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JUNE 2026

# Living

MAGAZINE

## CELEBRATE THE

# Fourth of July

Hometown fun makes holiday special in Norwalk

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**FDIC**

# WELCOME

## FUNNEL cakes, chaos and community

There is nothing quite like a community festival to remind us that humanity is chaotic, charming and deeply committed to eating fried food outdoors.

On paper, festivals sound wholesome — live music, local vendors, smiling families. In reality, they are a delightful mash-up of sunburns, long lines and someone’s uncle absolutely destroying a karaoke rendition of a 1980s power ballad. And yet, we keep coming back.

Maybe it is because community festivals turn ordinary places into something slightly magical. Suddenly they are packed with food trucks, handmade jewelry and a suspiciously competitive pie-eating contest.

The real entertainment, though, is the people. Festivals are one of the few places where strangers will strike up a conversation with others for no reason at all.

And then there is the food — arguably the main event. Community festivals operate under a simple rule that, if it can be fried, it will be fried. Oreos? Fried. Pickles? Fried. Possibly things that were never meant to be fried? Absolutely fried.

Music adds another layer. Local bands take the stage and give it everything they have got. And there is something refreshing about a performance where the lead singer might also be your dentist.

Of course, no festival is complete without at least one mildly chaotic moment. Maybe it is a sudden rain shower that sends everyone scrambling under tents. Maybe it is a child covered head to toe in cotton candy. Maybe it is you, realizing you have been walking around for an hour with powdered sugar on your face.

In the end, community festivals are messy, loud and a little ridiculous, but that’s exactly why they matter. They pull people out of their routines and into shared space, where the goal isn’t productivity or efficiency, but simply being there.

You may leave feeling slightly tired, possibly sticky and definitely overfed. But you also leave with a feeling that, for a few hours, you were part of something fun, spontaneous and genuinely human. ■



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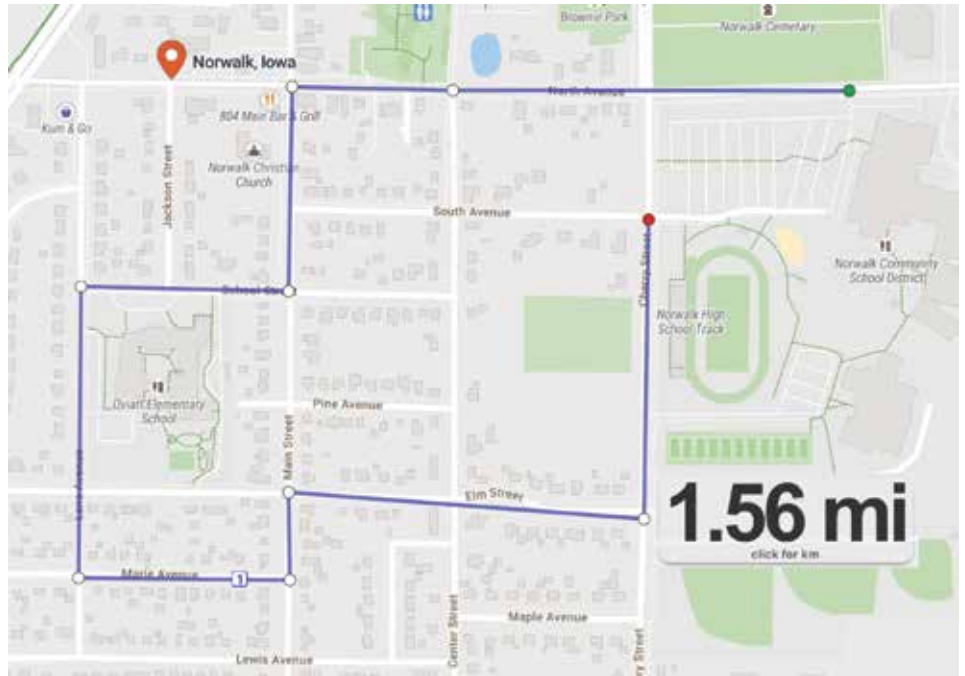


# CELEBRATE THE *Fourth of July*

Hometown fun makes  
holiday special in Norwalk

**By Rachel Harrington**

From the sound of marching bands in the morning to fireworks lighting the sky at dusk, Norwalk's Fourth of July celebration returns this year with events designed to bring the community together. Norwalk Hometown Pride



The Fourth of July parade will begin and end at the Norwalk High School.

presents the celebration.

“Our annual Fourth of July parade will begin at 9 a.m. at Norwalk High School,” Tina Robinson, president of Norwalk Hometown Pride, says. “We had to change the usual route of the parade due to construction, and the map of the new route will be available on Norwalk Hometown Pride’s Facebook page beginning in June.”

The parade will also end at the high school.

Last year, 96 parade entries and multiple walk-ups, totaling well over 120 groups, participated. Several groups had multiple vehicles or displays.

“It is a great way to promote businesses in town,” Robinson remarks, “but the main goal is to bring the community together.”

She says she personally looks forward to seeing groups such as the Norwalk High School Marching Band and Guard as they perform and walk in the parade. Those interested in entering are invited to sign up for a \$10 entry fee.

After the parade concludes, the celebration moves to Norwalk City Park. For the past two years, Party in the Park has not been held because of a lack of volunteers. The Hometown Pride team plans to reintroduce Party in the Park while keeping it low-key to help manage the event as efficiently and seamlessly as possible.

“We plan to have a couple of vendors,”



More than 120 entries were featured in last year’s Fourth of July parade.

Robinson says. “One will be a dirty soda food truck, and the other will be announced after a contract is signed. We will also have two bands. One of the bands features Corbett Reeves, a board member of Norwalk Hometown Pride. He is from Norwalk, and he plays American folk music on guitar. The other band will hopefully be announced by the first week of June.”

Parking for those with disabilities will be near the library, but most visitors should look

for parking along side streets. The community is invited to bring lawn chairs and beverages to enjoy the music for a few hours.

“We want to make sure we do what we can to bring the community together, to better the community, and to promote pride in the city of Norwalk,” Robinson says. “All proceeds we collect go back into the community for things like benches and dog stations, among many other things.”

At dusk on July 4, a fireworks show will be



The Fourth of July parade starts at 9 a.m.



held for community enjoyment. For the past 50 years, the Lions Club has spearheaded the show.

“This year will be the first year we don’t shoot the fireworks off ourselves,” J.D. Dagenais, Lions Club past president, remarks.

“I remember when we used to light them with cigars, laying on our backs and stretching out to light them, then rolling over to cover our ears and faces to avoid sparks getting in our eyes. We got smarter and put emergency flares

like what you put behind a car on the end of a broomstick to light them then take cover. About 15 years ago, we went all electric. It is too big of a show to do it all by hand, and it has been a large show for quite some time now.”

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Dagenais says Norwalk's fireworks show is one of the larger private shows in central Iowa. Crews begin early in the morning to set up, and preparation takes most of the day for the 35-minute show. During the past 25 years, Dagenais has been the lead pyrotechnician in all but five. He says he and others who oversee the show are trained and certified by Homeland Security because of the size of the explosives.

"In the old days, fireworks were housed in the old fire station overnight, but they weren't as big as they are now," Dagenais explains. "Now we can't leave them overnight without at least two people staying with them."

Dagenais says the company supplying the fireworks will set them off this year.

"Most of us in the Lions Club are getting older; many of us are in our 70s now, and there are increasingly fewer members," Dagenais explains. "We hired a group of younger folks to do it this time."

The Lions Club began fundraising in early May to cover the cost of the show by selling raffle tickets and placing collection jars around town. Last year's show was valued at about \$30,000, and raffle prizes were also of high value.

"This year, as they have for the past 10 years, the city has donated toward the fund, but my understanding is that this is the last year they will do so due to newly implemented state budget cuts and caps," Dagenais shares.

Lions Club members hope the community will contribute so everyone can enjoy the show.

Robinson says the fireworks show is one of her favorite parts of the July 4 celebration in Norwalk, along with chatting with people as they line up for the parade.

"I get to learn what is going on in their groups and businesses," she says.

Dagenais especially enjoys the camaraderie he has found as part of the fireworks crew and takes pride in knowing such a large show takes place in Norwalk. He invites everyone to attend and to bring guests from out of town to enjoy it. ■



The Lions Club holds the annual Fourth of July fireworks.

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## HONORING dads

Just a few weeks ago, we celebrated moms and the 112th anniversary of Mother's Day in America. It took a bit longer for Father's Day to reach equal status. At the end of World War II, Father's Day was a national tradition but not a federal holiday. Finally, in 1972, President Richard Nixon signed the proclamation putting Father's Day right up there with Mother's Day.



I think it is fitting to honor and celebrate both mothers and fathers since, without both of them, none of us would be here. We all owe a debt of gratitude and thanks to both our parents. That is the way God looks at it too. He tells us in Ephesians 6:2 "Honor your father and mother..." While God certainly desires that we honor our parents all the time, Father's Day serves as a reminder of how important it is that we express to our fathers how much we appreciate and value them.

So, with this in mind, instead of buying your father a tie, a pair of socks or another golf accessory, why not honor your father this year by:

### Affirming him

Write a letter thanking your father for all he's done and all he means to you. Read it in front of him and the whole family. Frame it and add photos and other mementos that will make it special.

### Forgiving him

Let's face it, some dads haven't exactly been model fathers. Maybe yours wasn't. As human beings, all fathers fall short of the original design for fathers. Some fall far short. Absent fathers, abusive fathers, critical fathers — they all fall short. We have no control over that. We can, however, control our response to our fathers. We can choose to forgive. Forgiveness always results in freedom.

### Remembering him

Maybe you no longer have your father with you. My father lost his battle with diabetes almost 24 years ago. He is not here to wish him Happy Father's Day. But I can spend some time honoring him by remembering the legacy he left me, the memories of holidays and times spent together and the appreciation I have for him. Remembering your father is one way of honoring him.

June 21 is coming. Let's honor our dads. Happy Father's Day. ■

Pastor Rob Jones is the senior pastor of Fellowship Community Church in Norwalk. The church was founded under his leadership in 1995.

## KEY financial takeaways from your tax return

Tax season may be behind you, but don't stash away your tax return quite yet. It is full of information that could help improve your finances or make a difference in next year's tax picture. Here are four things you could learn from reviewing your return.



**1. Are your retirement contributions on track?** The W-2 you received from your employer spells out pre-tax contributions you made during the tax year to your workplace retirement account such as a 401(k) or 403(b). If you were able to make deductible contributions to a traditional IRA, you can find that information on your tax return. If you contributed to an IRA, your financial advisor will also send you an informational Form 5498 that shows contributions you've made to a Traditional, Roth, SIMPLE, or SEP IRA that you can use to track and review your contributions.

Use this information to decide if you can increase your retirement contributions going forward. Contributing more will not only help boost your retirement savings but could also help reduce next year's tax bill if you are making pre-tax contributions or your contributions will be tax deductible.

**2. Are you withholding the appropriate amount of tax from your paycheck?** Receiving a refund that is larger than expected or owing the IRS money are both signs that your withholding deserves a second look. While a big refund is great, it means that you're missing out on the chance to put that money to work for you throughout the year by regularly saving, investing more or using the funds to pay off high-interest debt. Adjusting your withholding now can also help you reduce the amount you have to pay the IRS next tax season.

**3. Could your money be working harder for you?** Reviewing how much you earned in interest will reveal if you need to explore other options. If you're surprised by how little you earned, it might be time to move your money to a different type of account that offers more potential for growth and matches your financial goals and risk tolerance.

**4. Do you need to rethink your financial strategy?** With so much information at your fingertips, it's a good time to focus on your finances in general. Your tax return is more than just a once-a-year task; use it as a valuable tool for planning ahead. ■

Our team at City State Bank is here to provide guidance tailored to support your financial goals. For more information, please contact Kourtne Klocko with City State Bank Trust & Investments at 515-981-1400. Not FDIC insured. Not deposits or other obligations of the bank and are not guaranteed by the bank. Are subject to investment risk, including possible loss of principal. City State Bank does not provide legal advice. Each taxpayer should seek independent advice from a tax and/or legal professional. These materials are based upon publicly available information that may change at any time without notice.

## The Villages of Norwalk

Norwalk City Council has a goal to establish Norwalk as a community of unique, fun and proud neighborhoods.

The vision is to grow with purpose, shaping a city defined by vibrant and distinct neighborhood identities, unique experiences, connection and exceptional quality of life. This approach reflects the idea of **The Villages of Norwalk**.

This initiative will strengthen local identity and create meaningful experiences, resulting in a city where people feel close and connected to those in their "village", and proud to belong in Norwalk.

**Interested in becoming an ambassador for your neighborhood or want to learn more about the project?**

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www.norwalkiaeconomicdevelopment.org/neighborhoods



## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT!

**Officer Mike Newman,  
Police Department**



The City of Norwalk is proud to spotlight one of the dedicated officers serving with the Norwalk Police Department. Although he has been with the department for just over a year, he brings seven years of law enforcement experience to the role and has quickly become a positive presence in the community.

As a patrol officer, he spends his days serving and protecting the residents of Norwalk while building relationships throughout the community whenever possible. Whether it is handing out stickers to kids or turning on the red and blue lights for children playing outside, he enjoys creating positive interactions that leave lasting impressions.

What he enjoys most about his job is the opportunity to help others and bring positivity to people's lives. Early in his time with the department, he experienced a memorable moment that perfectly reflected that goal. While driving past a child's birthday party, he activated his lights and sirens before stopping to surprise the birthday child with stickers and a football—creating a moment the family likely will not forget anytime soon.

Outside of work, he enjoys lifting weights, running, fishing, hunting, watching movies and television shows, and spending time with his mom, brothers, girlfriend, and her children. In addition to serving the Norwalk community, he also serves the state and country as a member of the Iowa Air National Guard.

## "Meet Me on the Mississippi" River Rhythms & Lunch Cruise



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## THE HISTORY OF NORWALK

The City of Norwalk has a goal to gather, preserve and share Norwalk's history. Scan the QR Code to check out our History of Norwalk Video!

If you wish to contribute to our collection, reach out to Emily Donahue, Economic Development Technician at edonahue@norwalk.iowa.gov. Thank you!



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## HEATING & COOLING

By Dale Adams

# IS YOUR AC protected from power surges?

An air conditioning (HVAC) system is a significant investment and an essential part of ensuring year-round comfort. With proper maintenance, an AC unit can last a great deal of time, but in the case of an electrical storm, an unexpected power surge can take your unit clean out.



In this article, we will explain how power surges can affect your AC unit and how you can protect it from potential damage.

**Can a power outage damage an AC unit?** Yes, a power outage from a storm can absolutely damage an AC unit. HVAC systems often have little room for sudden voltage fluctuations, and so, when a power surge or outage occurs, it can damage compressors, motors, circuit boards and other components within the air conditioner. If your AC unit fails to turn on after a storm, it may require outright replacement if the electrical damage is bad enough.

**What's causing all these surges?** One common cause of power surges for air conditioning systems is a lightning strike during a storm. When lightning strikes near a power line or transformer, it can send a surge of electricity through the electrical grid, potentially damaging the delicate circuitry within your HVAC system. Another cause of power surges is utility grid fluctuations, which occur when there are sudden changes in voltage levels supplied by the electric company. Some other causes are malfunctioning appliances and animal or tree interference.

**The solution:** AC unit surge protectors. The most effective way to shield your AC unit from electrical damage is to install a dedicated HVAC surge protector. Like the surge protectors used for computers and TVs, these devices are wired into the electrical supply line and prevent power spikes from reaching your HVAC components. The surge protectors absorb excess voltage, shielding the air handler, condensing unit and other parts from damage.

AC unit surge protectors can be hardwired to the outside unit, the inside unit, or even directly to the high-efficiency motors that operate using DC voltage.

Given the high costs associated with replacing or repairing AC unit components like high-efficiency motors, compressors and circuit boards, we recommend opting to install an HVAC surge protector.

For those looking to add an extra layer of protection, there are surge protectors that also come with a voltage monitor. This device not only safeguards your HVAC system from power surges but can also shut down the unit if the voltage goes beyond set parameters. This preemptive measure can prevent severe damage from voltage fluctuations and save you from costly repairs or replacements.

It might seem excessive but consider this: The one-time cost of a surge protector pales in comparison to that of replacing an entire AC unit due to storm damage. ■

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.

# THE BILL of Rights (part I)

We often hear about and discuss our “rights” under the law. Many of these rights are contained in the first 10 amendments to the United States Constitution. Our history shows that it has not been uncommon for these rights to come under attack. The following is a discussion of the Bill of Rights and how it applies to our lives. This article will discuss the first four amendments. Later articles will discuss the remaining amendments. It is anticipated that this will be a three-part series.



## Amendment I

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.”

**Comment:** This language has the dual purpose of prohibiting a national religion and allowing the people to worship as they please. Note that the freedom of speech relates only to governmental prohibitions. It does not apply to private constraints. Finally, it is apparent that the right of assembly and protest has been a protected right from the beginning.

## Amendment II

“A well-regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.”

**Comment:** At one time, there was a debate as to whether this was an individual right. The U.S. Supreme Court has now made it clear that it is.

## Amendment III

“No soldier shall, in the time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.”

**Comment:** This amendment rarely comes up in current times. However, it is notable that the founders made it clear that, in times of peace, a homeowner has an absolute right to refuse to accommodate soldiers, and, even in war, legal requirements exist.

## Amendment IV

“The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.”

**Comment:** The founders were very protective of one’s right to personal privacy against government intrusion. In this digital age, questions arise concerning whether data constitutes “persons, houses, papers, and effects.”

Warrants require probable cause, supported by oath and must be specific concerning location of searches and persons or things seized.

## Conclusion

These rights are valuable and often under assault. We should know them and cherish them. ■

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

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# WALKER finds a 'purr-fect' spot to volunteer

Cat lover finds joy in fostering kittens.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Jane Walker learned about Whiskers TNR and, as a cat lover, decided to research the organization.

"I saw the blurbs on Facebook about what they were doing, and, at the time, it was their 5-year anniversary," she says.

She decided Whiskers TNR was worth her time and became a volunteer.

In the beginning, her work revolved largely around fostering kittens. "I kept them at my house but kept them separate from my own cats," she recalls. "It was a lot of fun. I met a lot of new people, met a lot of new friends, and I learned how to properly take care of the kittens. It was a really nice experience."

Walker now also fosters adult cats. She works closely with Corissa Arndt, president of the organization. The preliminary intake building is located at Arndt's home.

"They have a building for preliminary intake to make sure that the kittens and cats are ready to go to a home and are not sick," she explains. "They have food, carriers, and traps for foster families to use as well."

Walker has fostered between 60 and 70 kittens and cats since she began five or six years ago. In addition to fostering, she assists in transporting cats



and kittens that others foster, whether to their new homes, to their veterinarian in Des Moines, or to the intake facility.

Once a month, Walker takes cats and kittens that are ready for adoption to Norwalk Easter Public Library so potential adoptive families can see the felines in person and observe their personalities instead of relying solely on online profiles. She has also taken kittens to Waukee and Urbandale. Last month, she was in Des Moines as well, bringing her total trips to showcase cats and kittens to as many as three per month.

Those who serve in roles like Walker's are an integral part of their communities. As a volunteer with Whiskers TNR, she helps monitor where cats and kittens are placed.

"We don't feel like declawing is right, so we take care to place them in homes that will not do that," she says. "We also microchip them. We are out for the sake of the animals more than the enjoyment of the owner. We make sure to spay and neuter the feral cats that come to us, so the problem isn't multiplied. This is our main goal, and caring for and placing kittens is an offshoot of that goal."

Those who foster kittens and cats through Whiskers TNR can take in up to three at a time, depending on how many they already have. Walker says, when she talks to people about fostering, many worry they will not be able to give the kittens up.

"I say that kittens are adopted fast, and you don't have time to get very attached to them," Walker shares. "Last week, I had three, and by the end of the week, they were all adopted."

Because Norwalk does not have a facility for stray cats and kittens, Walker is especially appreciative of Whiskers TNR and the work it does for residents and felines of Warren County. Though Whiskers TNR is based in Prole, Walker says it is reassuring to know there is a place for cats to go and receive care.

Volunteering with Whiskers TNR has brought Walker much joy.

"I love cats, and I always have, but I also love the friendships with other volunteers I have made. That is probably the best part of it for me," she says.

In addition to friendships, she has also gained some furry companions along the way.

"The first litter I fostered had a cat named Sawyer," she says. "He is a big 20-pounder of a cat. He is still special to me. He was adopted by my son and now lives in Phoenix."

To foster with Whiskers TNR, contact Corissa Arndt.

"She will likely ask how involved you want to get," Walker explains. "There is no application process, but there are some state guidelines for fostering to follow." ■



Jason Siemens of Edward Jones presents the Neighbor Spotlight certificate to Jane Walker.

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Financial Advisor  
1327 Sunset Dr., Ste. 500  
Norwalk, IA 50211  
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EJB-19325-A-E-DA-4 AECSPAD 28883057

## THE REAL cost of assisted living and what you are actually paying for

When families begin exploring assisted living, one of the first questions is often, “How much does it cost?” It is an important question, but it is not always the most complete one.

A better question might be: “What does that cost actually include?” In many cases, assisted living can make more financial sense than the combined cost of home upkeep and in-home care.



Understanding the full picture can help families make more confident, informed decisions and avoid unexpected expenses down the road.

It's more than rent: At first glance, assisted living pricing can feel similar to rent. But, unlike traditional housing, assisted living typically includes much more than just a place to live. Monthly fees often cover: utilities and maintenance, meals and dining services, housekeeping and laundry, transportation, and social activities and programming. When compared to the combined cost of housing, groceries, home maintenance and entertainment, the value becomes clearer.

Care and support are built in: One of the most significant components of assisted living cost is access to care. This may include: assistance with daily tasks like bathing, dressing, or medication management; 24/7 staff availability for support and emergencies; and ongoing monitoring and adjustments as needs change. For many families, this built-in support provides peace of mind that is difficult to put a price on.

Fewer hidden costs than you might expect: Living at home can come with unpredictable expenses: home repairs, increasing utility bills or the need to hire outside help. These costs can add up quickly and often without much notice. In contrast, many assisted living communities offer more predictable monthly pricing, especially when multiple services are included under one roof. This can make budgeting easier and reduce financial surprises.

Convenience adds real value: Another often-overlooked benefit is convenience. When meals, activities, care and services are all available in one place, it eliminates the need to coordinate multiple providers or manage a complex schedule. This not only saves time but also reduces stress for both residents and their families.

Quality of life is part of the equation: While cost is important, it is equally important to consider what that investment supports. Assisted living can provide: opportunities for social connection; engaging activities and events; nutritious, enjoyable meals; and a safe, supportive environment. These elements contribute to overall well-being and can significantly enhance daily life.

The bottom line: When exploring assisted living, consider the true value. When you look beyond the monthly rate and consider everything that is included, it becomes clear that assisted living offers more than housing. It offers support, connection, convenience and peace of mind — things that truly matter at this stage of life. ■

Information provided by Holland Farms, 2800 Sunset Drive, Norwalk, IA 50211, [www.hollandfarmsliving.com](http://www.hollandfarmsliving.com), 515-608-0364.



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(515) 750-1644

[hollandfarmsliving.com](http://hollandfarmsliving.com)

2800 Sunset Drive, Norwalk, IA 50211



Check for cancellations

## Upcoming in Norwalk 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).



## When Headstones Talk

Saturday, June 20, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
West side of I.O.O.F. Cemetery (.6 miles south of Highway 92 on Jefferson Way)

Help clean gravestones and uncover symbols and words. Supplies provided. Watch “The Cemetery Guy” and team restore broken markers. A picnic lunch will be provided. This is a free event, but donations are encouraged. No RSVP required and no rain date is scheduled.

## Reading of the Declaration of Independence

Tuesday, June 19, 5 p.m.  
Warren County Courthouse east steps,  
115 N. Howard St., Indianola

Iowa Republican Women invite the public as they read the Declaration of Independence.

## Parks and Recreation Day at the Warren County Fair

Thursday, July 23, 9 a.m. to noon  
Warren County Fairgrounds, 1400 W. Second Ave., Indianola

Join Indianola, Norwalk and Carlisle parks and recreation departments for a morning of fun:

- 9 a.m. Rooster Crowing Contest
- 9:30 a.m. Braids, Mulletts and Mohawks
- 10 a.m. Mini Me Look-Alike Contest
- 10:30 a.m. Face-Off Cookie Challenge
- 11 a.m. Bubble Gum Blowing Contest
- 11:30 a.m. Celebrity Sound-Off

## Middlebrook Mercantile Events

4125 Cumming Ave., Cumming

- Friday, June 12, 6-9 p.m., live music: The Foxes with Casey Joe Collins, Bus Owen and Danny Russell Wolf
- Saturday, June 13, 6-9 p.m., live music: Tony McGhee
- Sunday, June 14, 2-5 p.m., live music: Other Brothers
- Wednesday, June 17, 6-7 p.m., information session: What Is Middlebrook?
- Thursday, June 18, 6 p.m., trivia
- Friday, June 19, 6-9 p.m., live music: Ava Lemon
- Saturday, June 20, 6-9 p.m., live music: Bob Dorr and The Blue Two
- Sunday, June 21, 2-5 p.m., live music: The Fabulous TruTones
- Wednesday, June 24, 6 p.m., music bingo
- Friday, June 26, 6-9 p.m., live music: Of a Feather
- Saturday, June 27, 6-9 p.m., open mic night
- Sunday, June 28, 2-5 p.m., live music: Matt Terronez Band



## Norwalk Farmers Market

Every Tuesday through Oct. 13,  
4-6:30 p.m.

Norwalk Christian Church parking lot, 701 Main St., Norwalk

The market will offer locally grown fruit and vegetables, baked goods, meats, eggs, local honey, fresh flowers, crafts and much more.

## Social Saturday: Pride and Seek

Saturday, June 13, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

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

Join the Des Moines Art Center’s June Social Saturday event: Pride and Seek. During Des Moines’ annual Capitol City Pride PrideFest, stop by the Art Center for a couple hours of fun, art making and educational engagement. Enjoy crafts in the Art School studios, a free screening of “Last American Gay Bar,” a free guided tour, drag king storytelling, treats in the Café, and so much more. Visit <https://desmoinesartcenter.org/event/social-saturday-pride-and-seek/> for full schedule.

## Norwalk Easter Public Library Events

1051 North Ave., Norwalk

See details and registration at <https://norwalklibrary.org/calendar/>.

- Closed Monday, May 18, for collection inventory, and Monday, May 25, for Memorial Day.

### KIDS

- Storytime: Tuesdays in June and July, 10:30 a.m.
- Babytime: Thursdays in June and July, 9:30 a.m.
- Music and Movement: Thursdays in June and July, 10:30 a.m.

### TWEENS

- Tween Hangout: Monday, June 29, and July 6, 1:30 p.m.

### TEENS

- Teen Takeover Hangout: Thursdays, 3:30 p.m.

### ADULTS

- Forever Fit: Mondays and Wednesdays, 9 a.m. and 10 a.m.
- Play Create Connect: Tuesdays, 1 p.m.

## Coffee and Camaraderie

First Tuesdays of the month,  
10 a.m. to noon  
Norwalk United Methodist Church, 1100 Gordon Ave.

All veterans and service members are invited for a morning of coffee and camaraderie, a morning of connection and community. Whether you’re a veteran, active-duty member, spouse or caregiver, everyone is welcome. Enjoy coffee and come together to form new friendships and share stories and experiences.

# EVENTS IN THE AREA

Check for cancellations

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



## 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>.

## 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.

## 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 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).

## Seni-Om-Sed

Fridays through the summer

Des Moines Biergarten, Water Works Park, Des Moines Water Works Park, 2251 George Flagg Parkway, Des Moines

This summer, the Des Moines Chamber of Commerce invites the community to flip the script on their typical Friday and celebrate Des Moines and the end of the week with SENI-OM-SED — Des Moines, spelled backwards. This weekly event series brings together professionals, families and friends for an energized and easygoing kickoff to the weekend. Guests are encouraged to follow the Des Moines Biergarten on social media for the latest updates, including any schedule changes or closures due to weather. For more information, visit [dtchamber.com](http://dtchamber.com).

## 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. ■



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# TAKE OUR POLL

WHEN IS THE LAST TIME YOU WENT FISHING?

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

[www.iowalivingmagazines.com](http://www.iowalivingmagazines.com)

SCAN THE QR CODE TO VOTE!



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%



The June 2011 *Norwalk Living* magazine featured the story, "Today's students . . . tomorrow's stars: Fourth of July celebration to honor Norwalk youth." The event honored some of Norwalk's former Norwalk youth who had gone on to seek fame. Parade marshal was actor Brandon Routh, who grew up in Norwalk and graduated from Norwalk High School in 1997. He's best known for starring in the 2006 movie "Superman Returns." ■




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# IT'S BACK!

Who will be voted favorite in Warren County?

We all have our favorite local people, places and things. And now it's time to share your choices and honor those who deserve the recognition.

Make your voice be heard and cast your votes in the 2026 Warren County Residents' Choice Poll. This contest is being hosted by Iowa Living magazines, and the results will publish in our Indianola and Norwalk August editions. You can vote in one or every category, or anywhere in between.

**HURRY! POLL CLOSSES JULY 3, 2026.**

See rules and vote at [www.iowalivingmagazines.com/residentspoll](http://www.iowalivingmagazines.com/residentspoll). One vote per resident, please.

SCAN HERE TO VOTE TODAY!



## FOOD AND DRINK

- Restaurant
- Restaurant for Breakfast
- Restaurant for Lunch
- Restaurant for Dinner
- Restaurant for Dessert
- Place for Ice Cream
- Pizza Establishment
- Bar
- Coffee Shop
- Brewery/Distillery/Winery
- Bakery
- Catering Company
- Server/Bartender (First and last name)

## AUTO BODY

- Auto Service
- Auto Body Shop
- Car Dealership
- Auto Parts Store

## COMMUNITY

- Preschool/Daycare
- School (name of building)
- Park
- Community Festival or Event
- Church
- Pastor
- Chamber of Commerce

## SHOPPING

- Grocery Store
- Boutique
- Retail Store
- Florist
- Home Improvement Retail Store
- Appliance Store
- Liquor Store
- Nursery or Garden Center
- Place to Purchase a Gift for a Man
- Place to Purchase a Gift for a Woman
- Thrift Store

## ENTERTAINMENT

- Dad/Child Date Spot
- Mom/Child Date Spot
- Place to Take Your Mom and Dad
- Place to Take Your Kids or Grandkids
- Place for Children's Birthday Parties
- Event Venue
- Golf Course

## HEALTH/BEAUTY

- Hair Salon
- Health Clinic
- Dental Office
- Orthodontist Office
- Mental Health Services
- Chiropractic Office
- Vision Care
- Health Club or Gym

- Pharmacy
- Hearing Center
- Cosmetic Services
- Physical Therapy
- Dance Studio
- Gymnastics Studio
- Tumbling Studio
- CBD Store

## OTHER PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

- Financial Planner
- Law Firm
- Accounting Firm
- Veterinarian
- Dog Groomer
- Pet Care
- Lawn Care Business
- Landscaping Company
- Heating and Cooling Business
- Electrician
- Plumber
- Senior Living Facility
- Insurance Agency
- Realtor
- Bank/Credit Union
- Photographer
- Place for Guests to Stay
- Pest Control
- Tree Service
- Home Builder
- Home General Contractor
- Exterior Contractor (siding, roofing, windows, doors)

## '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



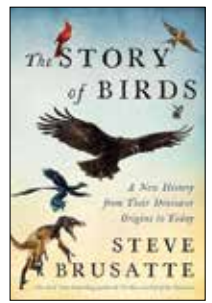
By Sunyi Dean  
5/5/26  
320 pages  
\$29.99  
Tor Publishing

## '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  
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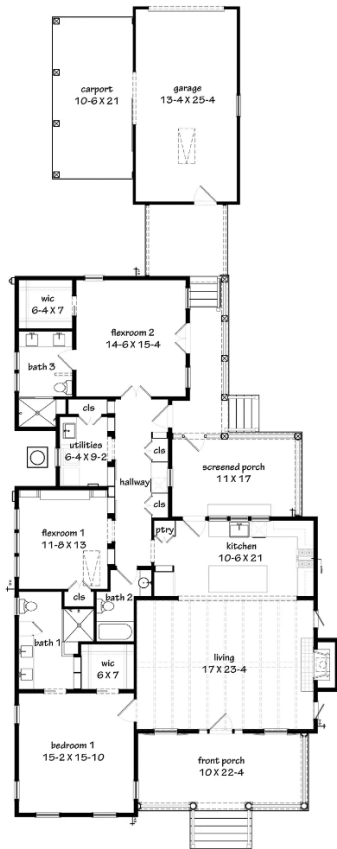
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# ADAPTIVE cottage house plan

This house was designed as an adaptive home in conjunction with the Parkinson's Foundation. With three bedrooms and three baths across a single-level layout, the Adaptive Cottage offers accessible living features ideal for aging in place. A rear-entry garage connected by breezeway, spacious bedrooms, and open living spaces provides both comfort and flexibility for long-term living. The traditional Southern exterior is thoughtfully crafted to blend into existing neighborhoods while supporting independence and ease of use inside.

The traditional but comfortable nature of the architecture is designed to blend seamlessly into a traditional neighborhood or existing community. ■



## SPECIFICATIONS

Floors: 1  
Bedrooms: 3  
Bathrooms: 3.0  
Foundation(s): Slab  
**SQUARE FEET**  
Main Floor: 1,966  
Total Conditioned: 1,966

Rear Porch: 113  
Garage: 585

## DIMENSIONS

Width: 42'-8"  
Depth: 71'-2"  
Height: 24'-4"

## HOUSE LEVELS

Level Name	Ceiling

## Heights

Main Floor 10'-0"

## CONSTRUCTION

Wall Construction: 2x6  
Exterior Finish: Lap Siding  
Roof Pitch: 10:12

## FEATURES

Kitchen: Island, Pantry

Primary Bedroom: Double Sink, Shower, Walk-in Closet  
Additional: Fireplace, Porch, Screened Porch

## GARAGE

Type	Size
Carport	1 - Stall
Attached	1 - Stall

# BEACH BALLS BOUNCE AROUND. YOUR RETIREMENT PLAN SHOULDN'T.



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## Dan Rundahl

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## INVESTMENT By Daniel Rundahl

# PREPARING to meet a financial advisor



Many people hesitate to seek certain professionals for guidance: lawyers, doctors, dentists and, often, a financial advisor. If you think about it, a wide range of emotions can surface when we seek assistance in areas where we do not consider ourselves experts. Questions about money can feel personal, emotional and sometimes intimidating. Let's look at what a first meeting with a financial advisor should entail and how preparation can make the experience more productive and comfortable.

Your first meeting with a financial advisor is less about numbers and more about clarity. It is an opportunity to establish goals, identify concerns and begin building a financial strategy that reflects your life today — and where you want to go tomorrow. The more prepared you are, the more meaningful the conversation will be.

As a financial advisor, I often tell clients they do not need to arrive with perfectly organized spreadsheets or an advanced understanding of investing. What matters most is bringing the right information and being open about your priorities, concerns and long-term objectives.

Start with a snapshot of your income and expenses. Recent pay stubs, tax returns and a rough monthly budget can help your advisor understand your cash flow and spending habits. Knowing what comes in — and what goes out — creates the foundation for financial recommendations like saving strategies, debt management and retirement planning.

Next, gather information about your assets. This includes bank accounts, retirement plans, investment accounts, pensions and insurance policies. If you have a 401(k), IRA, brokerage account or savings account, bring the most recent statements. These documents allow your advisor to assess how your money is currently allocated and whether your investments align with your long-term goals and risk tolerance.

It is equally important to bring details about your liabilities. Mortgage balances, student loans, credit card debt, auto loans, and other financial obligations all play a role in shaping your financial plan. Many hesitate to discuss debt, but transparency is essential. A good advisor is not there to judge your financial past. They are there to help assist in your financial future.

Think carefully about your goals before the meeting. Are you hoping to retire early? Save for a child's education? Purchase a home? Reduce taxes? Build a legacy? Financial planning is not just about growing money; it is about aligning money with purpose.

Bring a list of questions. Ask how the advisor is compensated, what services are included, how often meetings occur, and what type of clients they typically serve. Trust, communication and transparency matter just as much as credentials.

Preparation does not need to be perfect. Even incomplete information can help begin the conversation. The goal of the first meeting is simple: to gain a clearer understanding of where you are financially today and begin building a roadmap for where you want to go tomorrow. ■

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

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# MEET Carrie Krupke

Expands real-world learning opportunities

Carrie Krupke grew up in Southern California but spent summers in rural Iowa near her father's family farm. She attended Drake University, where she studied music education, with a history minor and a church music certification.

Krupke joined the Norwalk Community School District during her second year of teaching as a band lesson para at Norwalk Middle School. In her 10th year, her role expanded to include teaching high school photography. She earned a career and technical education authorization in 2019 and has since helped grow the program to include social media communications and dual-credit Photo 2 through Des Moines Area Community College.

Krupke also earned a multi-occupational certification in 2022, creating the possibility to transition into a work-based learning coordinator role. This year marks her first year full time at the high school as a CTE teacher and work-based learning coordinator. She has been teaching for 20 years, 19 of which have been at Norwalk.

"One of the things I value most is being in the same district as my children. I'm grateful to work alongside colleagues who have been incredibly supportive throughout my teaching career, and it's meaningful to know the educators who are teaching my kids," Krupke says.

On any given day, Krupke may observe a student intern at a workplace, coordinate a job shadow, plan campuswide events such as Career Day or complete lesson planning. She also spends time connecting with local businesses through the Learn Local initiative to build partnerships that give students meaningful, career-connected learning opportunities.

Krupke's goal is to keep course content connected to real careers so students can see how their skills translate into the workplace. For example, she has taken photography and social media students to visit communications teams at Central College and Drake University, where students completed a media content challenge, collaborating to create promotional content for the college. The marketing team selected a winner and posted it to their social media platforms the same day.

"One of the most rewarding parts of my role is helping students connect their interests to possible careers. At the high school level, students are beginning to think seriously about life after graduation, and they want learning that feels relevant to their goals," Krupke says.

Since 2018, Krupke has also worked to host a guest speaker from the industry each month. Students have learned from professionals connected to organizations such as National Geographic, ESPN and Sports Illustrated, to name a few. In 2024, she also welcomed guest speakers from the NASA team that trained Artemis II astronauts in photography skills.

"Looking ahead to next school year, I'm eager to continue expanding our network of business partners who can serve as guest speakers, host job shadows and offer internships so our students have even more opportunities for real-world career learning," Krupke says. ■



This year marks Carrie Krupke's first year full time at the high school as a CTE teacher and work-based learning coordinator.

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# TRANSFERRING insurance

We all know how stressful moving can be. There is a massive list of tasks to perform. It is no surprise that making new insurance arrangements might not jump out as your first priority. But do yourself a favor: Don't wait. The process isn't as rough as it seems. Below are a few key questions to investigate about moving any insurance. They don't cover everything, but they should get you going in the right direction.



sure your home is safe and secure in case an earthquake occurs. That is not the case in Indiana. Different states also have different auto insurance laws, and if you are moving to a new state, you'll need a new auto insurance policy, plain and simple. Most state laws require you to have homeowner's insurance before you even buy a home.

**Have you talked to your agent?**

If you are happy with your insurance company, give your agent a call. Your agent should be able to tell you whether you will need to find a new agent and how to transfer your policies to your new address.

**What about new insurance or transferring insurance?**

Talking with an agent is the best way to find out what you will need to do to get new insurance or transfer your insurance to your new address. Your agent will also help you understand insurance requirements in your new location.

If you're moving between states, keep in mind that insurance coverage varies across states. For example, in California, due to the high frequency of earthquakes, you need to take special precautions to make

**Are your possessions covered while you're moving?**

Depending on how you've chosen to move — hired movers, rental truck, a portable container or DIY in the back of your old Honda — your property may or may not be covered between the time it leaves your home and arrives at its final destination. Some homeowner policies will cover your property everywhere, regardless of whether it is in your home or a moving truck.

Other policies will not cover anything once it is out of your door. So double check your policy or call your agent. If your insurance policy won't cover your property, you can get coverage through the moving company. By federal law, moving companies have to offer supplemental insurance for your property that will include a set percentage of replacement costs, but you will need to increase that amount to get full coverage. ■

Lane Insurance would be happy to help examine your risks and suggest the best coverages for you and your family. Feel free to request a quote online at [laneinsurance.com](http://laneinsurance.com) or give us a call at 515-981-4614. Information provided by Mike Lane, Lane Insurance Agency Inc., 1225 Sunset Drive, Norwalk.



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# 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 Martha Munro, Advertising Account Executive, Big Green Umbrella Media, 8101 Birchwood Court, Suite D, Johnston, Iowa 50131, 515-953-4822 x314, martha@iowalivingmagazines.com.

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# DAUGHTER and mom achieve milestone together

Kallenbachs share college graduation.

Janell and Anya Kallenbach have achieved something not many mothers and daughters can say they've done at the same time: graduate from college.

Anya graduated from Norwalk in May 2024 with both her high school diploma and associate degrees in arts and sciences from DMACC. She began attending Minnesota State University in Mankato, Minnesota, in fall 2024 and recently graduated with a Bachelor of Applied Health Science degree, with a pre-occupational therapy emphasis and a minor in psychology.

For Janell, the journey looked a little different. In fall 2024, she enrolled in Brown University's Master of Science in Technology Leadership program, officially completing the degree in October 2025 and participating in commencement this May.

"Returning to graduate school at this stage of my life and career allowed me to refine my executive presence, expand my network with leaders from around the world, and immerse myself in the strategic side of emerging technologies," Janell says. "Most importantly, it allowed me to be a role model to my children in a different way, demonstrating how important it is to pursue your dreams and continue to learn new things from new people throughout your life."

Going to college at the same time as her mom was a unique experience for Anya, who noted how motivated her mom was to achieve this accomplishment and continue growing in her career and learning after her kids left home.

"It is definitely an interesting conversation when you are studying late for an exam, and you know your mom is still awake working on homework or assignments as well and can understand what school looks like now," Anya says.

Janell agrees the experience was especially meaningful.

"Sharing this milestone with my daughter has been unexpectedly meaningful," she says. "As an empty nester stepping back into the world of assignments, deadlines and long nights of studying, I found myself experiencing a version of college right alongside her. It created a new kind of closeness, one rooted in mutual understanding of the effort, discipline and stamina it takes to pursue a degree."

"If you had asked me five years ago whether my daughter and I would be graduating in the same season, I would have said absolutely not," Janell adds. "At that point, I genuinely thought my window for graduate school had passed."

But when she joined Wellmark in early 2024, she found herself in an environment that actively encouraged employees to pursue higher education.

"That support reignited a dream I had set aside, and it pushed me to start exploring programs that aligned with my career in technology leadership. At the same time, I knew I would soon have more space in my life as the last of my three very involved children prepared to leave home. What I didn't anticipate was that my daughter Anya and I would end up crossing our own finish lines together."



Janell Kallenbach and her daughter Anya both earned degrees in May and enjoyed sharing the experience together.

For the entire Kallenbach family, this shared accomplishment has become both meaningful and a little humorous.

"They joke that we're both a bit crazy for taking on so much at the same time," Janell says. "In that way, Anya and I are very much alike. But beneath the teasing is deep support that has carried us through."

Moving forward, Anya has accepted a full-time position with a college ministry called the Salt Company, where she will focus on student outreach and leading worship. Janell will continue working at Wellmark while becoming even more engaged in Iowa's technology community.

Together, the mother-daughter duo hopes their shared experience serves as a reminder that learning and pursuing new opportunities can happen at any stage of life. ■

# STOPPING power

Why routine brake service is non-negotiable.

When we think about vehicle performance, horsepower usually steals the spotlight. But there is one system in your car that is infinitely more important than how fast you can go: how reliably you can stop.



Your vehicle's braking system is its No. 1 safety feature. Because it relies entirely on intense friction and extreme heat, components naturally wear out over time. Brake pads are actually designed to sacrifice themselves to protect your vehicle. Regular maintenance isn't just about safety — it also protects your wallet.

### Three reasons routine brake service matters

1. Uncompromised safety: Worn pads or degraded brake fluid drastically increase your stopping distance. In a split-second highway emergency, a few extra feet can be the difference between a close call and a serious collision.
2. Preventing costly damage: Brake

maintenance operates on a slippery slope. Replacing worn brake pads is a simple, inexpensive fix. However, if you ignore them, the metal backing will grind directly into your rotors. This "metal-on-metal" contact ruins the rotors, turning a minor service into an expensive repair bill.

3. Hydraulic health: Brake fluid naturally absorbs moisture from the air over time. This moisture lowers the fluid's boiling point and causes internal corrosion. A "spongy" pedal or total brake fade during heavy braking is often the result of old, contaminated fluid.

### Warning signs you need a brake check

Your car is excellent at communicating when its brakes are suffering. Never ignore these red flags:

- Squealing or squeaking: A sharp metallic squeal means the built-in wear indicators on your pads are touching the rotor — your car's way of saying, "change me soon."
- Grinding sounds: A harsh, growling metal noise means your pads are completely gone, and you are actively damaging your rotors.

- A "spongy" pedal: If the pedal sinks easily to the floorboard or feels soft, you likely have air or moisture in your brake lines.

- Vibrations: If the steering wheel or brake pedal shakes when you slow down, your rotors may be warped from excessive heat.

Pro tip: Don't wait for the warning signs. Have a technician inspect your brake thickness and fluid quality during every routine oil change.

### Prioritize your peace of mind

Your brakes work tirelessly to keep you, your passengers and other drivers safe. If you are hearing an unfamiliar noise, or it's simply been a while since your last inspection, don't take your stopping power for granted. Schedule a brake inspection with your service professional as soon as possible. ■

Information provided by Chris Werner, owner and lead technician, Werner's Elite Auto, 506 1/2 E. Euclid Ave., Indianola, 515-259-0122, [www.wernerseliteauto.com](http://www.wernerseliteauto.com).



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## GRIEF and judgement

Do any of these sound familiar? “I shouldn’t feel...” “I can’t be angry...” “This is going to sound strange...” “I feel so weak...”

Do you know what I hear when I hear these statements made by people who are grieving?

Self-judgement. Perhaps reading the title, you thought I was referring to the judgement of others on those grieving. Certainly, that is something most grievers face at some point, but I want to talk about self-judgement. We don’t have control of others’ judgements, but, with awareness and intention, we do have power over our own.

Self-judgement makes our grief more difficult because we are self-imposing restrictions on the naturally occurring responses for the loss we have endured. Some of these responses may not feel natural and normal, but they are. It is important to remember that feelings aren’t necessarily facts but can give us information about what our hearts need tending to. It can take time for our heads and our hearts to come to a place of agreement. And, sometimes, they never do, and that is OK.

Validating our own losses is a powerful tool in our coping-with-grief toolbox. When you have a judgmental thought, take a deep breath and tune into the feeling. Allow the feeling to exist as it is instead of dismissing it with a “I shouldn’t feel this way.” See what it has to tell you instead. You can learn a lot when you listen to what feelings are trying to teach you. ■

Information provided by Buffy Peters, Director of Hamilton’s Academy of Grief & Loss, 3601 Westown Parkway, West Des Moines, IA 50266, 515-697-3666, [www.HamiltonsFuneralHome.com/academy-of-grief-and-loss](http://www.HamiltonsFuneralHome.com/academy-of-grief-and-loss).



## IN-HOME services

Living where you want to, with a little help

A few years ago, Jeanne Klock fell.

She had always had trouble with her knees, and she worried that a serious fall could force her to leave the home she loved. Like many older adults, Jeanne wanted to stay where she felt most comfortable, surrounded by her own belongings, routines and memories.

So, when she stumbled, her first thought was frightening: “Now I’ll have to leave my home.”

Jeanne’s family knew how much staying home mattered to her, so they began looking for support that could help her remain independent without requiring a move. That search led them to in-home services, also known as non-medical assistance.

Today, Jeanne is living independently at 89 in her home near Des Moines. In-home services aides help keep her safe, assist with daily activities and provide companionship. “I like that they don’t tell me what to do,” Jeanne said. “They make suggestions, but they are very kind. They would do anything for me.”

That balance matters. In-home support is not about taking over. It is about helping people continue living on their own terms, with the right level of assistance.

An in-home services aide may help someone get ready in the morning, prepare meals, provide light housekeeping or go along to appointments. Some days may include errands, shopping or social outings. Other days may be quieter, with conversation, a good meal and help around the home.

“I help her get ready in the mornings, and some days we are pretty active, going here and there,” said Wendy, one of Jeanne’s aides. “I go with her to doctors’ appointments, we go shopping — really anywhere she needs or wants to go. Some days, we take it slower.”

In-home services are different from medical home health care. In most cases, they are not covered by insurance and are paid for by the client or family. Services vary by provider, but they often include help with cooking, light housekeeping, laundry, errands, appointments, personal care, pet care, medication reminders and companionship.

When choosing an in-home services provider, families should ask how support is delivered, not just what tasks are offered. A good provider will take time to understand a person’s routines, preferences, safety needs and goals before recommending a plan. Ask how aides are trained, supervised and matched with clients; whether schedules can change as needs change; and how the provider communicates with family members.

For Jeanne, the arrangement has helped her keep what matters most: Her home, her choices and her sense of independence.

“My things are here, and I’m comfortable here,” she said. “I just need a little help. I think it should be up to a person where they choose to live.” ■



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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## WELLNESS By Jen Penisten-Clark

### NON-INVASIVE body

Ultrasonic cavitation and Emsculpt are two popular non-invasive body contouring treatments designed to help patients achieve a slimmer, more sculpted appearance without surgery or downtime. While both treatments target stubborn areas of the body, they work in different ways and offer unique benefits.



Ultrasonic cavitation uses low-frequency ultrasound waves to break down fat cells beneath the skin. The sound waves create pressure that disrupts fat cell membranes, allowing the body to naturally process and eliminate the released fat through the lymphatic system. This treatment is commonly used on areas such as the abdomen, thighs, hips, arms and flanks. Ultrasonic cavitation is painless, requires no anesthesia, and can help reduce inches, improve skin smoothness, and enhance body contours over a series of treatments.

Emsculpt uses high-intensity focused electromagnetic (HIFEM) technology to stimulate powerful muscle contractions that cannot be achieved through exercise alone. These contractions help build muscle while also promoting fat reduction in treated areas such as the abdomen, buttocks, arms and thighs. Emsculpt treatments are quick, non-invasive, and require no recovery time. Studies reported 30% increase in muscle tone and 25% targeted fat reduction.

Together, ultrasonic cavitation and Emsculpt can complement a healthy lifestyle by helping patients reduce stubborn fat, strengthen muscles, improve body contours and boost confidence. ■

Information provided by Jen Penisten-Clark, MSN, RN, NP-C, CEO/owner, Vivid Life Spa, 1951 E. 18th St., Suite 105, Norwalk, 515-850-7848, [vividlifespaspa.com](http://vividlifespaspa.com).

## HEALTH By Dr. Jonathan Anderson

### WHAT ARE eye mites?

Demodex blepharitis is a chronic inflammatory eyelid condition caused by an overgrowth of a mite called demodex folliculorum, which live in eyelash follicles and oil glands. It often presents with itching, burning, redness, crusting, dry eye symptoms, blurry vision and the characteristic "collarettes" or cylindrical dandruff at the base of eyelashes. The condition becomes more common with age and is associated with rosaceas, meibomian gland dysfunction and chronic blepharitis. Diagnosis is usually made during an eye examination using a microscope for the eyes called a slit-lamp.



Treatment focuses on reducing mite populations and controlling inflammation. Traditional management includes daily eyelid hygiene. Tea tree oil-based eyelid cleansers had been commonly used because they are toxic to Demodex mites. However, tea tree oil must be used carefully around the eyes and can still cause irritation of the sensitive tissue of the eye lids. There are companies that make specific tea tree oil-based eyelid scrubs. Hypochlorous acid eyelid sprays and other eyelid cleansers may help reduce bacterial overgrowth and improve some symptoms but do not directly treat the mites. In 2023, the FDA approved an eye drop called Xdemvy, the first treatment specifically targeting demodex. It kills the mites by inhibiting their nervous system function. It is used twice daily for six weeks. Results have been shown to be very effective at eliminating this pest. ■

Information provided by Jonathan Anderson, O.D. of Optometric Associates of Warren County, P.C., 1228 Sunset Drive, Norwalk, 515-981-0224.

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Spinal Decompression Therapy provides a safe, non-surgical answer. Using a gentle, computerized table, the treatment slowly stretches your spine to create negative pressure inside the discs. This relieves pinched nerves, pulls bulging material back into place and floods the discs with oxygen and nutrients.

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"I threw my back out lifting heavy bags of mulch for my garden beds last weekend. The sciatica was so bad I could barely walk. After four spinal decompression sessions, the pain is gone, and I'm back outside mulching and planting pain-free." – Mike S., Norwalk weekend warrior. ■

Information provided by Dr. Jesse Stumbaugh, Norwalk Chiropractic, 1300 Sunset Drive, 515-981-9208, [www.norwalk-chiropractic.com](http://www.norwalk-chiropractic.com). Norwalk Chiropractic is a provider with most major insurance companies.



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Many people believe that avoiding candy and brushing regularly is enough to prevent cavities. While brushing and flossing are essential, they cannot fully undo the damage caused by a high sugar diet.

The common misconception is that only obvious sweets like candy or soda cause tooth

decay. In truth, all carbohydrates — including bread, crackers and fruit — can fuel cavity-causing bacteria. These bacteria feed on sugars and starches, producing acids that wear away enamel.

What matters most is not just what you eat, but how often you eat it. Frequent snacking or sipping sugary drinks throughout the day means your teeth are constantly under acid attack. Even the best brushing routine cannot neutralize this constant exposure.

Your toothbrush is powerful, but it is not a magic eraser. You cannot out-brush a bad diet. If you are eating sugar throughout the day, brushing twice daily won't fully protect your teeth. Good oral hygiene is critical, but it is only part of the picture.

Limit sugary foods and drinks, avoid frequent snacking and rinse with water after meals. Combined with proper brushing and flossing, these habits give your teeth the best chance to stay healthy. ■



Information provided by Dr. Elizabeth Fleck, Norwalk Family Dentistry, 1101 Chatham Ave., Suite A, Norwalk, 515-256-9000, [www.norwalkfamilydentistry.com](http://www.norwalkfamilydentistry.com).



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# BRAIN fitness and hearing loss

June's Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month is a great time to focus on the correlation between hearing loss and cognitive issues, as research has found that patients with hearing loss may be at a higher risk of developing dementia. A study to look at the effects of brain fitness software was conducted on participants with a wide range of hearing abilities, and the results were impressive.<sup>1</sup>



a total of eight weeks. Training covered six separate modules that studied the link between memory and perception in different situations, focusing primarily on the consonant-vowel transition, a notoriously vulnerable area of speech.

At the start of the program, transition times were extended, then gradually shortened as listener performance improved. Participants in the Brain Fitness group showed improvements in neural timing, short-term memory and processing speed, particularly in noisy situations. In contrast, the control group displayed no change in hearing or cognitive functioning.

The Brain Fitness participants were also enthusiastic about their overall experience and reported noticeable improvements in both their ability to hear and to focus on conversations. With such encouraging results, audiologists should consider auditory training techniques to help manage hearing loss in their patients.

## The role of brain exercises

Hearing devices provide an invaluable benefit to millions of Americans suffering from hearing loss, but even they have their limits. Since following conversations in noisy environments is an ongoing challenge for several reasons, including deficits in central auditory processing and cognitive function, participating in brain exercises is one way for patients with either of these issues to improve their listening experience.

Just 15 minutes of rigorous brain exercise a day is enough to keep the brain active and may help fend off or delay Alzheimer's and other types of dementia. ■

Information provided by Dr. Kelly Cook, Audiologist, Iowa Hearing Center, 1228 Sunset Drive, Suite B, Norwalk, 515-416-5990, [www.IowaHearingCenter.com](http://www.IowaHearingCenter.com). 1 Szalavitz, M. (2013). Can You Hear Me Now? Training the Brain to Hear Better. BrainHQ. <https://www.brainhq.com/news/latest-news/brain-training-how-it-works/>

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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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Erica Baird, Stitched By Erica



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NORWALK COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2026



Photos by: Michelle Gritters Luxe Photography and NHS Photography Teacher, Carrie Krupke

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