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WELCOME

# A FRESH take on farmers markets

For years, I dismissed farmers markets as little more than roadside produce stands — tables of fruits and vegetables, nothing more. I didn't cook. I didn't grocery shop. I didn't care.

Then, a few years ago, I wandered into a local farmers market — and my view changed. There was honey, still sweet from the hive. Bread, warm and crusty. Homemade jelly. Even wine. But the real surprise wasn't what was for sale. It was the atmosphere.

Farmers markets aren't just about food. They are about people. Music drifts through the aisles. Vendors chat with regulars. Shoppers linger instead of rushing. It is part market, part gathering — and entirely its own experience.

At its heart, a farmers market is a place where producers sell directly to consumers. But "farmer" is a broad label, and that is the point. Alongside fresh produce, you will find plants, baked goods, prepared foods and more.

Some markets are small and unassuming. Others take over entire city blocks. They are not permanent. They don't last all year. And that's exactly why they matter. Much like the Shamrock Shake I seem to seek out each spring, their short season makes them something to look forward to.

Farmers markets have been around for centuries, long before modern grocery stores reshaped how we shop. But, in recent decades, demand for fresh, local food has brought them back.

And for the grammar-minded: It is "farmers market," not farmer's or farmers'. The Associated Press keeps it clean — no possessive — so we do, too.

In this month's cover story, we take you inside your local farmers market and introduce you to the people who make them worth the trip. ■



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Laura and Steven Greig make the markets a family outing with their children.

# Fresh FINDS

Local vendors bring flavor, passion and community to farmers markets

By Jackie Wilson

Longer days and warmer nights can only mean one thing — farmers market season is back. With fresh-picked produce, handcrafted goods and sweet treats, the market is a weekly gathering place for both vendors and visitors.



## VALLEY JUNCTION FARMERS MARKET

Come enjoy fresh produce, baked goods, handmade items, art, food trucks and more. Music in the Junction is held along with the farmers market and classic car shows are twice a month.

**WHEN:** May 7 through Sept. 24

**WHERE:** Historic Valley Junction, Fifth Street area, West Des Moines

Music in the Junction is held along with the farmers market to provide entertainment for attendees.

### Valley Junction Farmers Market

For more than 50 years, Historic Valley Junction has hosted its signature farmers market in the Fifth Street area in West Des Moines.

The market was formerly held on Saturday mornings, but organizers moved it to Thursdays in 1987. Larry Kaster, event and marketing manager for the Historic Valley Junction Foundation, explains it was “tough competing with the Des Moines Downtown Farmers Market on Saturdays.”

This year’s market runs through Sept. 24. It currently features between 80 and 90 vendors and reached capacity by the end of February. In late August, the footprint is reduced by one block.

“We change the footprint in September, as it’s a school night, and we have fewer vendors,” Kaster says. “That gives extra parking, too.”

Vendors include food trucks, produce, handmade goods, baked goods, artwork and more.

“We put a lot of time and energy into our vendors. We create something for everyone and try to be as inclusive as possible,” Kaster says. “We ask our vendors to line up to the sidewalk so folks with mobility issues can easily attend.”

Entertainment is another major draw. A free concert takes place each Thursday as part of Music in the Junction. The market also features live entertainment throughout and classic car shows twice a month.

Kaster says the market’s atmosphere sets it apart.

“This market is more of a party atmosphere. It is not just shopping for goods,” he says. “We also have unique shops downtown that draw people in. We have a beautiful setting, too.”

New this year, additional bike parking is available. The website also features an interactive map so attendees can locate their favorite vendors.

For more information on concerts, entertainment and vendors, visit [www.valleyjunction.com](http://www.valleyjunction.com).

### The Good Stuff

For 20 years, Heidi Blanchard has sold baked goods and seasonal produce through her stand, The Good Stuff. She has attended the Valley Junction Farmers Market for about 16 years. She offers “sentimental” baked goods, including cinnamon and caramel rolls, strawberry-rhubarb pie, quick breads and more.

“I focus on quality and nostalgic items. They are like items your grandma used to make,” she says.

For her wheat bread, she uses fresh-milled wheat, which adds nutrients.

“I grind the grain instead of just buying the flour. It’s worth it and offers better taste and shelf life for the bread.”

Throughout the market season, she also sells seasonal produce, free-range chicken eggs, beef tallow lotion and floral bouquets. During downtime, she repurposes denim jeans into rugs.

Blanchard began selling at markets as a stay-at-home mom looking to earn extra income. She also entered baking competitions at the Iowa State Fair, winning numerous awards.

Her products are also available at a stand at the Blanchard Mercantile in Indianola and at the Ankeny Farmers Market.

Blanchard says connecting with customers is the best part.

“They stop by week after week. I’ve learned their names and stories,” she says. “Sometimes it’s tricky trying to remember which market I met them at.”

A guest book allows customers to sign up.

“I appreciate it when my return customers recommend my items,” she says. “By going to the market, people are supporting real families. Every purchase does make a difference.”



Joyce and Jody Fisher came out of retirement to sell their produce at several farmers markets, including the Valley Junction market on Thursday evenings.

### Fisher's Flowers and Produce

Joyce Fisher has sold at the Valley Junction and Ames Main Street farmers markets for eight years.

At Fisher's Flowers and Produce, she offers bedding plants, herbs and cut flowers. During harvest season, she sells asparagus, green beans, tomatoes, peppers and other produce. Her tomato seedlings include Cherokee Purple and Brandywine varieties.

Cut flowers, including zinnias and sunflowers, are available in mid-June.

Their produce is grown organically.

"We'd like to be certified organic, but it's a lot of paperwork and government regulations," she says. "Our farming practices are as natural as possible."

Fisher first "dabbled" in markets years ago while raising her children. After retiring, she returned to selling. Her husband, Jody, also retired and now helps; he is a beekeeper and sells honey.

"It's not really a relaxing retirement," she says. "It keeps us busy and gives us a purpose."

Weather can be a challenge for both growing and selling. "If you're a gardener or farmer, you're always dependent on the weather," she says. "We irrigate, but, if we don't get natural rain, it hurts." Extreme conditions can also make market days difficult. "One day the heat index was over 100 degrees. I said, 'Are we crazy?'" Windy days with tents flying make for an interesting day," she says. Still, she values the relationships built over time. "We've made so many friends over the years," she says. "We provide good, wholesome food. We love people who come back year after year."

### Muddy Feet Farm

After having her first child, Laura Greig wanted to become a stay-at-home mom. With skills in baking and gardening, she found a way to do both while staying home with her children.

Her business, Muddy Feet Farm, has booths at the Valley Junction, Ames and Des Moines Playhouse pop-up farmers markets. As an urban farmer, she offers produce and sourdough bread. Her tomatoes, herbs and fruit are often used in jams and other fresh items.

Her sourdough bread is especially popular.

"Grocery store bread has too many ingredients," she says. "Everyone can appreciate a fresh loaf of bread. We try to use items from our own property."

Greig taught herself how to make sourdough and later learned how to scale production.

"You have to be careful about sourdough. It's been a work in progress," she says.

She recently purchased a commercial oven to increase production.

"It's physically demanding, but it's also very rewarding. For two of my market seasons, I was pregnant," she says.

Her husband, Steven, and their children often accompany her to markets.

"The best part is seeing the other vendors and repeat customers," Greig says. "We've built a camaraderie. It feels like seeing a long-lost friend, especially at Valley Junction. It's a cool community."



Sourdough bread made by Laura Greig is a favorite food item at her farmers market booth.

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### Coffalo Coffee

When Chris James was laid off after a 25-year career in restaurant management during the pandemic, he was unsure of his next move. He researched what to do with his time.

With kids at home and his bills piling up, he scoured his home for things to sell. As he was intrigued with the aroma and flavor of coffee, he bought a coffee roaster with the money. He roasted one pound of coffee beans an hour and delivered coffee bean orders on his bicycle.

While out biking, his pug, Sooshie, rode along delivering coffee beans. Folks in West Des Moines noticed the dog on the bike, advertising coffee.

# FEATURE



Chris James takes his Coffalo Coffee to various farmers markets.

Just four months later, he established his own coffee company, Coffalo Coffee. The name Coffalo is a combination of Buffalo Road, where he lives in West Des Moines, and coffee.

He upgraded his roaster twice and now roasts up to 120 pounds of beans an hour. His specialty is hot-air roasted, clean coffee, resulting in a less acidic taste. He sold coffee at the Ames Farmers Market and wanted a venue closer to home. For the past three years, he has sold beans and brewed coffee at the Des Moines Downtown Farmer's Market.

He has expanded his coffee bean sales to more than 60 retail outlets, including Hy-Vee, Price Chopper, Fareway and more. His coffee is served at Paws & Pints in West Des Moines.

"I recently celebrated my five-year anniversary of the company," he reflects. "I've transformed my basement into a coffee roastery."

Coffalo beans come from Central and South America. One of his brews, the Bison Brew, includes direct-trade beans from farmers in Honduras. He visited El Zapote, Honduras, to meet the coffee farmers and their families.

"It was a wonderful experience to see what they go through to harvest the beans," he says. "I've learned why the cost of coffee has increased, with varying factors."

He contemplated using the image of a buffalo on his packaging.

"The last roaming buffalo are protectors of land. A portion of our Roam Free Roast goes toward protecting buffalo. The Buffalo Field Campaign volunteers look for buffalo herds and bring them back to the protected land," he explains.

Coffalo began as a coffee bean roaster and not a coffee shop, but some have mistaken it for brewed coffee. However, he began selling cold brew coffee at the farmers market, using coffee ice cubes.

"When you have a cold brew, the ice cubes add to the experience, and the coffee isn't watered down," he says. "I've created a monster, making coffee cubes."

James likes attending the Des Moines Farmers Market, to reconnect with other vendors and repeat customers. He continues to make coffee deliveries on his bike with his dog, Buggy. A buffalo costume at markets keeps customers engaged.

"I love the hard work. It's different than working in the corporate world," he reflects. "I now get to hang outside and serve something I'm proud of." ■



Chris James still enjoys delivering his roasted coffee beans on his bike with his dog riding along.

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## HOME HEALTH

By Stacey Miller

# HOME HOSPICE: Comfort, familiarity and support

In a recent national survey, seven in 10 Americans said, if they were diagnosed with a life-limiting illness, they would prefer to spend their time in familiar surroundings with the routines and comforts they count on. In other words, they'd want to be home.

For families facing end-of-life decisions, that preference has helped drive growing interest in hospice care delivered at home. While inpatient hospice centers remain an important option, home-based hospice offers a different kind of experience — one centered on comfort, familiarity and personalized support.



### Understanding hospice at home

Hospice is not limited to a specific location. It's a philosophy of care focused on comfort and quality of life, typically for individuals with a serious illness who no longer are pursuing curative treatment. When provided at home, hospice services are brought directly to wherever a person lives, whether that is a private residence, apartment or community setting.

Care at home generally includes pain and symptom management, emotional and spiritual support, and assistance with daily needs that may become difficult over time. The goal is to help individuals remain as comfortable and engaged as possible and to support those close to them.

### A team approach to care

One of the defining aspects of hospice is its team-based model. Families typically work with a group of professionals who collaborate to meet medical, emotional and practical needs. This may include registered nurses who oversee care plans and medications, nursing assistants who provide direct support, and social workers who help navigate resources and decisions. Many programs also offer volunteers, spiritual care providers and specialized services such as music therapy or pet visits. Together, this team adapts as needs change, aligning with the individual's condition and preferences.

### When hospice is not the right fit

Not every situation calls for hospice. For individuals managing serious illness while still pursuing treatment, palliative care can provide similar layers of support without the same eligibility requirements.

Palliative care focuses on symptom management, emotional support and planning for future care needs. In some cases, it can serve as a bridge, helping families transition if hospice becomes appropriate later.

### Practical considerations

Deciding on hospice at home involves both emotional and logistical factors. Families often weigh a loved one's wishes alongside the realities of caregiving, the suitability of the home environment, and the availability of support. Financial questions are also common. Medicare and many private insurers typically cover a wide range of hospice services, though details can vary.

Ultimately, there is no single "right" choice. What matters most is finding an approach that honors the individual's preferences while providing the level of care and support the family needs. ■

Stacey Miller is executive director of WesleyLife at Home, which offers a broad network of services, including medical and non-medical at-home care. Visit [wesleylife.org](http://wesleylife.org) or call 515- 978-2777.




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## EDUCATION

By Jackie Wilson

# MEET Debra Herring

### Teaching life skills to junior high students

After 24 years of teaching junior high students — and following a second career — Debra Herring is retiring at the end of the school year.

Herring teaches family and consumer sciences at Indian Hills Junior High and taught at Stilwell Junior High. FCS consists of a 12-week rotation with other life skills units, such as technology education and financial literacy.

She teaches students to sew by hand and with a sewing machine. Cooking is a popular lab, with students making cookies, tortilla pizzas and pancakes from scratch. Teaching kids to measure and follow directions in a recipe translates to other skills needed as adults.

“It’s a life skill. When filling out a job application, you need to follow instructions,” she explains.

Herring recalls when students were tasked with learning how to look up equivalents in ounces and pounds for a box of batter.

“It was odd. I kept getting the same answer. Kids Googled it, and the first thing they saw was 64 pounds,” she says. “Technology has really changed how kids learn. Videos can be good, but they need to learn how to decipher what is valuable information and what is just entertainment.”

Numerous students thrive in family and consumer sciences classes.

“Some kids struggle in core classes, such as algebra, but they might excel in my class because it’s hands on, and they can figure out how things work on their own,” she says.

Students also learn how to do laundry.

“One student said, ‘My mom does that — I don’t need to learn it.’ I explained that sometimes parents get sick and can’t do it,” Herring says. “I’m a big life skills person.”

Before teaching, Herring worked in a corporate job. She later stayed home with her children before returning to the workforce.

She chose family and consumer sciences because of a positive experience when she was a student.

“My home ec teacher provided a safe space where I could truly be myself. That teacher led me to this career,” she says. “I still talk to my home ec teacher today.”

Over the years, Herring rarely took time off. Summers were spent preparing for fall classes. She spent weekends purchasing groceries and other supplies for her labs, often with her own money. Teaching sewing has taken a toll on her hands, resulting in arthritis. Still, her influence on students is significant.

“One of my former students, now in her 30s, thanked me for teaching her how to sew. Now she sews for her kids,” Herring says. “It’s the little things, and it’s rewarding knowing you made an impact.”

Her post-retirement plans include spending time with a new grandchild. She also plans to substitute teach after six months. She says Indian Hills has been like a family.

“West Des Moines is a great place with a lot of diversity,” she says. “You never know how many lives you’ve impacted. Compared to the corporate world, there is no comparison when it comes to the feeling of making a difference.” ■



Debra Herring left a corporate job to teach and enjoys making a difference in students’ lives.

# SAUSAGE and cheese breakfast bake is easy, filling and practical

Mornings get busy, which is why I love having a breakfast recipe I can rely on. This one checks every box for me. It is incredibly easy to make — just mix, pour and bake — with simple ingredients I usually already have in the fridge. No complicated steps. No mess. No standing over the stove while trying to get ready for the day. I love the idea of cooking once and enjoying for days.

What I appreciate most is how protein-packed this recipe is. Between the eggs, sausage and cheeses, it is the kind of breakfast that actually keeps you full and focused all morning. I am not reaching for a snack an hour later, which makes a big difference on busy days.

It is also perfectly sized for real life. The recipe makes enough for two people to enjoy breakfast for a couple of days, which means less cooking and more convenience. Or, double the batch and freeze some for future quick meals. I can warm up a slice and have a hot, satisfying meal in minutes. Easy, filling and practical — exactly how breakfast should be. ■



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

## Savory sausage and cheese breakfast bake



**INGREDIENTS:**

- 8 large eggs
- 1/4 cup water
- 2/3 cup cottage cheese
- 1/2 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1/2 package of Jimmy Dean breakfast sausage cooked, crumbled
- 1 teaspoon Nature’s Seasoning

**DIRECTIONS:**

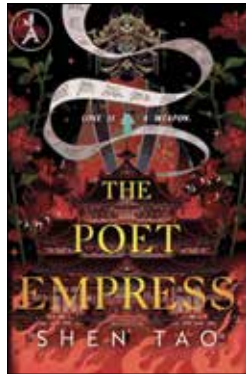
- Preheat oven to 350 F. Lightly grease a small baking dish (8-inch by 8-inch works well).
- Blend eggs, water and cottage cheese for 10-15 seconds in a blender.
- Combine with mozzarella and sausage and pour into the prepared baking dish. Spread evenly.
- Bake for 30-35 minutes or until the center is set and the top is lightly golden. Rest for 5 minutes, then slice and serve.
- Vary this recipe by adding sauteed onions, peppers or mushrooms. Pictured is the original recipe plus a version with peppers and mushrooms. ■

## 'The Poet Empress'

You should know that this is not a fantasy romance book, despite the piles of marketing that say otherwise. This is a book about power in 100 different forms, and, more specifically, this is a book about words. The magic in the setting literally comes from poetry. Also, the story itself is told so richly and beautifully, it becomes its own spell.

Shen Tao's debut drops us into a world women are forbidden to read, but the protagonist Wei Yin isn't going to let that stop her. Raised in poverty and the horrors therein, she is the rare kind of heroine who is genuinely, functionally competent without ever feeling like a caricature. She's desperate, brilliant and has to navigate a political labyrinth that would make Machiavelli sweat.

This is not an easy read. With power comes abuse, and while Tao writes with a poet's restraint, weaving the story so that pain and terror mean something, there is a lot of grim stuff. But there is also hope, and humanity, and the kind of epic tale that will resonate with me for a long, long time. Clear your weekend and surrender. It's so worth it. ■ — Review by Julie Goodrich



By Shen Tao  
Jan. 20, 2026  
400 pages  
\$32.99  
Tor Publishing

## 'Seek the Traitor's Son'

I came into this expecting something interesting and easy to read. I was not at all expecting to be swept off my feet — dazzled by this incredibly rich world, half in love with all the characters, and consumed by the need to know what happens next.

There is a deadly fever that blesses half its victims with mysterious gifts and kills the rest. In a situation that will seem familiar, part of the world welcomes the disease with religious fervor, while the other avoids it like the plague it is. Then a prophecy shakes up the status quo. Two enemies are told one of them will triumph and one will fall, but neither knows which. It's maddening and brilliant and so much fun to read.

Elegy is at the center of the prophecy, and she is exactly the kind of protagonist I want to follow into narrative peril. She is not the chosen one, but she is handed a terrible destiny and has to decide, in real time, what to do with it. There is a slow-burn romance, devilish politics, religious fanaticism and so much more. I don't think I've read a world that feels this live-in for a long time. It's just so good! ■

— Review by Julie Goodrich



By Veronica Roth  
May 12, 2026  
432 pages  
\$39.99  
Tor Publishing



The May 2018 Jordan Creek Living magazine featured the story, "Special delivery: Jordan Creek area parents and siblings reflect on multiple births." The cover photo featured triplets Christopher, Daniel and Matthew Rydberg, who were 15 at the time. Also interviewed were parents of twins Devonne and Devonna Wright and twins Lincoln and David Knaub. ■

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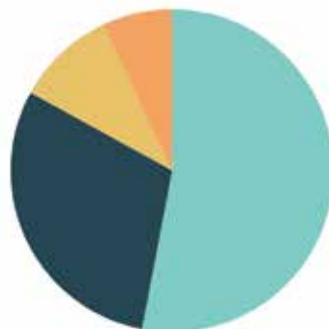
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## HEATING & COOLING

By Dale Adams

# INSTANT discounts and rebates



Did you know that nearly half of the energy used in your home goes to your heating and cooling? Are you considering upgrading a heating and cooling system in 2026? You may qualify for some instant discounts. MidAmerican Energy reveals their residential energy rebate program every January for the current year. MidAmerican Energy is following a similar model in 2026 as in the previous year with “instant discounts” versus “rebates” playing the biggest role in the program. The only rebates you will see in HVAC are for smart thermostats, which can yield you up to \$100 per unit, and electric heat pump water heaters, which will yield a rebate up to \$225. Instead of a rebate, instant discounts are available for other equipment installations. Let's talk details.

### Instant discount opportunities

The instant discounts program incentivizes local distributors to stock energy-efficient equipment, making it easier for you to find more energy-saving models in your area and reduce your energy bills and overall carbon footprint. Instant discounts are only available through participating providers, and the discount is automatically deducted from the purchase price — no paperwork needed. Check if your preferred HVAC contractor participates in the MidAmerican Energy Instant Discounts program.

Examples of equipment and discount are: air-source heat pumps\*, \$300 - \$563/unit; cold climate air-source heat pumps\*, \$563 - \$713/unit; central air conditioners, \$263 - \$413/unit; central air conditioners (large), \$150/ton; ductless split heat pumps\*, \$375/unit; cold climate ductless split heat pumps\*, \$525/unit; geothermal heat pumps, \$900 - \$1,200/unit; desuperheater, \$113/unit; heat pump water heaters, \$225/unit; Natural gas furnaces, \$2.40/MBtuh.

### Keep the following in mind

- Review the Iowa qualifications and conditions pages on the MidAmerican Energy HVAC Rebates page to make sure you qualify. [www.midamericanenergy.com/ia\\_qualifications-and-conditions](http://www.midamericanenergy.com/ia_qualifications-and-conditions)
  - Equipment must be purchased, installed and operating between Jan. 1 and Dec. 31, 2026, to be eligible for rebates or incentives.
  - Instant discounts are only available by purchasing your equipment through a participating Instant Discounts provider.
  - Instant discounts cannot be combined with any other rebate or incentive program, including prescriptive rebates.
  - Check the date. Be sure to apply for rebates within 90 days of purchase or by Dec. 31, 2026, whichever comes first.

It's so important to know that efficiency is key. Obviously, efficiency most importantly translates into energy savings for you, which means less money spent on your utility bills. MidAmerican Energy reserves its rebates and instant discounts for the most efficient equipment.

When you're investigating your options, be sure to ask your HVAC expert about the system efficiency and rebate/discount qualification. It's common for companies to quote basic model equipment that is generally lower efficiency because those systems' upfront costs are going to be lower. Remember to discuss the comparison between the upfront savings versus the backend savings. A few hundred dollars at the time of purchase may seem like a lot, but, if you imagine the energy savings throughout the life of the equipment, it could and will likely outweigh that. If you are getting bids, be sure to ask those questions, and compare apples to apples. ■

Do you still have questions? Visit [www.tripleahomeservices.com](http://www.tripleahomeservices.com) for additional information. Dale and Natasha love to answer questions. Give them a call at 515-868-2779.

## WELLNESS

By Traci Frantzen and Lauren Conway

# THE GOLD standard in skincare

Many consider the gold standard in skincare to be a vitamin C serum with ferulic acid and a high-quality sunscreen. Vitamin C serums contain potent antioxidant essentials for maintaining skin vitality. By neutralizing free radicals — unstable molecules generated by environmental sensors like pollution and ultraviolet (UV) radiation — vitamin C helps prevent the oxidative stress that leads to premature aging. Clinical research indicates that consistent application can improve skin texture, diminish the appearance of fine lines and brighten hyperpigmentation by inhibiting melanin production. While vitamin C provides a robust defense, it is not a replacement for sun protection. When paired with a high-quality broad-spectrum sunscreen, vitamin C serums act as a force multiplier. Sunscreen provides the primary barrier against UV-induced DNA damage, while vitamin C addresses the secondary damage caused by reactive oxygen species that bypass or penetrate the barrier. Studies suggest that combining vitamin C with ferulic acid creates a synergistic effect significantly enhancing photo protection and reducing inflammation. This dual-action approach of protecting the skin from external rays while repairing internal oxidative damage is widely considered the gold standard for maintaining a youthful complexion.

Get ready for summer by using a vitamin C serum with ferulic acid and a high-quality sunscreen every morning. ■

Information provided by Traci Frantzen and Lauren Conway, aestheticians, 4 Ever Young, 1180 S.E. University Ave., Waukee, 515-304-2324, [www.4everyoungantiaging.com](http://www.4everyoungantiaging.com)



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## HEALTH

By Mary Doherty, LISW

# WHAT to know before therapy

As you jump into supporting your mental health, there are a few things you should do. First of all, will you be using insurance or paying out of pocket for sessions? Be aware of what your insurance will cover and if you need to meet your deductible before insurance will cover mental health services. You can always turn your payments into insurance to go toward your deductible, but that will be out of pocket until your deductible is met. Some places will offer a sliding fee scale or a lower rate for paying out of pocket. Check this out to make sure this is something you can financially do as well. Another thing you will need to do is find your therapist, which is often the fun part. Check out their bios and what population they prefer to work with. Look for key words that stick out and feel like a connection between you and the therapist. I like to tell people that picking a therapist is similar to online dating. You want to make sure you find someone who will be a great connection and last. It is OK to be picky and choosy when looking for a therapist. Lastly, and the most important, is identifying what you would like to work on with your therapist. Maybe there is a specific event that has occurred or ongoing stressors. If you cannot identify a specific thing to bring up to your therapist, that is also OK. This is a space to be you. ■



Information provide by Mary Doherty, LISW, Renewed Strength Counseling, 2910 Westown Parkway, Suite 314, West Des Moines, IA 50266, 515-809-2419.



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# FROM DONATIONS to devotion

Aker finds meaning in volunteer sewing.

When Linda Aker moved to the area, she began volunteering at WayPoint Resources. She eventually settled into sorting clothing for its clothing closet one or two days a week. The closet accepts donations for school-age children, from size 4T through adult 2XL.



Through her work, she noticed the organization received a large amount of baby clothing the closet could not use. Around the same time, she saw a Facebook post for a local group, Mary’s Helping Hands, which supports expectant mothers with donations of gently used clothing and baby supplies. Aker asked permission to take the baby clothes WayPoint received to Mary’s Helping Hands.

“That started a relationship that I am so grateful for,” Aker says. “As I dropped off clothing each week, I learned about the need Mary’s Helping Hands has for sewers.”

Aker began by taking full-size sheets Mary’s Helping Hands received and cutting and sewing them into sheets for cribs and Pack ‘n Plays. She talked with volunteers to learn what items were most needed at any given time. Over the years, she has sewn bibs, burp cloths and tag blankets, but her favorite items to make are reusable nursing pads.



Ryan Mihalovich of Edward Jones presents the Neighbor Spotlight certificate to Linda Aker.

“It is such a satisfying little project to work up between other larger items,” Aker says.

Aker has also crafted for Blank Children’s NICU for years, as her daughter is a neonatal nurse practitioner there.

“After having sewn bedding and other items as requested for the unit for close to 20 years, I now devote my time there to sewing, crocheting and knitting holiday hats and costumes for the babies,” she says.

She has gotten a head start and is currently working on Halloween costumes for the tiniest patients.

For now, aside from the Mondays she spends working at the WayPoint Resources clothing closet, the majority of Aker’s volunteering happens in her sewing room at home.

“It is a little bit of a selfish pleasure to be able to do what I love and to be able to help others at the same time,” she says.

She believes other sewers can relate to the desire to find projects that are truly needed.

“You reach the point that the grandchildren are too big for you to sew dresses for them,” Aker says. “There are no babies in the family anymore who need a quilt. Sewing for Mary’s Helping Hands was a godsend for me. When I go in each week, I find out exactly what the needs are. Knowing that the time I spend at the sewing machine is for a good cause brings meaning to my life.”

For Aker, volunteering is essential.

“As we retire, we have the pleasure of being able to reinvent ourselves,” she says. “We get to focus on those things we did not have time for during our working days.”

When her last grandchild starts school, she plans to spend more time helping sort donations at Mary’s Helping Hands. For now, she said she has the best of both worlds.

“Volunteering gives your life meaning,” Aker says. “It does not need to be something hugely impactful. I always remember Mother Teresa’s words: ‘Do small things with great love.’ I try to give my best to every project.” ■

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4601 Westown Pkwy Ste 218  
West Des Moines, IA 50266  
515-224-5284

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# WEST DES MOINES

## Public Library news



### WDM Public Library Summer Reading starts May 18.

Our annual Summer Reading Club is back and bigger than ever this year. Everyone who registers (yes, adults, too) will get an exclusive WDM Library Summer Reading sticker. You will track your reading through the handy Beanstack app or with paper trackers handed out at the children's desk. Readers of any age who log more than 30 reading days will win exciting prizes at the end of the summer. For information on registering groups (such as classes or daycares), send a message to [youthservices@wdm.iowa.gov](mailto:youthservices@wdm.iowa.gov).

Registration opens on Monday, May 18. You may sign up online, through the Beanstack app from the App store or Google Play, or by stopping by the children's or adult desks at the library. Learn more at [wdmlibrary.org/summer](http://wdmlibrary.org/summer).

### WDM Public Library participates in Community Library Map Project

Libraries across central Iowa are inviting the community to explore, connect and celebrate with the launch of the Central Iowa Libraries Map. This illustrated map links public libraries throughout the region, encouraging residents to visit new locations, discover unique services and experience the collective impact of libraries working together. Designed by illustrator Kevin Cannon, the map highlights the diversity and reach of central Iowa's library system.

Free printed maps are available at participating library branches, with a downloadable version also offered online. Each library also has their own themed merchandise, including puzzles, posters, enamel pins and tote bags. At the West Des Moines Public Library, select items are available in person, with additional options offered online. Learn more at [wdmlibrary.org/central-iowa-libraries-map](http://wdmlibrary.org/central-iowa-libraries-map).

Community members can also participate in a region-wide social media campaign. By visiting libraries and sharing photos or videos using #CentralIALibraries, participants will be entered into monthly prize drawings, with entries rolling over toward a grand prize at the end of the year. ■



### West Des Moines Public Library

[www.wdmlibrary.org](http://www.wdmlibrary.org)  
515-222-3400  
4000 Mills Civic Parkway,  
West Des Moines  
Monday - Thursday: 9  
a.m. to 9 p.m.  
Friday: 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.  
Saturday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Sunday: 2-5 p.m.

## ADVANCE planning offers peace of mind

Planning ahead is one of the kindest gifts you can give the people you love. Many families tell us that the greatest benefit of advance planning is the sense of calm it brings during an otherwise overwhelming time. When important decisions have already been made, your family is free to focus on what truly matters: being together, supporting one another and honoring a life well-lived without added stress or uncertainty.



There can also be meaningful financial benefits to planning and paying in advance. Designed to give families confidence and clarity about future expenses, you can have your selected services and merchandise guaranteed — protecting your family from the impact of rising costs over time.

Whether you are just beginning to think about your wishes or you are ready to put a full plan in place, starting the conversation can be simple and should be completely pressure-free. Advanced planning counselors are here to listen, answer questions, and help you explore your options at your own pace. They will meet you where you are and make sure your preferences are thoughtfully recorded.

Every family deserves compassionate care and affordable options, regardless of budget or preferences. Advance planning is simply about creating peace of mind — for yourself and for those who mean the most to you. ■

Information provided by Scott Eriksen, Director of Hamilton's Advanced Planning, Hamilton's Funeral Home, 605 Lyon St., Des Moines, 515-697-3670, [www.HamiltonsFuneralHome.com](http://www.HamiltonsFuneralHome.com).

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

## Upcoming in West Des Moines/Jordan Creek Living magazine:

**Fishing:** Share your fishing stories. Perhaps you fished with your father as a child, fished in an interesting place, participated in fishing competitions. If it is related to fishing, drop us a note! Email [tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com](mailto:tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com).

**Play sets, play houses and tree houses:** Share the stories of your memorable play sets, play houses and tree houses. Perhaps your family has play structures that entertains your kids for hours. Or maybe you have memories of the play house you enjoyed as a child. Big or small, if it creates happy times, let us know. Email [tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com](mailto:tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com).

## Gary's Ride

Saturday, May 16, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
Starting at Waukee Raccoon River Valley Trailhead, Waukee

This ride is a fundraiser to increase awareness of glioblastoma and support Richard Deming Cancer Center's terminal brain cancer patients through their Integrative Medicine program, Iowa Oncology Research Association for Glioblastoma Clinical Trials, MercyOne Des Moines Foundation for gift cards for terminal brain cancer patients and their families, and Gary's Compassion Fund for financial assistance for terminal brain cancer patients and their families. Help us to "pedal" forward in reaching the funding goal of \$65,000 and be the difference for these loved ones and their families afflicted by terminal brain cancer/Glioblastoma. The ride ends at Dallas Center downtown Main Street. Registration and information available at [garysrideiowa.org](http://garysrideiowa.org).

## Des Moines Art Center Museum Highlights Tour

Saturdays, 1-2 p.m.  
4700 Grand Ave., Des Moines

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

## Jordan House Tours

Fridays and Sundays, 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.

2001 Fuller Road, West Des Moines

Weekly guided tours are offered at the Jordan House. The cut off for purchasing tickets is noon Thursday for Friday tours and noon Friday for Sunday tours. If you have missed that cutoff, call 515-225-1286 to find out if walk-up tickets are available. To reserve a ticket, see the schedule and links at [www.wdmhs.org/openhousevisit/](http://www.wdmhs.org/openhousevisit/). All tours will be guided by a docent. Arrive at the Jordan House Museum at least 10 minutes before the tour begins. The tour will involve taking stairs to the basement and the second floor, as well as walking and standing for at least one hour. If you have a group of eight or more, call to schedule a private tour.



## Celebrate Spring in the Park

Water Works Park, 2201 George Flagg Parkway, Des Moines

**• Styx with special guest Cheap Trick:**  
Thursday, May 21, 6 p.m. Experience a legendary night of arena rock anthems, powerhouse vocals and nonstop hits from Styx with special guest Cheap Trick, two Rock and Roll Hall of Fame icons. From "Come Sail Away" and "Renegade" to "I Want You to Want Me" and "Surrender," this is classic rock at full throttle as the Willis Summer Series heats up. Tickets available at [www.ticketmaster.com/event/06006383E039973A](http://www.ticketmaster.com/event/06006383E039973A).

**• Live performances:** Monday, June 15, 6 p.m. The Kerry and Linda Killinger Foundation Community Series features live performances on the Killinger Family Stage throughout the summer. The Des Moines Performing Arts takes the stage in June, featuring a national touring act in the park. Stay tuned for the performance announcement. Learn more at [www.waterworkspark.org/events-in-the-park/community-series](http://www.waterworkspark.org/events-in-the-park/community-series).

## Registration for Hands-On History Camps open

Registration is now open for the 2026 Hands-On History Camps. Your 9- to 13-year-old will experience history in a unique way with the West Des Moines Historical Society. Get hands on with pioneer skills at the Jordan House and Bennett School: start a fire with flint, learn from Paleo Iowa, churn butter and more. Don't just read about the past, live it. Dates are June 15-19, July 6-10, and Aug. 10-14. There are only 20 openings per week, so register today: [www.wdm.iowa.gov/government/parks-recreation/program-registration](http://www.wdm.iowa.gov/government/parks-recreation/program-registration).



## CITYVIEW Midday Mixer

Saturday, May 30, 1-4 p.m.  
The District at Prairie Trail, S.W. District Drive, Ankeny

Enjoy summer cocktails to kick off the season. Check in is at El Presidente. Cost is \$25 for advance tickets, \$35 at the door. For tickets, scan the QR code.



## Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden Summer Camp Registration

909 Robert D. Ray Drive, Des Moines

Give your child a summer of discovery, creativity and outdoor adventure. These nature-based camps combine science, art, exploration and play in a safe, inspiring environment led by experienced educators. Perfect for students entering grades 1-5. Register at <https://dmbotanicalgarden.com>.

# EVENTS IN THE AREA

Check for cancellations

## The Iowa Files: A History Series

Community Room of the West Des Moines Public Library,  
4000 Mills Civic Parkway

The Iowa Files, an educational history lecture series, returns for its seventh year in 2025/2026. This joint West Des Moines Historical Society and West Des Moines Public Library program is free and open to the public, thanks to the generosity of West Des Moines Historical Society members, Bravo Greater Des Moines and the Friends Foundation of the West Des Moines Library. All programs are streamed on the WDMHS Facebook page and YouTube channel.

• **May 17: Villisca; Living With a Mystery.** On the morning of June 10, 1912, Josiah and Sarah Moore, along with their four children and two young overnight guests, were found brutally murdered in their home. Dr. Edgar V. Epperly has written dozens of articles and blog entries and appeared on CourtTV and other radio and television programs. He will be joined by filmmakers Kelly and Tammy Rundle, whose 2004 documentary explores the crime's aftermath in a small town.

## Levitt AMP Earlham Music Series 2026

### Food n' Drink Lineup

Sundays at 6 p.m.

Earlham City Park, Earlham

- **May 31:** Music: Olivia Fox, Michael Zellmer-McMahan. Food trucks: Karam's Grill, Deardorff Highland Cattle, Sabores De Mexico, Street Sweets, Jodee Sodees.
- **June 7:** Music: Denitia, Emma Butterworth. Food trucks: Hotel Luna, Off the Griddle, C'est La Crepe, Jodee Sodees.
- **June 14:** Music: Ozone Creations, Robert Deitch. Food trucks: Smokin' Bad Decisions, Iowa Noodz, Jack Frost Drink Lab.
- **June 21:** Music: Braided Janes, Soten Taiko Drums. Food trucks: Karam's Grill, Pho Wheels & Sushi, C'est La Crepe, Jodee Sodees.
- **June 28:** Music: Shannon Curfman, Iowa Military Veterans Band. Food trucks: Deardorff Highland Cattle, Sabores De Mexico, Zipp's Pizza, C'est La Crepe, Jack Frost Drink Lab.
- **July 12:** Music: The Elders, Banjokat. Food trucks: Hotel Luna, Snappy's BBQ, Street Sweets.
- **July 19:** Music: BYOBrass, Beth and Brandon. Food trucks: Hotsy Totsy, Pho Wheels & Sushi, Street Sweets, Jack Frost Drink Lab.
- **Aug. 2:** Music: Leon Timbo, Carol Montag Music. Food trucks: Hotsy Totsy, Sabores De Mexico, Street Sweets, Jack Frost Drink Lab.
- **Aug. 9:** Music: Newfound Road, Cedar County Cobras. Food trucks: Karam's Grill, Hotsy Totsy, C'est La Crepe.
- **Aug. 16:** Music: XOLEX, Bone People. Food trucks: Hotel Luna, Snappy's BBQ, Pho Wheels & Sushi, Street Sweets.

## Des Moines Downtown Farmers Market

Through Oct. 31, 7 a.m. to noon, 8 a.m. to noon in  
October

Historic Court Avenue District, Downtown Des Moines

The 2026 season will feature 305 vendors, including 43 new participants, with 75 produce and agriculture vendors highlighting the region's strong farming community. Vendors represent 74 cities across 42 Iowa counties, spanning 12 city blocks from Water Street to Fifth Street. For more information, visit [www.dsmpartnership.com/desmoinesfarmersmarket](http://www.dsmpartnership.com/desmoinesfarmersmarket).

## Dine & Dance with CultureALL

May 18 and June 5

Three owners of local ethnic restaurants are presenting community gatherings with the help of CultureALL. These cultural arts events pave the way for Iowans to feel more at home with their neighbors. Reserve your seat at [CultureALL.org/events](http://CultureALL.org/events).

- Monday, May 18, China Chef, 5010 S.W. Ninth St., Des Moines
- Friday, June 5, Mama Africa, location to be announced

## NAMI Iowa's Beautiful Minds

Thursday, May 21, 6-8:30 p.m.

The Tea Room, 713 Walnut St., Unit 600, Des Moines

In honor of Mental Health Awareness Month, NAMI Iowa will host a dinner and live entertainment fundraiser dedicated to breaking the stigma surrounding mental illness. This inspiring evening features powerful storytelling and performances that highlight the lived experiences of individuals navigating mental health challenges. Proceeds from this event directly support NAMI Iowa's education, advocacy and support programs serving communities across the state. Purchase tickets by scanning the QR code.



## Hoover on the Road Exhibit

Through May 31

Living History Farms, 11121 Hickman Road, Urbandale

Designed to introduce audiences across Iowa to the life and legacy of President Herbert Hoover, the exhibit highlights Hoover's remarkable journey from his humble beginnings in Iowa to the presidency, along with his lasting humanitarian impact around the world.

## Iowa Craft Brew Festival

Saturday, June 6, noon to 4 p.m.

Water Works Park, 2201 George Flagg Parkway, Des Moines

The Iowa Brewers Guild Iowa Craft Brew Festival encourages attendees to log off, raise a glass and enjoy an afternoon together in a relaxed outdoor setting. Each festival ticket includes unlimited samples, a commemorative tasting glass, and access to the festival grounds featuring shade tents, vendors, yard games and a variety of Iowa-based food trucks. The festival highlights the best in Iowa craft beer while also featuring Iowa craft cideries, wineries, distilleries and a growing selection of Iowa-produced non-alcoholic beverages. One hundred percent of festival revenue supports Iowa's craft beverage industry and the Iowa Brewers Guild's Brewed in Iowa campaign, which raises awareness about the economic and community impact of local breweries across the state. Tickets available at [www.iowacraftbrewfestival.com](http://www.iowacraftbrewfestival.com).

## Christine Rebet: Sound of Time

Through Aug. 23

Des Moines Art Center, 4700 Grand Ave., Des Moines

This survey exhibition presents five films made between 2015 and 2025 by Paris-based artist Christine Rebet, which play consecutively in the Pamela Bass-Bookey and Harry Bookey Gallery. Rebet has devoted her practice to the act of drawing, creating lush and labor-intensive hand-drawn animations marked by vivid color and lively images that change and morph alongside lyrical voice-over narrations. ■

# PRE-PLANNING key to estate administration

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're 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 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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## CITY of West Des Moines breaks ground on new fire and EMS station

The city of West Des Moines hosted a groundbreaking ceremony for a new fire and EMS station on April 24. This new facility is not just a building; it's a significant step toward enhancing the city's emergency response capabilities and supporting the continued growth of the community, officials said in a press release.

The new station is being constructed at 1650 S.E. Maffitt Lake Road. The groundbreaking included remarks from Mayor ProTem Doug Loots, City Manager Tom Hadden, Fire/EMS/Westcom Chief Craig Leu, and representatives from Turner Construction Company and Farnsworth Group.

This state-of-the-art facility will cover 15,288 square feet and will include modern apparatus bays, advanced safety features for firefighters and paramedics, and a flexible fitness space that can be expanded for more room when needed. Station 13 is expected to open in late 2027.

As the city continues to grow, the demand for essential emergency services increases as well. In 2025, the West Des Moines Fire/EMS Department saw a 5% rise in service calls compared to the previous year. This trend highlights the need for this station.

"This project is about planning for the future of West Des Moines," said City Manager Tom Hadden. "As our community grows, it is crucial we are prepared to respond quickly and effectively when our residents need us most."

Fire, EMS, and Westcom Chief Craig Leu emphasized the importance of this new station in improving service.

"Calls for service across the city have been steadily rising over the last several years," he explained. "This facility will allow us to better serve our community, reduce response times, and create a safer, more functional space for our dedicated firefighters and EMS personnel." ■

## ENERSON joins DMU Clinic - Physical Therapy

Ryan Enerson, PT, DPT, has joined the providers at the Des Moines University Clinic - Physical Therapy. Enerson will practice at the Des Moines University Clinic in the MidAmerican Energy Company RecPlex at 6500 Grand Ave., West Des Moines.



Enerson earned a Doctor of Physical Therapy degree from Des Moines University Medicine and Health Sciences in 2024, where he also received the DPT Service Award and Sandra Teague Memorial Scholarship. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in biological sciences education from North Dakota State University.

With clinical experience in sports injury management, orthopedics, post-operative rehabilitation and treating musculoskeletal injuries, vertigo and balance issues, Enerson brings a well-rounded skill set to the DMU Clinic - Physical Therapy. He is also certified in dry needling, an intervention that supports improved blood flow to underlying tissues, pain reduction and restoration of movement. He knows that, by eliminating or reducing his patients' pain, they can increase their activity levels and recover faster.

A standout track and field athlete and record holder, Enerson still finds time to coach and compete. His personal connection to sport fuels his passion for helping injured athletes return to peak performance and delivering individualized care for patients at all activity levels.

"I love solving problems," Enerson says. "PT is the perfect opportunity to do that in real time and in a meaningful way. Whether someone is working to return to sport or simply get back to what they love, we get to partner with them to make that happen."

From the initial evaluation through goal setting and treatment, Enerson emphasizes a collaborative approach, regularly engaging patients in their care with the question: "How are we going to get you back to doing what you want to do?" ■

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# YOUTH gymnasts win team titles and medals

Seven boys gymnasts from Chow's Gymnastics & Dance Institute in West Des Moines returned home this week as Western National Champions after a dominant performance at the 2026 USA Gymnastics Men's Development Program Western National Championships, held April 24-26 in Galveston, Texas.

The Chow's boys team competed at two competitive levels and won both. At Level 9, the team scored 210.65 to claim first place among 109 clubs. At Level 7, the team scored 209.95 to claim first place among 90 clubs. Combined, the seven athletes earned 35 medals: two team titles, three all-around gold medals, ten event gold medals, three all-around silver medals, 13 event silver medals, and four event bronze medals.

The 2026 USA Gymnastics Men's Development Program Western National Championships drew competitors from across the western United States. More than 1,500 male athletes competed across the Eastern and Western Championships combined. Qualification is earned through regional competition — gymnasts must advance through state and regional championships to earn a berth at the national level.

The competing athletes — Asher Ballard, Alexander Lazutkin, Emmett Bielski, Sawyer Baccam, Emmitt DeMoss, Merrit Akin and Jackson Wallin — range in age from 11 to 17. They are coached by Bob Gauthier at Chow's Gymnastics & Dance Institute in West Des Moines.

Individual highlights include Emmitt DeMoss winning the Level 9 all-around title with a score of 71.1; Merrit Akin taking silver in the Level 9 all-around and gold on still rings; and Jackson Wallin earning Level 9 all-around bronze. At Level 7, Asher Ballard, Alexander Lazutkin, and Emmett Bielski swept the top three all-around positions, with multiple event titles among them.

Men's artistic gymnastics involves competition on six apparatus: floor exercise, pommel horse, still rings, vault, parallel bars and high bar. The sport requires years of dedicated training beginning in early



Level 9 athletes winning honors: Emmitt DeMoss, Level 9 all-around title; Merrit Akin silver in all-around and gold on still rings; and Jackson Wallin, Level 9 all-around bronze.



Level 7 athletes were Asher Ballard, Alexander Lazutkin, Emmett Bielski and Sawyer Baccam.

childhood. Iowa has only a small number of competitive boys gymnastics programs, making a national championship result a significant achievement for the state.

The Chow's Boys Booster Club, a parent-led volunteer organization, supports the athletes year-round. ■

# DHL opens retail store in West Des Moines

DHL, the world's leading provider of international express shipping services, has recently expanded its extensive U.S. retail network by opening a new, DHL-owned and operated retail store at 338 Grand Ave. in West Des Moines. This DHL-branded ServicePoint is the company's third location in Iowa, providing customers with increased access to DHL's world-class shipping services.

The store is part of DHL's national retail expansion strategy to make international shipping more accessible to residents and businesses in high-growth local markets across the country.

Des Moines is an emerging logistics hub in the Midwest, strategically positioned to support efficient distribution across the central United States. The region's diverse and growing business community, spanning agriculture, advanced manufacturing, financial services, and a rapidly expanding e-commerce sector, is fueling increased demand for reliable global shipping solutions. This new DHL retail store will support consumer, B2C and B2B shipments, helping residents stay connected with family and business partners abroad, while enabling local businesses to ship with confidence worldwide and across the U.S.

"Given its central position in the U.S. distribution network and a business community that continues to grow and diversify, Des Moines represents a key priority market for DHL," said Aaron Gallagher, senior vice president of commercial at DHL Express U.S. "This new retail store reflects DHL's continued investment in the region, providing local businesses with nearby and trusted shipping options that connect them across the U.S. and around the world." ■

# RIBBON Cutting

West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Affinity Care of Iowa on April 2.



West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Affinity Care of Iowa, 4601 Westtown Parkway, Suite 100, on April 2.

Gared Hassell and Kyle Valois



Monica Boyles and Kyle Valois



Sean Lee, Gared Hassel and Jared Galligan



Chet Galetich, Lacey Galetich and Megan Frantum



Gabiella Drummondo and Isabella Lankford



Jeff Raines and Patrick Mullen



Alex Scharansky, Dan Smith and Nick Ohara



Scott Campney and Amanda Marean



Danielle Bloxham and Jay Mathes



Megan Frantum, Megan Ashley Tape and Lisa Odland

# OUT & ABOUT

# RIBBON

# Cutting

West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Discover Strength, 595 S. 60th St., on April 23.



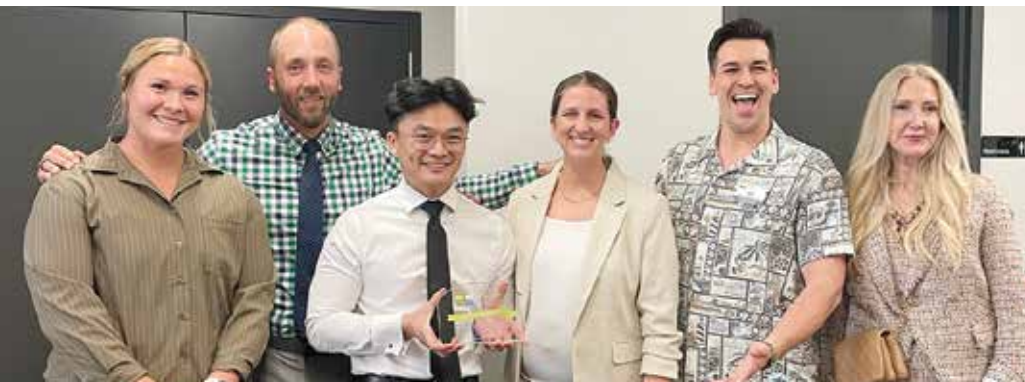
Greg Blumhagen and Ryan Cooley



Everett Mullican and Jay Mathes



Gared Hassel and Jared Galligan



Angie Mulvihill, Tyler Gustafson, Keyan Mayginnes, Jessica Gustafson, Gared Hassel and Katherine Harrington



Angie Mulvihill and Katherine Harrington



Sean Lee and James Eaton



Tony Klein and David Carlson



Connie Blodgett and Reonna Snyder

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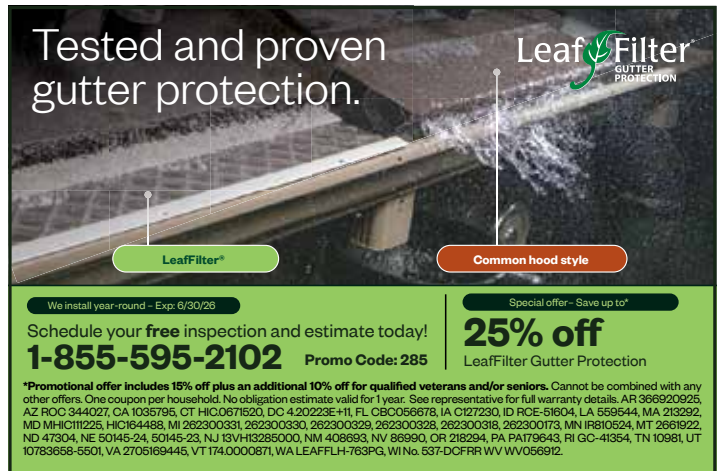
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