar,” I mean they had opinions.

Family history backs up my Irish claim. My grandmother’s maiden name was Leonard. Her father, Patrick Leonard, was born near Carlow, Ireland, in 1866. And, if that isn’t enough proof, my grandson — appropriately named Callahan — arrived in 2025 with a head full of red hair. Genetics doesn’t get much clearer than that. Somewhere in Ireland, an ancestor is nodding proudly and probably ordering another potato.

Speaking of potatoes, let’s address a few stereotypes. Do the Irish really love potatoes that much? Is everyone named Mary? Are they obsessed with the weather? Do they enjoy a good fight but still manage to remain friendly afterward? And do they really say “wee” all the time?

I can’t answer all of those questions with scientific certainty, but I can say this: If someone offers me a baked potato, I’m not going to turn it down.

Personally, I enjoy poking a little fun at my Irish roots while also celebrating them. Truth be told, most of us are a mix of several backgrounds anyway. Somewhere in the family tree, there is probably an Irishman, a German, a Frenchman and someone arguing loudly about the weather.

At the end of the day, we probably have more in common than we realize. That’s worth celebrating. Still, there’s nothing wrong with taking a little pride in where you came from — at least a wee bit.

Have a great month and thanks for reading. ■

SHANE GOODMAN

President and Publisher
Big Green Umbrella Media
shane@dmcityview.com
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Tammy Pearson
Editor
515-953-4822 ext. 302
tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com

Becky Clegg Anderson
Advertising Account Executive
515-953-4822 ext. 323
becky@iowalivingmagazines.com



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Celebrating HERITAGE

Residents reflect on the traditions that connect them to home

By Sean Dengler

For many families, heritage shapes values, traditions and identity in lasting ways. For Laurel Howell and May Posadas, their Filipino and Laotian roots continue to influence how they live, raise their families and stay connected to the past while building the future.

May Posada and her husband celebrate their daughter's Quinceañera, a memory she says they will always cherish.



Laurel Howell has visited her family home site, rice fields and other locations in The Philippines.

An act of kindness

Laurel Howell’s heritage has always been with her.

“I was always connected to my Filipino heritage,” Laurel says. “My lola (grandmother), a former teacher in the Philippines, lived with my parents when I was a toddler. She was always there — cooking and teaching me about Filipino customs, traditions and superstitions, along with reading and math.

“When my parents divorced, my three younger brothers and I were primarily raised by our mother, Nanay, and continued to embrace our Filipino roots.”

Laurel connects with her Filipino heritage in many ways.

“Food is a major connection — from lumpia to adobo, to balut and dinuguan, to rice and pancit — all of it,” she says.

Social aspects of her heritage also play a role.

“Laughter and kindness are attributes that run strong through the Filipino community. Filipinos tend to be very giving and always share a smile, no matter the hardships they may carry,” Laurel says.

Her heritage also led her to dance.

“At a young age, my mother enrolled one of my brothers and me in Filipino dancing. We begrudgingly agreed, but I actually came to love it and continued to join Filipino dance groups when I moved to Iowa, as time allowed.”

Laurel has also been fortunate to visit the Philippines.

“In February 2024, my mother, my three younger brothers and I finally made the trip,” she says. “My mother had not been back in almost 50 years, and it was the first visit for my siblings and me. We saw the land where my mom’s family grew up and the area where my parents first met.

“We also learned that my mother’s family lived alongside the family of Jose Rizal, a national hero in the Philippines. From the skyscrapers in Makati to the beaches of Palawan, it was all breathtaking.”

Her story, she says, would not exist without her lolo (grandfather).

“When Japan invaded the Philippines in 1941-42, my lolo was a dentist,” Laurel says. “Japanese soldiers stationed themselves in Columba Laguna, where my lolo and his family lived, with the intent to take and kill all the men in the city.”



Laurel Howell was emcee for CelibrAsian festivities.

Laurel says her grandfather survived because of his kindness. He noticed that a soldier staying in their home kept rubbing his jaw, and he offered to treat the infected tooth that was causing him pain.

“To repay the kindness, the soldier warned my lolo of the plan and told him to hide in the attic dressed as a woman in case he was found. The soldier said he would try to be assigned to search their home.”

When the day came, Laurel says that same soldier conducted the search, pretended to look for him and left without a word.

“My family line continued because of that act of kindness between two people who could have been enemies,” she says.

When it comes to connecting with one’s heritage, Laurel believes it is essential.

“Connecting to your heritage connects you to your ancestry — good or bad. We learn from the past in hopes of carrying the best of ourselves and our ancestry into the future.”

Laotian and proud

After coming to the United States from Laos as a toddler, May Posadas understands the importance of heritage.

“Our parents brought us here to give us the American dream,” May says. “To prosper and to be whatever we wanted to be. They instilled that in us wholeheartedly.”

There is immense pride in her family’s identity.

“My dad was an only child,” May says. “My maiden name is Deuanepenh. We were the only Deuanepenh family in the U.S., and we still are. We take a lot of pride in that.”



May Posada and her family make many offerings at a temple in honor of her son who passed away.



May Posada's family in Laos before coming to the United States.



May's parents encouraged their four children to succeed. "Our parents always said, 'You are the start of this in this country. Make it a legacy for us and for your children,'" she says. That mindset led May to graduate from Simpson College with a degree in business management and minors in accounting, marketing and human resources. She later earned a Master of Jurisprudence in compliance and risk from Drake University. Despite her success, she has never lost sight of her roots.

"Having a great career was important, but so was never losing sight of where we came from," May says.

Family remains central to Laotian culture.

"In our culture, you bring your parents to live with you. That extended family is very traditional," she says. "My dad brought his mother with him, so I grew up with my grandma. When I started my own family, I brought my mom to live with us."

That connection helps pass traditions to the next generation.

"She teaches my kids," May says. "They are trilingual. They speak Laotian, understand it and embrace the culture. They also understand what it's like for my mom, who doesn't speak English well. They don't see her as any different."

Her children also experience another culture at home.

"My husband is Hispanic, so we have Asian and Hispanic cultures, along with American culture," she says. "We live and breathe all of those heritages while staying grounded in where we came from."

Coming to America was not without hardship.

"It wasn't easy," May says. "But those challenges shaped who we are. They gave us grit and a strong work ethic. That story helps people understand where we come from."

After the tragic loss of her son, Diego, last December, May honored him through her culture. Although he was not raised Buddhist, he connected with its spirituality.

"We went to the temple and held an offering ceremony in his honor,"



May Posada feels a connection to her husband's hometown of Guachinango, Jalisco, and its annual festival.

she says. "Friends and family joined us."

The ceremony included meditation and a bracelet blessing.

"When you are blessed, a monk ties a bracelet on your wrist," May says. "Everyone surrounds you, placing their hands on each other to pass along energy, blessings and good luck. That sense of connection is a powerful part of our culture."

Through it all, May embraces her family's blended heritage.

"I feel so fortunate to live this life," she says. "I want people to see how beautiful it is and not be afraid of it."

Being Laotian is something May wears proudly.

"My license plate says 'SAO LAO,' which means 'Miss Lao,'" she says. "I'm very proud of who I am, proud of where I came from." ■

WHY DOES my back hurt when I sit too long?

If you have ever stood up from your desk, your car or the couch and felt stiff, achy or like you suddenly aged 20 years, you're not alone. Back pain with prolonged sitting is extremely common.

Many people assume sitting is restful for the body, but staying in one position too long can actually increase stress on the lower back. Muscles begin to tighten, joints become less mobile, and your body starts to feel "stuck." It is often less about having "bad posture" and more about not moving enough.

The good news is that your body usually responds well to small changes. Standing up every 30 to 60 minutes, taking short walks, changing positions often, and gently stretching your hips and back can make a big difference. Your chair setup matters too, but even the best chair in the world cannot replace regular movement.

It is also important to remember that pain does not always mean damage. Sometimes it simply means your body needs a new position, more support or more strength.

If your back hurts every day, gets worse over time, or starts limiting your ability to work, sleep or enjoy activities, it may be worth taking a closer look instead of just pushing through it. ■

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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WHY SHOULD I write my obituary?

We all look at them. They help honor the memory of the person who died, and they serve as a notice of the death itself. Writing an obituary is essentially writing a life narrative. You have lived a lot of life, and there is no better way to get a zoomed-out view of yourself and your life than to write your own obituary. It is a life review.

It is an opportunity to identify details that make you proud, and you may even uncover areas of your life that you realize are unfinished. This can offer you an opportunity to reroute paths that may have led you astray from those accomplishments.

Some questions that can help you as you get started with this activity include:

- Are there specific things I want my family and friends to remember about me?
- What are the most important roles I have played in life?
- Is there any advice or guidance I want to pass along to others?
- What are my most important accomplishments, and what am I most proud of?

Advanced funeral planning is ultimately about making things easier for those you love. Writing your own obituary is a simple, but meaningful way to help accomplish this. ■

Information provided by Robert Christensen, Advanced Planning Counselor, Hamilton's Funeral Home, 515-697-3671



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GRADUATION starts new financial chapter



In Iowa, April brings a sense of renewal. Tractors line the edges of farm fields, greenhouses fill with eager weekend gardeners, and families begin planning summer vacations and long-awaited getaways. It is also a season of milestones — spring formals, prom dances and, of course, upcoming graduations.

Graduation is an exciting achievement, but it also marks the beginning of a new financial chapter. Whether your graduate is heading to college, entering the workforce, or still exploring their next step, now is the ideal time to build strong financial habits that can last a lifetime.

One of the first steps is creating a simple, realistic budget. For many graduates, this is their first time managing money independently, and understanding where it goes is critical. Start by identifying income sources, such as part-time work, family support or scholarships. Then, outline expected expenses like housing, food, transportation and entertainment. This should be viewed as a teaching opportunity rather than a “control” conversation.

Another priority is building an emergency fund. Life is unpredictable, especially during transitions. Setting aside even \$500 to \$1,000 can provide a cushion for unexpected expenses like car repairs, medical bills or last-minute travel. Starting small is what matters most and builds confidence over time.

Credit is another important area to discuss early. Establishing a credit history can be beneficial, but it must be handled responsibly. Opening a starter credit card or becoming an authorized user on a parent’s account can help. Emphasize paying balances in full and on time each month. A practical approach is using the card for one consistent expense, like gas or groceries, and paying it off every cycle.

For those heading to college, understanding education costs is essential. Review tuition, housing, meal plans and additional expenses like books and supplies. If student loans are necessary, take time to understand interest rates and repayment expectations. Encourage students to borrow only what they need and track total debt throughout their academic journey.

Graduates entering the workforce should take full advantage of employer benefits. If a company offers a retirement plan like a 401(k), contributing early — even a small amount — can make a significant difference over time due to compound growth. If there is an employer match, be sure to contribute enough to receive the free money.

Setting short- and long-term financial goals is another key step. Short-term goals might include saving for a car, building an emergency fund or paying off small debts. Long-term goals could involve homeownership or retirement. Writing goals down and revisiting them regularly helps maintain focus and motivation.

Finally, keep the conversation about money open. Financial literacy isn’t often taught in school, so guidance from parents, mentors or advisors can make a big difference. Keeping the process engaging helps build confidence and long-term success.

Graduation is more than a ceremony — it’s a launching point. With thoughtful planning and a few smart financial steps, new grads can move forward with confidence and begin building a strong foundation for their future. ■

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

TIME FOR SPRING CLEANING

Just like your home, your financial plan benefits from a little seasonal attention.

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AT SYVERSON STREGE, giving is a focal point

Workplace encourages giving back to the community.

Many workplaces encourage employees to give back to the community, but Syverson Strege takes it a step further. As a financial planning and investment management



company, Syverson Strege has made volunteerism a central theme. The company’s website lists more than 50 nonprofits and other organizations that Syverson Strege supports and/or partners with to help the community.

“Our firm was founded locally in 1997, and, since that founding, the two co-founders wanted to make a focal point of the planning we do be around philanthropy,” Managing Director Lance Gunkel says. “A great number of our clients come from a philanthropic background. So, maybe we can introduce them to creative ways to give. Working with those types of clients day in and day out, we wanted to make sure that we, as a firm, our employees, are kind of walking the walk. Not just writing checks but getting out and helping the community specifically.”

The firm targets company-wide giving as well as individual giving back. Each of the company’s 20 employees is encouraged to give back to causes that are meaningful.

“We’re focusing on financial literacy, food insecurity and just the general wellbeing of the community. So, we actively encourage employees to go out, whether it is individually, or as teams or the full company, and spend time outside volunteering,” Gunkel says. “We know that our employees have varied interests, so, last year, we asked our employees to track where they are volunteering and how much, so we know the extent to which we’re involved in the community.”

Syverson Strege discovered that employees are making positive differences in many ways.

“When we tallied it all up for 2025, our employees averaged 65 hours per year. I thought that was an impressive number,” Gunkel says.

According to Gunkel, giving back has become part of the team culture at Syverson Strege.

“Every December, around the holidays, we invite all of staff and their families to go down to DMARC, and we not only bring food but also we do sorting and manual labor at the warehouse. We had all sorts of ages, including kids with their parents.”

Gunkel adds that the firm provides time and money to “prime the pump” of employee giving, and the result has been impressive.

“We do give time off for volunteering. And we also, at the beginning of each year, give each staff member \$200 toward philanthropic giving, so, if there’s a specific group they want to help support, then they can do so,” Gunkel says.

The company recently opted to add another way of volunteering close to home.

“In the past, we have worked most closely with DMARC and Junior Achievement, but we wanted to do something closer to the office as well. So, we had some employees come up with the idea of adopting a Clive park. Rio Valley Park was close to our office, so we thought that would be a good chance to clean up as a group, and, while we’re out at the park, maybe have a picnic lunch or pizza together,” Gunkel says. “We



Daniel Timmons of Edward Jones presents the Neighbor Spotlight certificate to Lance Gunkel.

just adopted the park and have committed to do it for at least two years, and the city asks that we do it at least four times per year. We’re all very excited to get started working with the city of Clive to help out at the park. The Clive parks and trail system are just incredible.” ■




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THE COMFORT of a savory lasagna

There are few things in life more comforting than a warm kitchen filled with the savory aroma of lasagna baking in the oven — any time of the year. It is the kind of smell that draws everyone in, pulling family members from each corner of the house to ask, “Is it ready yet?”



This hearty lasagna has become a true family favorite in our home. With rich layers of seasoned meat, creamy ricotta, tender pasta and plenty of melted cheese (I suggest adding more than what this recipe calls for), it is the ultimate comfort food. Lasagna is more than just dinner — it is a tradition. This dish has even been selected as our dinner for Christmas and Thanksgiving many years, as it truly is a treasured recipe — and the leftovers taste even better the next day. This recipe represents the simple joy in sharing something homemade and delicious with the people you love. I need to warn you, though, the sauce takes some time to cook, but it is well worth the wait. Enjoy!

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

Lasagna

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound ground hamburger
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley, divided
- 1 28-ounce can whole tomatoes, undrained and chopped
- 1 14.5-ounce can Italian-styled stewed tomatoes, undrained and chopped
- 1 six-ounce tomato paste
- 1 eight-ounce can tomato sauce
- 2 teaspoons dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon dried basil
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- Water to boil noodles
- 12 uncooked lasagna noodles
- 1 large egg white, beaten
- 2 cups cottage cheese
- 1/2 cup shredded parmesan cheese
- 1 15-ounce carton fat-free ricotta
- 2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese

DIRECTIONS:

- Brown hamburger and drain grease. Set aside. In the same pan, coat with cooking spray, sauté onion and garlic

- for 5 minutes. Add beef back in. Add 2 tablespoons parsley, chopped whole tomatoes and next six ingredients. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer for 20 minutes. Uncover and simmer for 15 minutes. Set aside.
- Boil water and cook noodles for 12 minutes or until “al dente.” Drain and set aside.
- Preheat oven to 350 F. In another bowl, combine 2 tablespoons parsley, egg white, cottage cheese, parmesan cheese and ricotta cheese.
- Spray a 9-inch by 13-inch pan with cooking spray and spread 1 cup tomato/beef mixture on the bottom of the pan. Place 3 noodles on tomato/beef mixture, top with half of cottage cheese mix, then 2 cups of tomato/beef mixture, and 2/3 cup of mozzarella. Repeat. Place another layer of noodles on top, then spread with remaining tomato/beef mixture.
- Cover with aluminum foil and bake for 1 hour. Then, sprinkle with 2/3 cup of provolone and bake uncovered for another 10 minutes. Take out of oven and let rest for 10 minutes. ■

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- Thunderstorms** 26%
- Green grass**..... 26%
- Flowers blooming**..... 17%
- Jacket weather** 4%



LOOKING BACK



The April 2017 Clive Living magazine featured the story, “Spring tools: Tips on cleaning up, brightening up and shaping up your home and yard.” The cover photo featured Jay Reichenbacher, sales director of Silent Rivers Design+Build. Also interviewed were LeRoy Mains, president of Brilliant Borders; Chaden Halfhill, president of Silent Rivers Design+Build; and Haley Stomp, who had big plans for her springtime cleaning. ■

THE VALUE of banking at a branch

While the advantages of online banking are undeniable, the value of banking in person at a branch is often overlooked. There are certain aspects of in-branch banking, such as personalized guidance, access to full products and services and real-time solutions, that make a trip to your bank worth your time.



tailored specifically to your unique situation.

Personal connection, combined with face-to-face communication, can make all the difference, and they can play a key role in reaching your financial goals. They are an important part of your banking experience that online services are unable to replicate.

Access to full products and services

When you visit your bank in person, you gain access to its full suite of products and services, not just what's included online. There could be a better opportunity for you to receive special offers by simply visiting the branch. You may even learn about a product or service you didn't know was available before your visit.

There are also certain banking tasks that are best to do in person at a branch. Depositing large amounts of money is one of them. Additionally, most banks offer safe deposit boxes, which are an in-branch service meant to serve as a private and secure place for you to store your most valuable items. Many

branches also provide notary services, making it convenient to handle legal documents while you're there.

Real-time solutions

Another important advantage of in-person banking is the ability to receive real-time solutions when urgent issues arise. If you notice anything suspicious on your account, a banker can review the activity and identify a plan of action for you all in one visit. Urgent matters don't have to be as stressful when you have an expert to address and fix problems on the spot.

Finding the balance between using in-person and digital banking services will help you make the most of your financial experience. The next time you need financial advice or just want to meet your banker, consider stopping by your local bank for support. ■

Information provided by Chris Beener, VP, Clive branch manager, CBeener@BankersTrust.com, 515-222-5888, 11111 University Ave., Clive.

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Note about calendar events: This magazine is delivered the fourth Thursday of each month. Calendar items included are events happening after the delivery date and extend into the following month. If you receive and read your magazine upon delivery, you will not miss out on any calendar items.

Coming up in the Clive Living magazine:

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



Mayor's Spring Clean-Up

East of the Interstate, Saturday, May 2. West of the Interstate, Saturday, May 9

This is your chance to place old furniture and other bulk items at your curb for collection. Be sure to have all items to the curb by 6 a.m. on the date of your pickup. Please mark any trash cans you want to save. Appliances will not be accepted. To arrange for a pickup of appliances, call Metro Waste Authority at 515-244-0021. Seven large item stickers per appliance will be required. There will not be a drop-off appliance event this year. To find out if your items are eligible for pick up, call Metro Waste Authority at 515-244-0021.

The following items will NOT be accepted during the Mayor's Spring Clean-Up: railroad ties; yard waste; vehicles and/or major auto parts; building materials; concrete chunks of any size; asphalt shingles over 65 pounds in total weight; animal carcasses; and banned substances such as lead, acid, batteries, waste oil, explosive material, medical waste, drugs, poisons, highly combustible material, paint, and any other toxic or hazardous substances.

To help keep our landfills from filling up with usable items, consider donating items that might be of use to others.

Drug Drop Box

The Prescription and Over-the-Counter Drug Drop Box is available 24/7 for anyone to use. It is located just inside the main entryway of the Clive Public Safety Center, 8800 Hickman Road. No liquids, needles, inhalers, ointments, lotions, aerosols, bloody or infectious waste allowed. Questions? Contact Clive Police Administration at 515-278-1312.



Food Truck Fridays

Fridays from May 8 through June 12
Campbells Recreation Area,
12385 Woodlands Parkway, Clive

Food Truck Fridays start up again every Friday from May 8 through June 12. Enjoy live music and food trucks at Campbell Recreation Area.

Greenbelt Landing Opening Summer 2026

Construction progress continues at Greenbelt Landing with an anticipated July opening just in time for Clive Festival. Check out all the updates and learn more about this new civic space at www.cityofclive.com/project_detail_T51_R1137.php.

Des Moines Community Orchestra Spring Concert

Sunday, May 10, 2 p.m.
Valley High School's Staplin Auditorium, 3650 Woodland Ave., West Des Moines

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

Clothing drive

Clive Community Services,
2190 N.W. 82nd St., Suite A, Clive

Seasonal clothing in good condition can be donated to Clive Community Services. Additionally, new underwear is needed. New, in-the-package underwear for all genders and sizes can be donated. You can also contribute financially toward the project. As always, donations of food and personal care items are gratefully accepted. Your support helps provide essential resources to those in need. Learn more about how you can help by visiting clivecommunityservices.com.

Donations can be dropped off: Monday, 9:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Wednesday, 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.; Friday, 9 a.m. to noon

The Food Pantry and Clothes Closet are open: Monday, 4-7 p.m., and Friday, 9 a.m. to noon.

The Medical Clinic hours are: Monday, patient registration 5-6:30 p.m.; patients seen 5-7:30 p.m.

Swim Lessons

Clive Aquatic Center, 1801 N.W. 114th St.

Clive Aquatic Center levels 1-6 Learn to Swim program dates have been established. Online registration is open. Session A is June 8-18; Session B: June 22-July 2; Session C: July 6-16; Session D: July 20-30. Sessions are Monday through Thursday for two weeks. Private, adaptive and parent/child swim lessons are also available within the above dates. For more information, visit https://www.cityofclive.com/parkandrecreation/aquatic_center/swimming_lessons/index.php.



Clive Card Sharks

Third Wednesday each month, 1 p.m.
Clive City Hall, 1900 N.W. 114th St., Clive

Join fellow card enthusiasts at Clive Card Sharks for an afternoon of friendly competition. This is a free, drop-in group event for adults 19 and older looking to socialize and play card games. Registration is not required, and the program takes place in the Greenbelt Room at Clive City Hall on the third Wednesday of each month at 1 p.m. Contact Teri at tnelson@cityofclive.com for more information. ■



MEET Quinn Linkvis

Inspired by family, driven to teach

Quinn Linkvis didn't have to look far for inspiration to become a teacher — it runs in her family.

Her grandfather was a principal, her grandmother a school librarian and her father a teacher in Des Moines Public Schools. Becoming an educator herself felt like a natural path.

During her senior year of high school, Linkvis volunteered in a fourth-grade classroom, and the experience solidified her decision to pursue teaching.

"Since late high school, I knew I wanted to be an elementary school teacher," she says. "After my initial field experiences in college, I knew for sure it was what I wanted to do with my career."

Linkvis earned her degree in education from the University of Iowa. She taught in Cedar Rapids for two years and is now in her first year teaching second grade at Shuler Elementary School.

"I grew up in Waukee and attended Walnut Hills Elementary School," she says. "I chose to teach at Shuler because I had the opportunity to move back home, and I knew Waukee has an incredible school district. Moving back here to teach was probably the best decision I ever made. The amount of support and resources available here are incredible. I work with some of the most wonderful people."

An average day for Linkvis is intentionally routine and structured.

"I teach general education," she says. "You name it, and I probably teach it to my students — from science and math to reading comprehension and history. I teach whole-group lessons, small-group lessons and offer individual instruction."

Though she often feels there are not enough hours in the day, the joy she finds in her students outweighs the challenges.

"The students are my favorite part of the job," she says. "They are like little sponges. The joy and positivity they bring to learning is unmatched. They are so interested in the world and how things work."

Choosing a single favorite memory is difficult, she says, since she values all the authentic moments she shares with her students.

"It is fun to prepare them for the next grade level, but I especially like getting to know them on a personal level and learning their personalities through events and activities we do together," she says.

Linkvis encourages prospective educators to embrace every opportunity to learn and grow.

"Don't take for granted any opportunities you get, and make the most of them," she says. "Teachers need to be lifelong learners. Take one day at a time. Not everything is 'sunshine and rainbows.' Remember your 'why,' because it will get you through both the toughest and brightest days." ■



Quinn Linkvis says she is glad she decided to return to the Waukee School District to teach.

CLIVE Public Library news

The library is closing Monday, May 4 at 5 p.m. and will be closed all day Sunday, May 10 and Monday, May 25.

Clive Public Library

1900 N.W. 114th St., 515-453-2221
www.cityofclive.com/library
 Monday - Thursday: 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.
 Friday: 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday: 1-5 p.m.

YOUTH

• **Postpartum Play Group:**

Tuesdays, May 5 and 26, 9-10:30 a.m.

• **BeTWEEN The Pages:** Monday, May 11, 5-5:45 p.m. Registration required at <https://cityofclive.activityreg.com/selectActivity>.

• **Family Sing Along with Denise:** Thursday, May 21, 6:15 p.m.

• **Un-BEE-lievable Flower Planting:** Thursday, May 28, 6:15-7 p.m.

• **Family Bike Clinic with Bike World:** Sunday, May 31, 1-2 p.m.

Registration required at <https://cityofclive.activityreg.com/selectActivity>.

ADULTS

• **Yoga Happy Hour:** Fridays, May 1 and 15, 4:30 p.m.

• **Romance Book Club:** Saturday, May 2, 10 a.m. to noon. Calling all lovers of romance. Join for all things romance-related from the sweet to the scandalous. Discuss books, movies, apps and anything in the romance genre. For more information and to participate, contact Stephanie Keller at skeller@cityofclive.com or via phone at 515-453-2221.

• **Let's Play Mah Jongg:** Mondays, 10 a.m. to noon, Thursdays, 1:30-3:30 p.m.

• **Bingo for Seniors:** Tuesday, May 12, 1 p.m.

• **Bucket List Book Club:** Wednesday, May 13, 6:30 p.m. Here's your chance to read and discuss some of the "100 books to read before you die." Check the library website to see what the group is currently reading. Registration required at <https://cityofclive.activityreg.com/selectActivity>.

• **Quilts of Valor: Honoring Veterans Through Quilts:** Friday, May 15, 2-3:30 p.m. Learn about Quilts of Valor and how local volunteers cover service members and veterans touched by war with comforting and healing handmade quilts. Kathleen Jones, state coordinator, will share the group's beautiful mission. See actual quilts up close, hear inspiring stories, and discover ways you can support or get involved. Registration required at <https://cityofclive.activityreg.com/selectActivity>.

• **Painted Rock Plant Markers Creations Class:** Sunday, May 17, 2-3:30 p.m. Registration required at <https://cityofclive.activityreg.com/selectActivity>. ■

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PRE-PLANNING key to administering estate plan

In more than 30 years of practice, I have helped families through countless estates. Some are nearly insolvent; others have millions of dollars of assets. In every estate, pre-planning was the difference between easy administration and a logistical nightmare. An organized and easily-understood estate plan is a gift to those you leave behind.



First, prepare a will or trust. These are written documents, drafted by an attorney, which direct the distribution of your assets. The executor or trustee is the person in charge of finalizing your affairs. The rest of the document is a set of instructions that directs who inherits assets. If your will is out of date (or you've never created one), update it.

Second, you should have a durable financial power of attorney. The financial power of attorney names an agent you trust to help manage your financial affairs. You can control the timing of when it goes into effect.

Third, you need advance medical directives. The health care power of attorney appoints someone to make medical decisions for you if you can't make them yourself. The living will sets out your wishes for end-of-life care. You should discuss both these documents with the people you are assigning so they understand your wishes.

Fourth, make sure you have beneficiaries listed on all assets that you can. The beneficiary designation supersedes the will or trust, so the asset goes directly to the beneficiary and doesn't go through probate. Make sure your beneficiary designations are up to date. Too often, I have seen assets designated to someone who died

years before or to a guardian for children who are now adults.

Fifth, pre-arrange your funeral and pre-pay it if you can. When a family is grieving, they don't always make the best decisions. Take that burden off them by putting basic arrangements in place.

Lastly, have a family conversation. It is not easy to ponder mortality. But, as difficult as this subject may be, it is important that someone knows your wishes and where key information can be found.

Lack of planning can leave a mess for your loved ones. If you have questions about how to update your estate plan, contact an attorney who has the experience and knowledge to assist you. ■

Information provided by Russ Barnett, Abendroth Russell Barnett Law Firm, 2560 73rd St., Urbandale, 515-278-0623, www.ARPCLaw.com.

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SOCIAL Security fundamentals

Social Security is a “pay-as-you-go” system funded primarily through current payroll taxes rather than relying solely on its trust fund. As of early 2023, the trust fund held approximately \$2.83



trillion and is projected to last until 2035. At that point, a shortfall of about 25% is expected, but the program will not disappear. Instead, adjustments such as increased taxes or reduced benefits may be required to sustain it. Despite concerns, Social Security remains a reliable source of income for retirees.

Social Security benefits and eligibility.

Benefits are based on your birth year and full retirement age (FRA). For those born in 1960 or later, FRA is 67, while individuals born between 1955 and 1959 have an FRA ranging from 66 and 2 months to 66 and 10 months. Many people overestimate their expected monthly benefits and are unaware of their FRA. It’s important to treat Social Security as supplemental income rather than a primary source, making personal savings essential.

Claiming benefits: early vs. delayed.

When you claim benefits significantly impacts the amount received. Claiming at age 62 reduces benefits to about 70% of the full amount, while delaying until age 70 can increase payments to roughly 124%. Filing early may be necessary due to health, financial needs, or caregiving responsibilities. However, waiting to claim can provide higher monthly income, especially for those with other income sources or longer life expectancies.

Income and taxation of benefits. Social Security benefits are adjusted for inflation and backed by the U.S. government, but they may be taxable depending on total income. For individuals, benefits are not taxed below \$25,000, taxed up to 50% between \$25,000 and \$34,000, and up to 85% above \$34,000. For joint filers, thresholds are \$32,000 and \$44,000. Working while receiving benefits before FRA may reduce payments if earnings exceed annual limits.

Strategies for retirement savings success.

Successful retirement planning involves building financial knowledge, maintaining a long-term perspective, and saving consistently. Maximizing

contributions to employer-sponsored plans and IRAs is key, especially to receive full employer matches. Self-employed individuals should consider SEP IRAs. Budgeting, managing debt, and aligning investments with financial goals are essential steps.

The role of financial professionals.

Working with a financial advisor provides personalized strategies, investment education, and risk assessment. Advisors help align financial decisions with individual goals and offer guidance on budgeting, debt management, and overall financial health.

Social Security facts. Social Security replaces about 40% of pre-retirement income on average. The average monthly benefit in 2024 was approximately \$1,782. Individuals born after 1959 reach full retirement age at 67, and benefits may be taxed based on total income, with up to 85% subject to taxation. ■

This material is for educational purposes and not intended as specific tax, legal or investment advice. Information provided by Travis Gaule, founding partner/financial advisor, Trust Bridge Wealth Advisors, 4090 Westown Parkway, Suite 108, West Des Moines, IA 50266, 515-207-4346.

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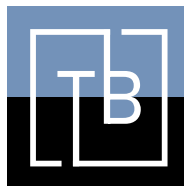
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STATE of the City

Clive Chamber hosted the State of the City Luncheon at NCMIC on March 24.



Lindsey Ellis and Renee Nash



Eileen Van Kooten-Schmitt and Tamyra Harrison



Anil Kothavale, Kalya Kothavale and Jenni Kothavale



Ramon Mulstay, Katelyn Worpel and Hope Boyd



Nick Swift and Alicia Stoner



Ted Weaver and Eric Klein



Ben Chambers and Angie Sprenger



John Edwards and Jessica Kamerman



Shelby Chavez Chun and Victoria Gama



Marsha Lappin and Jon Bianchi

OUT & ABOUT



Rich Wells and Madilyn Fouse



Dominic Chiovaro and Jim Hobson



Pete De Kock and Molly Elder



Shane Larson and Ahmed Ibrahim



Susan Steier and Noah Schrad



Susan Dunn and Lori Oakland



Kris Howard and Cameron Wendt



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