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JUNE 2026

# Living

MAGAZINE

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WELCOME

# BULLHEADS and bruised egos

I was introduced to fishing as a kid by my brother Steve along the riverbanks. At least we called it fishing. We eventually caught some fish — mostly bullheads — but I will get to those aquatic gremlins in a moment.

Our first gear consisted of cane poles strapped to our bicycles as we bumped our way to the river. Later, we upgraded to some of Dad's old rods and reels. To my brother's everlasting frustration, I became remarkably skilled at snagging lines.

We spent hot summer days dreaming about perch, bluegills and sunfish. Instead, we hauled in bullheads. Most fish would not win beauty contests, but bullheads look like they already lost one.

If you have never encountered a bullhead, consider yourself fortunate. The black bullhead is a North American catfish with a square tail and the survival instincts of a cockroach. Also known as fiddleheads, yellowbellies, chuckleheads, mud cats or hornpouts, they will eat practically anything. They thrive in warm, muddy, low-oxygen water that would make other fish file for relocation.

Apparently, there are three types of bullheads — black, brown and yellow. I think we mostly caught black bullheads, the largest and most common species. They live everywhere from muddy rivers to weed-choked ponds.

What I remember most is getting stung repeatedly by their fins while trying to unhook them. Years later, while fishing with my brother Brian, I started using a leather glove to handle bullheads. He still mocks me for it.

For fans of quirky Iowa landmarks, the world's largest bullhead sits in Crystal Lake. The giant fish statue, built in 1958 by Carl Frick and Rush Gabrilson and restored in 2007, stretches 12 feet long atop a pile of rocks. It may be the only bullhead in history people intentionally traveled to see.

Thankfully, fishing is about more than bullheads. It is about some great fish and is a fun activity, certainly, but it is also about slowing down, enjoying nature and spending time with family and friends — even if the fish are ugly and occasionally sting you. ■

### SHANE GOODMAN

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



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

**Kristine McDonald**  
Advertising Account Executive  
515-975-3543  
kristine@iowalivingmagazines.com



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# Hook, line and **LEGACY**

Passion for fishing connects generations of residents.



Jake Mitchell and his daughter, Maddy, enjoy fishing together.

**By Rachel Harrington**

A tug on the line, the splash of water and the anticipation of the unknown keep anglers coming back. But, for many local families, fishing means more than the catch, stories and memories. It has become a passion that spans generations.



Maddy Mitchell has learned to fish from her father and grandfather.

### Fishing buddy

Jake Mitchell has been a fisherman for as long as he can remember. His first memory is a fishing trip with his dad at Saylorville Lake.

“My dad thought I had hooked a log, but I ended up catching a 3-pound walleye on a Mickey rod from Walmart,” he recalls. “It is one of my first core memories.”

Mitchell says, growing up, he was the kid who woke up before everyone else so he could go fishing at his grandpa’s pond in Missouri. Those remain some of his fondest memories. It wasn’t long before he began fishing many of Iowa’s lakes and rivers, even before he could drive. In ponds and lakes around Ankeny, he mainly fishes for bluegill and bass.

“I have a couple of kayaks now,” he says, “but I mostly do shore fishing.”

Though his whole family enjoys fishing together — including his wife, Heidi; his children; and his father-in-law — one of his most frequent fishing buddies is his daughter, Maddy.

Maddy started fishing with her grandpa when she was about 4 years old.

“He would take me to his friend’s pond,” she says.

What she liked most about those early trips was getting to reel in catfish. Now, she enjoys fishing with her dad, too. While she would like



Brothers Harrison (left) and Sam Haugen enjoy friendly competition when they fish.

to go at least once a week, it usually ends up being once every month or two.

Mitchell says most of their fishing now takes place during ice fishing season.

“The biggest difference between summer and winter fishing is that summer is more flexible and offers more locations,” he explains. “Ice fishing offers cleaner water because there isn’t as much movement stirring things up.”

No matter where or when they fish, the father-daughter duo enjoys being outdoors, appreciating the solitude, family time and freedom it provides. They also enjoy meeting others who share their interest.

“We have met a lot of people while ice fishing,” Mitchell says. “More people do it than you might think.”

Mitchell says the two have plenty of fun together, including their share of shenanigans.

“One of my favorite memories is probably when I was 8 or 9 years old,” Maddy says. “I went out with Dad for the first time. I caught crawfish and actually got to fish.”

Today, she prefers catching catfish, while Mitchell especially enjoys catching walleye. When they bring home a catch, Mitchell fillets the fish and Maddy helps with the finishing touches. Then the whole family enjoys fish fries.

Teaching fishing tactics and skills has been a common theme for Mitchell.

“I’ve taught a lot of people better tactics and have learned myself how to be a more successful angler and the value of catch-and-release,” he says. “When I was first learning, my grandpa taught me a lot. I had flimsy rods from Walmart at that time, but I was catching 4- to 5-pound bass on them.”

The Mitchells say the memories are what make fishing worthwhile. They enjoy passing that love on to others and say family is what ties it all together.

### Time for brothers

About six years ago, two brothers, Harrison and Sam Haugen, went on an adventure that would lead to countless days of camaraderie and friendly competition. Their dad took them fishing while their family was living in a camper near Lake Icaria outside Corning.

Both Harrison and Sam like to fish whenever they get the chance. Sam says he enjoys fishing with his mom, dad, grandpas and two friends. Harrison says he most often fishes with his grandpa.

“He is the best fisherman because he knows the most tactics,” Harrison says.

Harrison enjoys being outdoors and catching big fish, while Sam likes trying new things — whether it’s a new fishing spot or a new species.

Like many brothers, they enjoy a little friendly competition.

“Sam is more patient, but Harrison catches more fish,” their mom, Bonnie Haugen, says.

Sam laughs and adds, “But I catch the bigger ones.”

Bonnie says Sam, 13, is a great big brother and willing to help Harrison, 11 — whether it is removing a stubborn fish from a hook or rebaiting a line.

Sam recently received a new rod and reel and is learning how to use it effectively. The boys enjoy visiting their favorite fishing spots. Harrison likes fishing at Simms Park.

“There are lots of bluegill there,” he says.

Sam prefers Criss Cove County Park outside Winterset or Pammel State Park.

They usually fish locally but have taken several trips. Harrison especially enjoyed fishing at the Lake of the Ozarks.

“The kids went on a fishing charter in Florida,” Bonnie says. “When Sam was reeling one in, a small shark came up and bit off half the fish.”

Sam recalls another memorable trip.

“A bass took my hook,” he says. “I reeled it

in, and we barely got a picture. As soon as we did, the fish started flopping and my hand got hooked.”

The brothers also have big plans for future trips.

“I want to go fishing in Texas and catch an alligator gar (one of North America’s largest freshwater fish),” Harrison says.

“I want to fish the Mississippi River and catch a blue catfish,” Sam adds.

Sam says he especially enjoys catching smallmouth bass because “they like to fight.

Harrison says his favorite saltwater fish to catch is sea trout, while his favorite freshwater fish is largemouth bass.

In the summer, the family often fishes from kayaks.

“We’re out in the middle of the water and have more luck than when we’re shore fishing,” Harrison says. “Fishing teaches us patience.”

Bonnie says she appreciates how fishing has drawn her sons outdoors.

“I’m for anything that gets my kids outside and away from electronics,” she adds. “Even when nothing is biting, they enjoy the time outdoors.”

## Going for the big fish

Ever since he could walk, Shawn Graham has been casting lines in search of big fish. As a child, his mom — now known as Mama Graham — took him fishing in local farm ponds for bullhead, bluegill and more.

When he fished with his grandparents, bullhead were a primary target. As he got older, he expanded to bass, crappie, walleye and larger bluegill.

His focus eventually shifted after a major catch.

“I used to fish for walleye, crappie and bass, but once I caught my first big flathead, that became my focus,” he says. “I realized that’s what I had truly been fishing for all along.”

That shift also changed his baiting practices. The fish he targets often eat what many anglers would consider a typical catch. Graham fishes for smaller species to use as bait, keeping them in a 100-gallon tank with a homemade 30-gallon filtration system in his garage.

“During the season, we try to keep around 200 bait fish in the tank — green sunfish,



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# FEATURE

bullheads, bluegill and small carp,” he says. “A friend recently told me he had limited out on crappie, perch and walleye. I told him that was great — but we use those for bait.”

Graham can often be found on or near a river. While he has learned from experienced anglers, he is largely self-taught.

“Time on the water is the best tactic,” he says. “You can’t catch fish from the couch. Even if you don’t catch anything, it’s still a good day because you’re out on the water.”

He often fishes with his wife, Kim. Together, they frequent the Raccoon, North, South, Middle and Des Moines rivers.

“Have you ever heard of a river rat? That’s what I am,” he says. “My wife and I go fishing nearly every night.”

Flathead catfish are his primary target, and he has long aimed to beat Iowa’s record of 81 pounds, set in 1958. So far, his personal best is a 43-pound fish.

“Everyone asks where I caught it,” he says. “I tell them, ‘Right in the mouth.’ I don’t give away my spots.”

The Grahams have also traveled in search of big catches. In Texas, they fished for



Shawn Graham enjoys fishing for the big catch. He uses the fish most people catch as bait.

alligator gar on the Trinity River during their honeymoon. They have also fished in St. Louis and with guides in Tennessee.

“We try to take a trip every year, though we haven’t in a couple of years,” he says.

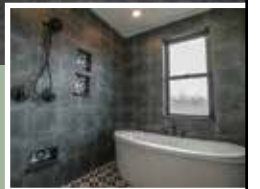
One of Graham’s favorite memories is

watching Kim catch her first big fish — a 36-pound flathead. Not long after, she landed a 29-inch, 4-pound walleye while using a large green sunfish as bait.

“We ate it the next day as fish sandwiches,” he says. “It was good eating.” ■

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## BEAUTY

By Annie Wiseman

### POST-OP hair changes

Surgery can place significant stress on the body, and one of the lesser-known side effects is temporary hair loss. This condition, often referred to as telogen effluvium, occurs when a physical or emotional stressor pushes more hair follicles than usual into the resting (telogen) phase. As a result, noticeable shedding can occur several weeks to a few months after the procedure.



The causes are multifactorial. Anesthesia, blood loss, medications and the body's inflammatory response can all disrupt the normal hair growth cycle. Additionally, the physiological stress of healing diverts nutrients and energy toward essential functions, sometimes at the expense of hair production. Nutritional deficiencies — particularly in iron, zinc and protein — may also contribute, especially if appetite is reduced during recovery.

Hormonal changes triggered by surgery can also impact hair health. In some cases, thyroid function or cortisol levels may shift temporarily, affecting hair growth patterns.

The good news is this typically isn't a permanent situation. Lean on your trusted stylist for direction and reassurance during this time. We've got you. ■

Information provided by Annie Wiseman, owner of Salon 107 and a licensed cosmetologist with 25 years of experience. 107 John Wayne Drive, Winterset, 515-462-4247, salon107style@gmail.com.

## HEALTH

By Dr. Amanda Queck

### CHIROPRACTIC and kids in sports

Youth athletics build confidence, discipline, teamwork and healthy habits — but they also place growing bodies under repeated physical stress. As children train harder and compete more often, parents are increasingly looking for safe, supportive ways to help young athletes stay healthy, recover faster and perform at their best. One option gaining attention is chiropractic care.



Chiropractic care focuses on supporting proper movement and function of the spine, joints and nervous system, which can play an important role in overall wellness and physical performance.

Chiropractic care may help reduce tension, improve circulation and support the body's natural recovery process.

Maintaining proper alignment and movement patterns may help lower the risk of strain and repetitive stress injuries.

When the body moves correctly, it can better absorb impact and distribute physical stress evenly. One of the biggest misconceptions is that chiropractic care is only needed after an injury occurs. In reality, many families include chiropractic visits as part of a proactive wellness routine.

Youth sports should be fun, rewarding and empowering. Helping kids care for their bodies early can encourage healthy habits that last a lifetime. ■

Information provided by Dr. Amanda Queck, D.C. Flourish Chiropractic & Wellness, 108 W. Court Ave., Winterset, 515-384-0360, www.flourishchiro.life.

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# MICROPLASTICS and oral health

Tiny plastic particles, called microplastics, have been found in air, water, and even in the human body. But can these microplastics affect your health? Let us look at the products used to keep your mouth healthy. Although many of these products may contain or be packaged in plastic, should you cut back on your toothbrushing and flossing? Not at all. We are still waiting for more studies on the relationship between microplastics and oral health care products. However, science suggests good oral health not only protects your mouth and teeth but can contribute to good overall health.

Good oral health care includes toothbrushing twice per day and cleaning between your teeth once per day with floss. It is not yet clear to what extent these products release microplastics or how much of the microplastics enter the body. Scientists are looking into these questions. If you want to cut back on your use of oral health care products that contain plastic, you have options. There are toothbrushes made of natural materials like wood or bamboo and



some that have natural bristles. The American Dental Association (ADA) recommends using a toothbrush with soft bristles to avoid irritating your gums. Natural dental floss options include materials like silk, bamboo or other plant-based blends. Toothpaste tablets are also available in glass jars.

Whether you are shopping for natural-based oral health care products or traditional ones, look for products that have earned the ADA Seal of Acceptance. Products that have earned the ADA Seal of Acceptance have been found to be safe and effective, according to ADA standards, when used as directed. A list of products that have earned the ADA Seal of Acceptance is available on the ADA website (ADA.org/sealproducts).

Studies are still needed on microplastics and the effect they might have on health, but there is solid research on the importance of good oral health. Talk to your dentist if you have questions about keeping your mouth healthy. ■

Information provided by Dr. Jason Phelps, Winterset Dental, 225 Wambold Drive, Winterset, 515-462-5755, Instagram: dr.\_jason\_phelps. Source: Journal of the American Dental Association.

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# WHOSE insurance pays when a neighbor's tree falls?

After several recent storms across Iowa, many homeowners have found themselves asking the same question: If my neighbor's tree falls on my house or car, whose insurance covers the damage?



Most people are surprised to learn that, in most cases, it is not the tree owner's insurance that pays.

Generally, insurance follows the property that was damaged — not necessarily the property where the tree originated. That means, if your neighbor's healthy tree falls onto your garage during a windstorm, your own homeowners insurance policy would typically cover the damage to your home. If the tree lands on your vehicle, your auto policy's comprehensive coverage would usually apply.

Here's an example: A strong thunderstorm moves through overnight. A large healthy oak tree from your neighbor's yard crashes onto your roof. Even though the tree belonged to the neighbor, your homeowners insurance would normally pay for repairs to your home, minus your deductible. The storm is considered an "act of nature," and there was no negligence involved.

The same principle applies to vehicles. If a tree falls on your parked car during a storm, your auto insurance would respond if you carry comprehensive coverage.

However, there are situations where the tree owner can be held responsible.

The key issue becomes negligence. If the tree owner knew — or reasonably should have known — that the tree was dangerous and failed to address it, their liability coverage may come into play.

For example, imagine a homeowner has a large dead tree leaning toward a neighbor's property. The neighbor becomes concerned and sends a written letter or email explaining that the tree appears rotten and could cause damage if it falls. The homeowner ignores the warning and takes no action. Months later, the tree falls and damages the neighbor's home.

In a case like this, the damaged homeowner may have a much stronger argument that the tree owner was negligent. In fact, we have seen situations where written documentation helped the affected homeowner successfully recover damages from the tree owner's insurance policy.

This is why documentation matters. If you notice a neighbor's tree appears dead, damaged or unsafe, politely bringing it to their attention in writing can be important. Photos, emails or letters may help establish that the hazard was known before the loss occurred.

The best advice? Maintain your trees, inspect them regularly, and address obvious hazards before storms arrive. A little prevention can save everyone a major headache later. ■

Information provided by Eric Johnson, IFG Insurance, 224 E. Highway 92, Suite B, Winterset, 515-462-4553.



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# AN UNEXPECTED path

Hall finds purpose in classroom.

Teaching was not on Amy Hall's radar growing up. She wanted to be a news broadcaster. Her mom even helped her write a letter to a popular news anchor at the time, inquiring about the job.



Amy Hall taught kindergarten for 25 years at Winterset Elementary before switching to second grade two years ago.

"When she wrote me back, she said there was a lot of journalism involved, so I decided that wasn't for me," Hall says. "I went to college as an 'exploring' student and didn't know what I wanted to do. When I really thought about different professions, I realized I had always loved school and my teachers. I enjoyed doing 'teacher things.'"

Hall was a high school helper in a Spanish class at Martensdale and later tutored students in college. She also was a nanny for a family the summer before she started college and enjoyed activities with the children and teaching them.

"I decided I was going to try education," Hall says. "I fell in love and knew it was the right fit for me from the first education class I took in college. It felt very natural to me, and I couldn't wait to get into classrooms to work with kids."

Hall attended college and graduated with a degree in elementary education with an emphasis in early childhood and a minor in Spanish. She landed her first teaching position at Emerson Hough in Newton teaching kindergarten for one year. When a position opened at Winterset Elementary, she applied and was offered the kindergarten role starting in the fall of 2000.

Hall remained in that position for 25 years before switching to second grade two years ago.

"The thing I enjoy most about teaching is the relationships with the kids, families, colleagues and community," Hall says. "I love the kids so much. They bring me joy and appreciation every day. I have always loved going to work. It doesn't seem like a job to me — it is a blessing that I get to do what I do every day."

In fact, she tells her husband, Rob, every year that her current class is her favorite.

One of her favorite memories was the "dirt file" at an end-of-the-year breakfast, when former principal Gary Anker shared a file full of humorous moments that staff had submitted throughout the year. Awards were given out, and the experience brought a lot of joy.

"It was a great ending to the year," Hall says. "It was a way to celebrate all of the hard work we had done together. I may have gotten a few of those famous awards."

Hall says the letters, emails, cards and pictures from students hold special meaning.

"I have a box full of them and will get them out and reminisce, thinking about each and every one of those students and families," she says. ■



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## REAL ESTATE

By Jennifer Stover

### SUMMER outdoor tips

Looking to spruce up your outdoor space right before summer? Wanting to host gatherings in your outdoor space but don't know where to start? Let's go over some quick tips and tricks that won't break the bank to transform your backyard into the spot of the summer. First, you want to start with a full deep clean. As we know, in Iowa, winters can be long, and springs can be muddy; it's important to do an overall check of your outdoor area before adding anything new.



Powerwash the deck, look for any cracks or damage that should be repaired, scrub down the seating and tables, and look for things like bird nests that could be hiding in your outdoor area. Next, one of the fastest ways to make a big change is by adding textiles. Outdoor rugs, vibrant pillows and a mix of patterns will make your guests feel at home in your outdoor space. Now, you can add some lighting. Lighting should be placed strategically in your outdoor setup. Use light to create layers and dimension in the backyard. String them on the fence, in the garden, or on the patio. Using light can help to elevate your spot into more uses, such as hosting a night dinner party or a bonfire with your neighbors. There is plenty more where this list came from, and the opportunities for upgrades are endless. Use this summer to create your dream outdoor space. ■

Information provided by Jennifer Stover, 515-480-3389, Madison County Realty, 65 W. Jefferson St., Winterset, [jenniferstover@madisoncountyrealty.com](mailto:jenniferstover@madisoncountyrealty.com). Licensed in Iowa.

## AUTOMOTIVE

By Dawn Lauer

### MAINTENANCE improves fuel economy

Rising fuel prices remain a concern for drivers throughout the summer, especially with vacation travel season ramping up. Fortunately, a few simple automotive maintenance steps can improve fuel economy and reduce trips to the pump.



One of the most important services for fuel efficiency is routine oil changes. Clean oil reduces engine friction and helps internal components operate smoothly, improving engine performance.

Tire maintenance is another major factor in gas mileage. Underinflated tires create additional rolling resistance, forcing the engine to use more energy to move the vehicle. Drivers should regularly check tire pressure, especially during hot summer months when temperatures fluctuate.

Cabin and engine air filters also deserve attention. A clogged engine air filter can restrict airflow and reduce fuel efficiency, while a dirty cabin filter can impact airflow inside the vehicle and place additional strain on the air conditioning system during summer heat. Replacing filters at recommended intervals helps maintain performance and comfort.

Finally, worn spark plugs can lead to engine misfires and poor combustion, causing reduced fuel economy and sluggish performance. Replacing spark plugs helps engines run efficiently and reliably.

Preventative maintenance not only improves gas mileage but also helps drivers avoid costly repairs in the future. ■

Information provided by Dawn Lauer, marketing specialist, Quality Car Care, 1012 N. 10th St., Winterset, 515-462-1035.

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# THINKING about retirement in the next 5-10 years? Start here

Retirement doesn't usually feel real — until it suddenly does.

If you're within 5-10 years of stepping away from full-time work, this is one of the most important financial windows you'll have. Not because you need to overhaul everything, but because the decisions you make now carry more weight than ever before.



At this stage, it starts with clarity. What does retirement actually look like for you? When do you want to retire, and what kind of lifestyle do you expect? Having a general picture of your timeline and spending helps guide every other decision.

Next, take a close look at your savings. These are often your highest earning years, which means they are also your most powerful for building momentum. Even small increases in contributions can make a meaningful difference.

Your investment strategy should also reflect your timeline. As retirement approaches, it becomes less about chasing growth and more about balancing growth with stability. The goal isn't to avoid risk entirely but to make sure your level of risk matches how soon you'll need to rely on your assets.

Just as important is understanding how your money will turn into income. Retirement isn't just about what you've saved, it is about how those savings will support you over time. Thinking through income sources, withdrawal strategies and longevity can help create confidence in your plan.

Finally, consider the gaps that often get overlooked: healthcare costs, taxes and key timing decisions like Social Security. These details can have a significant impact if they are not addressed early.

You don't need to solve everything at once. But taking the time to understand where you stand — and making a few thoughtful adjustments — can make the transition into retirement feel more intentional and much less uncertain. ■

Information provided by Jason Kleemeier, One Wealth, 224 E. Highway 92, Suite B, Winterset, IA 50273, 515-462-4608. Jason Kleemeier is a registered representative offering securing through Cetera Wealth Services LLC, member FINRA/SIPC. Advisory Services offered through Cetera Investment Advisers LLC, a registered investment adviser. Cetera is under separate ownership from any other named entity. Cetera Wealth Services, LLC exclusively provides investment products and services through its representatives. Although Cetera does not provide tax or legal advice, or supervise tax, accounting or legal services, Cetera representatives may offer these services through their independent outside business. This information is not intended as tax or legal advice.

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# TIPS for container gardening success

Add color and seasonal interest throughout the landscape with container gardens. Set them in garden beds to add vertical interest, place pots of edible plants on a patio, deck or balcony for convenient picking and include pollinator-friendly plants in containers to attract and support pollinators.

Keep containers looking their best with proper selection, planting and care. As always, select plants suited to the growing conditions and combine those that require the same care and growing conditions. Drought-tolerant plants are more forgiving once established if looking to reduce maintenance.

Consider function as well as beauty when selecting containers. Make sure the container has drainage holes, helping prevent waterlogged soil that can lead to root rot. If the pot lacks drainage holes, try double potting. Place plants in a pot, like a nursery pot with drainage holes. Set this pot on a layer of pebbles in the pot that lacks drainage holes. The pebbles elevate the pot of plants above excess water that may collect. Check throughout the growing season and pour excess water out of the decorative pot as needed.

Fill containers with a quality potting mix that provides adequate drainage yet retains moisture. Every gardener seems to have a favorite

or more often struggles to find one that works best for them. Check the label to see what the bag contains and recommendations for its use. Planting mixes usually contain peatmoss, coir and or compost as well as vermiculate, perlite or rice hulls for drainage. Check to see if it is sterilized to kill weed seeds and pests.

Proper watering and fertilization are key to keeping plants alive and healthy. Check the potting mix daily and water thoroughly as needed for the plants growing. Reduce frequency with the help of self-watering containers with water reservoirs that provide water over a longer period. Mulching the soil in containers helps to conserve moisture and irrigation systems with timers make it much easier.

Fertilize planters as needed. A slow-release low nitrogen fertilizer used at planting and again as needed and according to label directions can greatly reduce time spent fertilizing. These fertilizers provide small amounts of nutrients over a longer period. Those who prefer to be a bit more hands-on can use a liquid fertilizer applied regularly throughout the season according to the label directions.

Despite a gardener's best effort, insects and diseases can impact the health and beauty of planters. Regularly check plants for any signs of insects, their damage and disease. Early intervention makes it easier to

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# GARDENING

manage the problem and helps minimize the damage.

Remove small populations of insects and discolored leaves by hand. Use a garden hose and apply a strong blast of water to help dislodge aphids and mites. Follow this up, if needed, with an organic lightweight horticulture oil like Summit Year-Round Spray Oil (SummitResponsibleSolutions.com). These products kill the insects they contact but won't harm beneficial insects that land on a plant that has been treated. It is also effective against powdery mildew and certain other diseases. As always, read and follow label directions for the most effective and safest control.

Adjust container garden designs and maintenance to boost their beauty with minimal effort. Then enjoy a growing season of benefits these planters provide. ■

Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including the "Midwest Gardener's Handbook, 2nd Edition" and "Small Space Gardening." She hosts The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" instant video series and the nationally syndicated Melinda's Garden Moment radio program. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for Birds & Blooms magazine and was commissioned by Summit Responsible Solutions for her expertise to write this article. Myers' website is [www.MelindaMyers.com](http://www.MelindaMyers.com).



Photo by Melinda Myers

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# RHUBARB season just got crispy

As a kid, you could find me following my mother around the yard while she planted, weeded and tended to her flowers and plants. Our backyard wasn't overflowing with produce — just a small strawberry patch lined with rhubarb. Back then, I wasn't a fan. Rhubarb was a little too bold for my taste. But, over time, especially when paired with apples and a bit of sugar, it won me over. Now, I look forward to it every year.



Rhubarb is also one of the easiest and most rewarding plants to grow. Give it a sunny spot — ideally on the south side of your house or garage — and it will thrive with very little fuss.

This crisp is inspired by my mother's classic apple crisp. Sort of. Like my mother, I don't really measure ingredients for these kinds of treats, which has made sharing the recipe a bit tricky over the years. Sometimes I add nuts or oatmeal. Sometimes I mix in apples. But one thing never changes: a generous, crispy crumble topping. If it's not crisp, we're not doing it right.

So, for the sake of sharing (and finally having something more useful to say than "just eyeball it"), I actually paid attention while making it this time. What you will find here is my best attempt at a real recipe. That said... I probably added a little extra of something along the way. I encourage you to do the same. That's where the magic happens. ■

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

## Jolene's Rhubarb Crisp

**INGREDIENTS:**

- 5 cups of rhubarb
- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/3 cup oatmeal
- 1/3 cup chopped pecans
- 1/2 cup butter, room temperature (if it gets too dry, add a little more butter)



**DIRECTIONS:**

- Chop rhubarb in half inch pieces and place into an 8x8-inch dish. In a separate bowl, mix dry ingredients, then add butter. Cut butter into the dry ingredients until crumbly. Spread crumble mixture over rhubarb. Bake uncovered at 350 F for 45 minutes. Serve warm with vanilla ice cream. ■

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The **June 2017 Winterset Living** magazine featured the story, "In the garden: Winterset gardeners transform simple yards into tapestries of life." The cover photo was of Bill and Tiffany Jensen and their children, Michael, Elsie and Evan. Also included were Sue Brakhane sharing a composting bin with the children at St. Paul Lutheran at a gardening class and Sally Morris and Nathan Romine preparing seeds for the Winterset Library's seed catalog. ■



By David Negley

**AMENDING a tax return**

One problem with income taxes is that "you don't know what you don't know." With a major piece of legislation like last year's One Big Beautiful Bill, how are 175 million tax filers informed of the impacts to their specific situation?



If you learn of a provision you didn't take advantage of in your original 2025 filing, amending your return is available. Many factors inform whether an amendment is worth its trouble.

**No Tax On Tips:** Tip information could typically be found on your W2, in Boxes 7 and 8. This provision has some limitations, but most people don't encounter them.

**No Tax On Overtime:** Despite this heading, this only applies to the "half" of "time-and-a-half." Other limits apply, and this deduction is further complicated by not being figured on your 2025 W2.

**Deduction for Auto Loan Interest:** Briefly, it must be on a brand-new vehicle whose final production occurred in the USA. This site can help you find that out: [vpic.nhtsa.dot.gov/decoder/](http://vpic.nhtsa.dot.gov/decoder/)

**Enhanced Deduction for Seniors:** The proposed "no tax on Social Security" was compromised to a \$6,000 deduction, subject to limitations, for those who reached age 65 by Jan. 1, 2025.

See more at [irs.gov/newsroom/one-big-beautiful-bill-provisions](http://irs.gov/newsroom/one-big-beautiful-bill-provisions). ■

Information provided by David Negley, CPA, Negley Tax & Consulting LLC, 224 E. Highway 92, Suite B, Winterset, 515-462-4553, [negleytax@negleytax.com](mailto:negleytax@negleytax.com). This article is for general informational purposes only and does not constitute tax, legal or professional advice.

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1. Within the last week
2. Within the last month
3. Last year
4. It's been quite awhile
5. I've never fished

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**RESULTS FROM MAY POLL: What have you done most since the price of gas has gone up?**



Driven less ..... 40%  
 Cut back on "extras" ..... 30%  
 Fallen behind on essentials..... 30%  
 Nothing, the prices haven't affected me..... 0%



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# PHYSICS DAY uses data from Adventureland rides

Lessons go beyond worksheets to add fun to calculations.



Physics students collected and analyzed data during a day at Adventureland.

This year marked the beginning of a new collaborative approach for Iowa schools at Adventureland Resort with the launch of Physics Day. The goal was to move beyond worksheets and create an authentic experience where students could use real data from real rides to test their understanding of physics.

The project was a collaboration among university professors, science education leaders, members of the Governor's STEM Council, industry professionals and classroom teachers. Organizers designed an event that was rigorous enough for AP Physics students but also flexible enough that introductory students could participate meaningfully. The pilot event took place in early May, a perfect time since most physics courses were wrapping up major content, and students could apply their classroom knowledge in a theme-park setting.

"Experiences like this help students see that physics is not just equations on a worksheet. Physics explains the real world around them.

Students often memorize formulas in class, but when they physically feel forces on a ride and then see those forces appear in their own graphs later, the concepts become much more meaningful and memorable," Tony McCutchan, Winterset High School physics teacher and Physics Day organizer, says.

One of the most unique aspects of Physics Day is that students collected acceleration data using smartphone sensors while riding rollercoasters. This information is used to analyze the ride afterward. For example, students could compare roller coaster designs and how they manage forces, analyze acceleration graphs from rides like the Tornado, Monster or Outlaw, compare their theoretical predictions to real-world results, and more.

"One of the biggest lessons students learn during Physics Day is that science is not about getting perfect answers immediately. It is about building models, testing ideas, analyzing evidence and improving understanding over

time. That process is messy sometimes — and that is exactly what makes it real," McCutchan says.

Going forward, one of the major goals of Physics Day is helping students use modern tools, including AI, responsibly and effectively as learning partners rather than shortcuts. Future plans include more structured engineering and data analysis challenges, better visualization tools for ride data, additional teacher training opportunities and more.

The organizers hope Physics Day will continue to grow into an annual Iowa event, and they hope to continue building relationships between schools, higher education and industry so students can see how the skills they are developing in class apply to engineering, data science, manufacturing and technology careers.

"The long-term vision is to make Physics Day not just a field trip, but a statewide STEM learning experience that students remember years later," McCutchan says. ■

# WHY ADVERTISING is essential for small business growth and success

Small businesses often operate with limited resources, tight margins and strong local competition. In that environment, advertising is not a luxury — it's a necessity for survival and growth. Without it, even the best products or services can remain invisible to potential customers.



One of the primary reasons small businesses should advertise is to build awareness. Unlike large, established brands, small businesses usually lack name recognition. Advertising helps introduce the business to new audiences and reminds existing customers that it exists. Consistent visibility keeps a business top of mind when customers are ready to buy.

Advertising also plays a critical role in establishing credibility. Consumers tend to trust businesses they see regularly. A well-crafted advertisement signals professionalism and stability, even for a newer company. When potential customers encounter a business multiple times, they are more likely to view it as legitimate and reliable.

Advertising also drives sales by creating urgency and highlighting value. Promotions, limited-time offers and clear messaging can motivate customers to take action. Without advertising, potential buyers may

never learn about special deals or unique selling points that differentiate a business from competitors. In crowded markets, staying silent often means losing customers to more visible competitors.

In addition, advertising supports long-term growth. It's not just about immediate sales; it's about building a brand. Over time, consistent messaging shapes how customers perceive a business — its personality, values and quality. This brand identity can become a powerful asset, helping small businesses compete with larger companies that may have more resources but less personal connection with customers.

Finally, advertising allows small businesses to adapt and learn. By tracking which campaigns perform best, business owners gain insights into customer preferences and behavior. This data can inform not only future marketing efforts but also product development, pricing strategies and customer service improvements.

In short, advertising gives small businesses a voice in a competitive marketplace. It increases visibility, builds trust, drives sales and supports long-term success. Without it, even the most promising small business risks being overlooked. ■

Information provided by Kristine McDonald, Advertising Account Executive, Big Green Umbrella Media, 8101 Birchwood Court, Suite D, Johnston, Iowa 50131, 515-975-3543, kristine@iowalivingmagazines.com.

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## Upcoming in Winterset Living magazine:

**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 entertain 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).

**Hobby photographers:** Do you enjoy the hobby of photography? Perhaps you take wildlife photos or capture scenic scenes. Maybe you enter your photos in the county or state fair. Maybe you have taken a photography class. Tell us why you enjoy the hobby and share some of your favorite shots. Email [tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com](mailto:tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com).

## Madison County Conservation Center events

Madison County Conservation Center, 2508 Pammel Park Road, Winterset

The public is invited to these exciting events at the new Madison County Conservation Center in Pammel Park.

### Live Wild 2026 Speaker Series

- **Tuesday, July 7:** Barn Owls with Tanner Donovan and Jessie Lowry
- **Tuesday, Aug. 4:** Dog Training with Angela Tague
- **Tuesday, Sept. 1:** Lead-Free Hunt with Adam Janke
- **Tuesday, Oct. 6:** Madison County Hunt with Catherine Cummings
- **Tuesday, Nov. 3:** Basket Weaving with Amy Warnke
- **Tuesday, Dec. 1:** Northern Lights with Jess Lancial

First Tuesdays of the month, free will donation. Proceeds will be equally shared between Madison County Foundation for Environmental Education and an organization of the speaker's choice.

## Madison County Conservation Summer Camps

Registration is open for Madison County Conservation Summer Camps, including some new camps this year. Register at [www.mycountyparks.com](http://www.mycountyparks.com). Be sure to select "Madison County."

## Wednesday Winterset Wellness Support

Second and fourth Wednesdays, 5:30 p.m. Winterset Public Library, 23 N. Second St.

A healthy lifestyle is easier to achieve when you have support. This group meets every two weeks, which gives each person enough time to work on their goals in between meetings and discover what obstacles or achievements they encounter. Participants can share what has worked for them and find ways to get active and eat healthy together.



## CITYVIEW's Summer Stirs

Friday, June 26, Downtown Des Moines  
Friday, July 31, Des Moines East Village

CITYVIEW's traveling cocktail parties return in 2026. For \$25 advance ticket, sample 10 summer cocktails at downtown bars and restaurants. Cost is \$35 at the door. For information and tickets, visit <https://summerstirs.dmcityview.com>.

## Madison County Women's Giving Circle

Tuesday, June 23, 6-7 p.m. County Conservation Building, 2508 Pammel Park Trail, Winterset

The Madison County Women's Giving Circle second quarter meeting will be held Tuesday, June 23, at the new County Conservation building in Pammel Park. Attendees are welcome to arrive at 5 p.m. to tour the new Conservation Building before the meeting.

Because the Harmon Tunnel and Main Road through Pammel Park will be closed until further notice due to road work in progress, the best way to access the conservation center is to take Highway 169 South from the four-way stop west of Winterset, then turn west on Carver Road, then north on Pammel Park Trail to reach the south park entrance.

Anyone interested joining or learning more about the organization is welcome to attend.

Local charitable 501(C)(3) tax-exempt organizations that wish to present information about their projects for supporting women and children in Madison County should arrive by 5:30 p.m. to register. When registering to present, provide a brief description of the project; tax-exempt status; and email address and telephone number.

Three organizations will be selected by a drawing to present at the meeting. Each will be given four minutes to present and four minutes to answer questions. One of the three non-profits will be elected by vote to receive this quarter's donations. If more than three nonprofits wish to present, the rest will each have two minutes to tell us about their project.

## 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.

# EVENTS IN THE AREA

Be sure to check for cancellations



## Des Moines Downtown Farmers Market

Saturdays through Oct. 31, 7 a.m. to noon, 8 a.m. to noon in October Historic Court District, Downtown Des Moines

The 2026 season of the Downtown Des Moines Farmers Market 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).

## Ongoing Winterset Public Library programs

123 N. Second St.

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

- **Mah Jongg**, every Saturday, 9:30 a.m. Learn to play this ancient, intriguing and challenging tile game. All necessary items will be provided free; all you need is a desire to learn. Registration required.
- **Story Time**, Wednesdays, 10-10:30 a.m. During this 30-minute program, children will discover books, songs, rhymes and movement activities while building language and literacy skills. Ages 3 and older.
- **Let's Play Cribbage**, Wednesdays, 2-4 p.m.
- **Adult Game Day**, Tuesdays at 1:30 p.m. Many games to choose from or bring your own. Snacks are welcome. Free and no registration required.
- **Messy Munchkins**, Thursdays, 10:15 a.m. to noon. Children 0-5 with an adult. No registration required.
- **Lego Club**, ages 8-12, third Thursday of the month, 3:30-4:30 p.m. Legos provided. Do not bring your own. No registration required.
- **Get Fit with Geri-Fit**, Tuesdays and Fridays, no registration required. A strength-training class for older adults.
- **Acoustic Jam**, first Friday of the month, 1-4 p.m.
- **Game On!** Mondays, 3-5 p.m., ages 10 and older. No registration required. Behavior policies must be followed.
- **Chess Club**, Tuesdays, 5-7 p.m. All ages welcome. No experience necessary. Boards and sets available.
- **Morning Tai Chi**, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, 9 a.m. Follow Dr. Paul Lam's DVDs with stretching followed by the 12 forms and cool down exercises. Sessions are 30-45 minutes.

## Music In The Garden

Thursdays, June 4 to Aug. 20, doors open at 6 p.m., concerts 6:30-8:30 p.m. Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden, 909 Robert D. Ray Drive, Des Moines

Music in the Garden is one of Des Moines' premier outdoor concert series, offering a truly unique atmosphere. Set within the naturally beautiful surroundings of the garden, each evening blends live music, nature and community into an unforgettable experience. Whether you prefer to sit back and relax, get up and dance, or simply soak in the scenery, you'll enjoy great music surrounded by the beauty of the garden. See the lineup and get tickets by scanning the QR code.



## 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). ■

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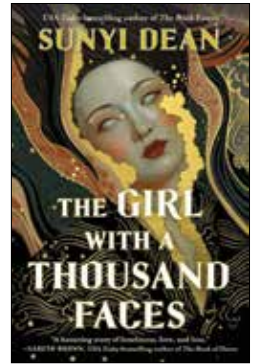
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**'The Girl With A Thousand Faces'**

Sunyi Dean already had me locked into her twisted narratives with "The Book Eaters" and her endlessly inventive sentences, but this one hit differently. It is set in Kowloon in 1970s Hong Kong, one of the most fascinating places in human history, and she absolutely uses that setting. Every back alley and stacked-high corridor feels alive, grimy and slightly threatening.

Mercy Chan is a ghost talker working for the local triad. Having pieced together a life from a blank slate, she washed up on shore with no past and no memories. Still, she built something out of nothing until a malevolent spirit starts to make everything difficult. What follows is part gothic mystery, part war story, part meditation on grief and generational trauma told in a dizzying series of narratives and nightmares.

Ghosts, spirit cats and monsters are one thing, but what really sealed this for me was the human horror underpinning it all. The Japanese occupation, the things families carry and bury and pass down without meaning to. This is a story about women who will not forgive and women who remember everything, whether they want to or not. ■ — Review by Julie Goodrich



By Sunyi Dean  
5/5/26  
320 pages  
\$29.99  
Tor Publishing

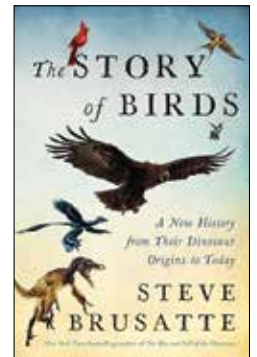
**'The Story of Birds: A New History from Their Dinosaur Origins to the Present'**

Stephen Brusatte is the paleontologist behind several brilliant popular science books that I have adored over the last decade. He has this gift for making deep time feel visceral and immediate and absolutely enthralling. He traces birds across 150 million years of history, from small feathered theropods all the way to hummingbirds hovering at your feeder, and somehow it never once feels like a textbook. It feels like a friend who just got back from the Cretaceous and cannot wait to tell you everything.

And the creatures. Oh, the creatures. Penguin-sized gorillas. Elephant birds with eggs the size of watermelons. Demon ducks that are heavier than cows. Science is so strange and so wonderful, and Brusatte just leans all the way in. I love that his enthusiasm just leaps off the page.

My favorite part of books that teach facts and wonder in equal measure is how they inevitably force me to see the world differently. There is always an extra glow for me when I know more about something, and these days the robins and the finches are even more special. I highly recommend this for anyone looking for some awe. ■

— Review by Julie Goodrich



By Stephen Brusatte  
4/28/26  
448 page  
\$35  
Mariner Books



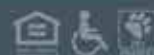
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# WINE WALK and Car Show

The Wine Walk and Car Show were held May 9 in Winterset.



Isolde Hatch and Sylvia Moody



Leslie Allen, Sarah Pugh and Susan McDonald



Andy Thompson, Jim Kinser and Ethan Thompson



Wade Porter, Steve Hartman and Howard Johnson



Megan Lee, Logan Bowman and Jesse Bowman



Laressa Carney, Adriana Carney and Andrew Faith



Trina Trindle



Jason Kems



Scott McLin and Honor McLin



Stephanie Gerleman

# OUT & ABOUT



Rose Boyle and Kevin Fifo



Lori and Megan Haynes



Amy Durnan



Bill Moody and Larry Guth



Michael Hanson



Jeff Hilsabeck and Keith Monckton



Brad and Tammy VanHorn and Jean Thompson



Dana, Melissa and Debbie Taylor



Jen Dieter and Jane Dawson



Eastyn Sick



Tony Jacobson and Jeanne Jacobson

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