

ANKENY

MAY 2023

Living

MAGAZINE

Up in the AIR

Residents share their
experiences as pilots

Meet Jane Smith

EDUCATION

Ice cream bowls and social

EVENTS

Harvest bowl salad with balsamic vinaigrette

RECIPE

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WELCOME

THAT ought to be enough

I was 20 years old and a junior in college before I ever stepped foot on an airplane. It wasn't some fancy commercial flight either.

My friend, Brian, had his pilot's license and offered to take me up in a small plane with another buddy. I reluctantly agreed. Filled with anxiety, I carefully stepped into the hangar where the plane was located. Brian opened up the gas tank, shrugged his shoulders, and said, "That ought to be enough." I mumbled and bumbled my words more than Mel Tillis at this point, and Brian turned his back on me and walked away, holding in his laughs.

I wasn't laughing.

This was a high-pressure moment for a young man of limited experiences who just recently dropped teenager status.

Before long, we were in the air, and I was viewing the rural Iowa scenery, floating among the clouds, listening to the hum of the plane engine — until the hum disappeared, and the plane started falling. The sweat beads were forming on my forehead, and that summer tan I had was nowhere to be seen as my skin turned milky white. Then, amidst the silence, I heard the engine hum again. My prankster pilot friend laughed some more and then proceeded with a myriad of airplane acrobatics.

When we finally landed, I said a quick thank you to Brian and spent the next 10 minutes in the bathroom. That was more than enough flying for my stomach.

Later that year, I went on my first commercial flight on a Boeing 747 and was amazed at the smooth ride, a much different experience than I had with my friend, Brian.

The last I heard, Brian was a commercial pilot for a major airline. I doubt that he is pulling his practical jokes on the crew and passengers of an Airbus A380.

Meanwhile, some local residents truly enjoy their time in the air and share their experiences in this month's feature story.

As for my buddy Brian's jokes on me, well, that ought to be enough.

Thanks for reading. ■

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Up in the AIR

**Residents share their
experiences as pilots**

By Ashley Rullestad

Our eyes often gaze upward in amazement. A clear, night sky filled with stars. Clouds painted in vibrant pinks and oranges by a rising sun. Ominous storms with lightning flashing across the heavens. Formations of geese traversing the continent, high above the land. And, heavy, metal airplanes with their human cargo miraculously crossing the skies as if light as hollow-boned birds.

While many of us are happily grounded, some pursue the dream of soaring above us, enjoying the view of expansive territories below, clouds from above, and the vastness of the blue sky surrounding them. This month, we ask local pilots to share the stories behind their passion for flight.



Work and pleasure

Mitchel Sellers had a long-time interest in flying, but after a bad experience with a flight instructor when he was 18, flying was put on the back burner. Ten years ago, he got the itch again and hasn't looked back since.

"My experience is part of the reason that I now instruct others on flying as well," he says.

He started providing flight instruction after having a number of pilots who would tag along with him on flights then have questions for him. He enjoyed sharing what he knew, so it was a logical step to get his instructor certificate.

His instructor and instrument instructor certificates allowed him to train others. In 2020, he also obtained a Cirrus Standardized Instructor Pilot (CSIP) designation, so he can deliver training that is approved by Cirrus Aircraft.

"Today, I spend most of my time working with those that have recently purchased a Cirrus, those looking for recurrent training, or those looking to continue to build their flight confidence or instrument flying skills. There is nothing more rewarding than getting trip



Mitchel Sellers' 2017 Cirrus SR22T

photos from students of mine that have gone out after our training and experienced the world in their airplanes."

Sellers has also served as a pilot for charity flights in order to give back and help others. Given the nature of general aviation travel, pilots are able to fly point-to-point with limited waiting and without exposing passengers to

large crowds, so it's an ideal method of travel for organizations like Angel Flight Central.

Sellers did his first flight for Angel Flight by taking some kids to summer camp in the summer of 2016. Since that first flight, he has helped transport people to and from Mayo Clinic, the University of Iowa, and other healthcare institutions. Now, Angel Flights

Thank you for your nominations!

Susie Sheldahl
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have an extra special place in Sellers' heart when, in 2020, his then-18-month-old daughter was diagnosed with brain and spine cancer.

"In December of 2021, we found ourselves on the other side of the Angel Flight story. Our airplane needed unexpected maintenance that was going to have us without a plane for five weeks, and she was starting radiation treatment at the Mayo Clinic. Her pain levels made the three-plus hour drive by car very uncomfortable, so we reached out to Angel Flight, and a number of other pilots stepped in to help us, just like I have in the past for others. We are forever thankful for each of these pilots, and I like to think that I have an even better understanding of how those that I fly feel after we land safely at the destination."

Nora lost her battle with cancer on April 20, 2022, at the age of 3, and Sellers has since returned to providing charity flights.

"To say it is one of the most rewarding things I can do with an airplane is an understatement. I try to pick up flights as often as I can, with my most recent one being just a few weeks ago."

Sellers recalls many special moments in flight. He enjoys giving someone their first experience of flight. His travels have taken him over the Hudson River in New York City and Hawaii. Other favorite memories include being one of the 10,000-plus planes to fly into the annual air show at Oshkosh, Wisconsin, and landing a small plane at Chicago's O'Hare airport, one of the busiest in the country.

"For myself now, I fly for business, to visit clients and speak at conferences and events. I also travel with my family for vacations and otherwise. Every single time, I'm 'flying above the clouds.'"

Civil Air Patrol pilot

James McLaughlin has been flying for about 35 years now. He started early since he grew up on a farm that had airplanes. His formal training started in 1996.

"I wanted to be an airline pilot, but life chose a different path. I now fly search and rescue and disaster assessment missions through Civil Air Patrol. I have many memorable moments, but the best ones are when I get to share the love of flight with a cadet through the CAP cadet orientation flight program."

The Civil Air Patrol flies missions all over the country as the auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force. Founded on Dec. 1, 1941, to mobilize the nation's civilian aviation resources for national defense service, CAP has evolved into a public service organization that still carries out emergency service missions when needed. Civil Air Patrol is there to search for and find the lost, provide comfort in times of disaster, and work to keep the homeland



James McLaughlin is a Civil Air Patrol pilot.

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Debt ceiling, bank crisis, and your retirement

If you follow the news, something is constantly threatening the economy. In the last few years, COVID, the supply chain, interest rates and inflation have grabbed the headlines. Recently, the debt ceiling limit and banking crisis are stealing the show.

Despite all these things you can't control, you still want to retire or stay retired, but how? Perspective and a plan.

Recently, three U.S. banks failed, lawmakers took emergency action, and there were more central bank rate hikes. Here's some perspective. Bank failures are fairly common. Since Oct. 1, 2000, there have been 565 bank failures, according to the FDIC. They just don't get as much press as the bank failures of 2023. The latest bank failures don't feel like the start of another 2008, but there could still be some aftershocks, including the possibility of increased volatility in the market.

As for the debt ceiling, the conversation has turned to Social Security and Medicare cuts as a solution — not what anyone retired or thinking about retirement wants to hear. While that grabs the headlines, lawmakers will more likely raise taxes to lower the federal



debt. Taxes are currently at historic lows, with the top tax bracket at 37%. It was just 42 years ago when the top bracket was 70%.

Now that we've discussed history, let's look to the future. You still want to retire or stay retired, despite all of this. And, so far, the families and individuals we work with have done just that, even during market downturns, despite inflation, and in the middle of a pandemic. How? They have a customized retirement plan that was built with retirement risk in mind. We can't predict a banking crisis or COVID, but a retirement plan can account for risks like market volatility, taxes and legislation. A customized retirement plan has action steps we can take when the market is down, such as dollar-cost-averaging or Roth conversions. It also includes a long-term tax plan. We help families and individuals build retirement strategies with the possibility of higher future tax rates in mind and talk about what we can do now to take advantage of taxes being on sale.

History has taught us that there is always a risk that can threaten your retirement. It's good to be aware but not scared of these risks. A customized plan allows you to take control of your retirement. Then when you see the headlines, you don't have to worry because you are still on track to live out your retirement vision.

Information provided by Loren Merkle CFP®, RICP®, Certified Financial Fiduciary®, Merkle Retirement Planning, 1860 S.E. Princeton Drive, Grimes, 515-278-1006.

Source: [fdic.gov/resources/resolutions/bank-failures/failed-bank-list/](https://www.fdic.gov/resources/resolutions/bank-failures/failed-bank-list/) "Failed Bank List"; <https://www.fdic.gov/resources/resolutions/bank-failures/failed-bank-list/>

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James McLaughlin's photos of the derecho damage helped determine which counties needed a disaster proclamation.

safe.

Pilots are 100% volunteer civilians who fly Cessna 172s and 182s, which are single engine general aviation aircraft. Membership ranges from pilots age 12 and older, beginning in the

cadet program. The Des Moines group has 73 members.

Two years ago, when the derecho came through Iowa, McLaughlin and CAP pilots were tasked with taking pictures of damage.

"It was awe-inspiring to see the amount of damage, knowing full well that we were going to help people by getting a damage emergency proclamation. It makes the work very worthwhile."

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The fun of flight

Paul Novak has been interested in flying since childhood. His father had airplanes, and he loved hanging around at the airport. He earned his license in 1976 when he was 21.

"I really always wanted to do it, and years later I got an instrument rating, which really makes the airplane useful. We acquired an airplane in 1985, and I've had it ever since. I have done lots of improvement work on it. I think the most fun thing I've ever done in a plane was to get my single-engine and multi-engine seaplane ratings in Florida."

His plane is a Piper Arrow with many modifications. In fact, he's putting a new propeller on it now. Novak keeps it at the Ankeny airport.

Though the years, Novak has flown long and short trips. For a time, he flew to work at two different hospitals where he was an emergency doctor. When he worked in Fort Dodge, he kept an old car at the airport and would fly up and drive to the hospital.

Of course, he's had many other adventures, too. Like the time when they put an airplane on skis and landed it at big Creek and on Saylorville in the winter time when the water was frozen.

"The people ice fishing there were fairly surprised." ■



Paul Novak outfitted his plane with skis and landed on Saylorville Lake when it was frozen.

Ankeny Regional Airport

Business and community leaders convened in 1989 to create a vision for an airport in the northeast part of Polk County. They saw a need to serve businesses that relied on easy access to Des Moines to complement Des Moines International Airport.

A partnership was crafted between Polk County and the cities of Bondurant, Altoona and Ankeny. The early leadership of the Polk County Aviation Authority and elected officials faced the dual challenges of building and financing an airport from scratch and constructing a system for governing it. These leaders used their relationships and vision to identify a location for the airport and to develop a plan to build it. The airport's proximity to the Metro North Business Park lent credibility to the vision for a business airport.

The Ankeny Regional Airport opened in February 1994. The first airplane at the airport was a Cessna TR182 owned by Casey's General Stores (Ankeny Press Citizen, 2/15/94 – 2/21/94).

The airport has grown to become the third-busiest in the State of Iowa. In 2016, the airport had 48,600 general aviation aircraft operations, an average of 133 per day. There is a strong use of the airport by area businesses for meetings and parts delivery. Charter services are also popular, serving more than 650,000 people in the metropolitan area. General aviation use is high, aided by the significant aircraft storage space at the airport. There are 100 aircraft based at the airport. ■

Information courtesy ankenyreionalairport.com



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Romans 8:38-39: "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor heavenly rulers, nor things that are present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

I've recently had the chance to share this scripture outside of my normal context. Just a few days ago, I was in a remote village in Malawi (a small country in southern Africa). As we talked together, the leaders of this community expressed they had experienced great troubles and discouragement. I shared the scripture from this article with them and said that, though we have different life experiences, when I feel discouraged or when I face troubles, I remember that nothing can separate us from the love of God.

Many of the Malawian people are experiencing famine, and their country has such inflation that it is a struggle to survive, much less to endure. And still I hear their testimony that nothing can separate them from God's love. God is with them... and they believe it. My friends in rural villages in Malawi trust that, even though they might be facing darkness, God's light shines and provides.

What can separate us — Ankeny residents — from God's love? I know many in Ankeny struggle with uncertainty and hopelessness caused by different things. Can hunger, pain, struggles, fear or doubt keep God's love from reaching us? Can discrimination or harm/hate cast toward us separate us from God? How about these — can busyness, hectic schedules or taxiing kids to sports separate us from God? Can achievements, accolades or privilege separate us from God's love? Can apathy or the temptation to think of only ourselves separate us from God's love?

I am convinced that none of these things can ever truly prevent God's love from reaching out toward us. God's love is like a light or a beacon that is always shining, showing us the way back to the blessings of the knowledge of God's presence with us. It is good to be reminded that God provides just as God promises. God's love never ends for us. It is our joy to receive it and trust in God's unfailing love.

So, whether we seemingly have everything we could ever need, whether we are facing trials and tribulations, whether we have seen signs of God's faithfulness or forgotten that waking up to a new day is a sign of the same, let us rejoice together that there is nothing in all creation that can separate us from God. God's light shines upon you. God loves you. ■



Information provided by John Wagner, campus pastor,
Christian Life Center, Ankeny First United Methodist Church.



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REAL ESTATE

By Mindy Selix and Yvonne Silvers

ALTERNATIVES to a 20 percent down payment

If you're putting off buying a home to save for a down payment, consider financing options that require little or no money down. Some options include a conventional mortgage with private mortgage insurance (PMI), an FHA mortgage or a 100% financed mortgage.

A conventional mortgage with PMI

A common option is a conventional mortgage, often a 30-year term. With less than 20 percent down, you will pay PMI, but often that is not a bad idea. A conventional mortgage can be obtained with as little as 3% down. The 3% down program does have income limits and additional limitations. If you don't meet requirements for the 3% down program, you may need to provide 5% down.

The way PMI is calculated has recently changed to risk-based pricing, which means the amount of PMI you pay is based on your overall credit profile. PMI can be paid monthly or in a one-time premium. The one-time payment requires more funds to close the loan, but it reduces monthly payments.



Mindy Selix



Yvonne Silvers

An FHA Mortgage

An FHA mortgage is another way to purchase a home with only 3.5% down. Often this option is best for those with lower credit scores or limits on new credit, which may cause lower scores. PMI on an FHA mortgage will likely be higher, but the interest rate is often lower.

A shorter-term mortgage

A good way to avoid any down payment is to obtain 100% financing. If you are interested in 100% financing, you should ask about a 15- or 20-year mortgage. These mortgages do not require a down payment or PMI; however, because they are amortized on a shorter term, they do require higher monthly payments compared to a conventional, 30-year mortgage.

One big advantage to shorter-term mortgages is you pay less total interest over the course of your mortgage. This is because, although your interest rate is comparable to a conventional mortgage interest rate, you have fewer total payments and fewer total interest charges.

If you are able to make higher monthly payments, a shorter-term mortgage may be your most financially efficient mortgage option. ■

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EVENTS IN THE AREA

Check for cancellations

To submit calendar items for consideration, send to tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com.

Neighbor to Neighbor free meal

May 21, 5 p.m., doors open at 4 p.m.
St. Anne's Episcopal Church, 2110 W. First St., Ankeny

This month, the meal will be mac 'n cheese with ham, side dishes, salads and homemade desserts. No one is required or expected to be a member of St. Anne's. The meals are free and are followed by seven hands of free Bingo with small prizes for each hand and a \$15 prize for the last hand. The doors are open at 4 p.m. They begin serving meals at 5 p.m. Free will donations will be accepted but are not expected or required.



Passion Studios free introductory sessions

Friday, June 2, 6:30 p.m. and Friday, June 9, 6:30 p.m.

"I've always wanted to play that instrument..." Does this sound like you? Students at Passion Studios play 30-50 classical, jazz, blues and accompaniment songs in their first year. Attend this one-hour session to learn more about the studio and its approach, meet instructors and hear their personal story. Space is limited. Save your free seat at passionstudiosmusic.com.

Annual Ice Cream Social

Sunday, June 25, 2-4 p.m.
Ankeny Area Historical Society,
301 S.W. Third St., Ankeny

What better way to celebrate summer than by attending the Ankeny Area Historical Society's annual ice cream social with your friends? Homemade pies, cakes and brownies. A freewill donation is accepted.



Bankers Trust Summer Branch Celebrations

Wednesday, June 28, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Ankeny Branch, 1925 N. Ankeny Blvd.

Bankers Trust is showing its appreciation to its customers with Branch Celebrations, featuring free food while supplies last and giveaways.



Paint Your Own Sundae Bowl

Saturday, May 20, 9 a.m. to noon.
Ankeny Art Center

Come visit the Ankeny Art Center and paint your own ice cream bowl. Fee includes one bowl, underglaze colors, clear glaze and glaze firing. Bowls will be available for pick up in three weeks. Children younger than 15 will need an adult to accompany them. Register online at www.ankenyardcenter.org/fundraisers.

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Check for cancellations



Carlisle Bike Nights

Third Saturdays through
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School Street, Downtown Carlisle

Bike Nights will be hosted by the Carlisle Chamber of Commerce along with music, raffles, beverages and food from Carlisle restaurants. May 20 features music by Joe Inman. June 17 features Richard Arndt; July 15 features Joe Inman; Aug. 19 features Luke Farland; and Sept. 16 features Adam Whitehead. Activities include Best Bike Contest and Best Audio Contest May 20 and Sept. 16. Prize is a free oil change donated by Smart Sound and Cycling. Bring your lawn chair and enjoy the evening, even if you don't have a bike!



Urbandale Summer Performance Series

Tuesday, May 23, 6:30 p.m.
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weather returning to the state.



Gary's Ride

Waukee Raccoon River Valley
Trailhead

Saturday, May 20

Gary's Ride is a fundraiser for MercyOne Richard Deming Cancer Center for terminal brain cancer patients. Riders and non-riders are invited to the celebration at The Handlebar Restaurant in Dallas Center. It will feature great food and entertainment for the whole family. For more information and to register, visit garysrideiowa.org. ■

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NEWS BRIEFS

ICUF awards \$23,000 to scholarship winners

The Iowa Credit Union Foundation (ICUF) recently awarded scholarships to eight high school students and four post-high school students as recipients of its Warren A. Morrow Memorial Scholarship.

The scholarship program is in memory of the late Warren Morrow and is open to credit union members pursuing or completing post-secondary education.

Locally, \$1,500 was awarded to Camryn Matheny, a member of Affinity Credit Union and a graduating senior at Ankeny Centennial High School. ■

HERBEL named to Forbes' ranking

Edward Jones financial advisor Brian Herbel of Ankeny has been named to the 2023 list of "Best-in-State Wealth Advisors" in Iowa by Forbes and SHOOK Research.

Herbel ranked No. 28 in Iowa. He has served area investors for the past 23 years.

To compile the 2023 list of financial advisors named to "Best-in-State Wealth Advisors" ranking, SHOOK Research analysts conducted more than 17,500 interviews with nominees. Criteria included revenue trends, assets under management, compliance records, industry experience, use of best practices and approach to working with clients. To learn more about how financial advisors were selected for this recognition, visit Methodology: America's Top Wealth Advisors 2023 (forbes.com).

Supporting Brian Herbel in serving clients from the local office are Senior Branch Office Administrator Penny Hein and Branch Office Administrator Samantha Reyes.

Herbel is one of 154 Edward Jones financial advisors to be named to the 2023 Forbes "Best-in-State Wealth Advisors" ranking. To see the full list of Edward Jones financial advisors who ranked among the top in their state, visit edwardjones.com and enter "Best in State Wealth Advisors" into the search box. ■

ANKENY Cleanup Days, May 20, 21

Ankeny residents are able to dispose of large unwanted items free of charge. Visit www.ankenyiowa.gov/316/Recycling-Events for more information about what materials are not accepted. Trucks larger than a pickup are prohibited from participating. Residents may bring tires, off the rim (limit 5 per household) and place them in a separate dumpster at the event provided by Metro Waste Authority, tires will not be landfilled like the rest of the debris, they will be recycled. Proof of residency is required. ■

TLC for your air conditioner

Ah, spring. The flowers are blooming, the birds are chirping, and the weather is finally starting to warm up. And while you might be busy cleaning out your closets and getting your garden ready, don't forget about your air conditioner. After all, it's about to start working overtime to keep you cool in the coming months.



That's why it's important to take the time to give your air conditioner a little TLC this spring. Here are some easy maintenance tips to help prepare your AC for the warmer weather ahead:

- **Change your air filter.** This is probably the easiest and most important step you can take to maintain your air conditioner. A dirty air filter can restrict airflow and cause your AC to work harder than it needs to, which can lead to higher energy bills and even system breakdowns. So make sure to replace your air filter regularly.

- **Clean the outdoor unit.** Over the winter months, leaves, dirt and other debris can accumulate around your outdoor AC unit. This can hinder airflow and cause your system to work less efficiently. Take a few minutes to clear away any debris and make sure the area around your unit is clean and clear.

- **Schedule a professional tune-up.** While there are some maintenance tasks you can do yourself, it's always a good idea to have a professional tune-up your air conditioner at least once a year. A trained technician can identify any potential problems before they turn into bigger issues, ensure that your system is running at peak efficiency, and help extend the lifespan of your AC.

- **Check your thermostat.** As the temperatures start to rise, it's important to make sure that your thermostat is working properly. If you have an older manual thermostat, consider upgrading to a programmable one to help save on energy costs. And, if you're not sure how to properly set your thermostat for optimal comfort and efficiency, don't hesitate to ask a professional for help.

Taking the time to perform these simple maintenance tasks can help ensure that your air conditioner is ready to handle the summer heat. And, not only will regular maintenance help keep your system running efficiently and effectively, it can also help save you money on energy bills and prevent costly repairs down the line.

So, this spring, show your air conditioner a little love and give it the attention it deserves. Your wallet (and your home's comfort level) will thank you. ■

Information provided by Scott Bontrager, 72 Degrees Comfort Company, 811 S.W. Ordinance Road, Ankeny, 515-200-2728.

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Andrei Murphy
President

HOME HEALTH

By Ward Phillips

HOSPICE services: making that first call

Diane had been living with cardiac disease for several years when her health took a turn, and she was told she was in congestive heart failure. Although Diane knew she was very ill, she and her husband, Carl, were stunned when Diane's cardiologist began talking about the benefits of hospice services.



"We heard that, and we thought, hold the phone; hospice is for people who are ready to die, and we weren't there yet," Carl recalls. "The cardiologist had initially said we were looking at maybe a year, so we were going to take a trip (and) do a few things while she still had energy. And then it felt like he was giving us a death sentence. We were confused, and I was pretty angry, actually."

The doctor explained, though, that even though he did feel Diane had some time, she qualified for hospice services because she had a life-limiting illness, and hospice care would afford her some amenities — all covered by insurance — that could enhance her quality of life.

That made sense to Diane and Carl, and their anger began to abate. They decided to look into home hospice services, and, after they returned from a short trip to see family, they scheduled a meeting with their care team.

"The trip was hard on Diane, so I think, in some ways, it helped her understand that maybe this was the right move," Carl recalls. "She loved the team right away — the nurse, the aide, the music therapist — and I really believe they extended her life. She lived 10 more months, and we were able to make some great memories."

Ideally, hospice services can and should be initiated when a person is still healthy. Virtually anyone with a life-limiting illness can qualify for services, enabling an individual to live life in comfort for the days, weeks or months that remain in their life. And, the earlier hospice services are started, the more they can — as in Diane's case — benefit the person who is ill, as well as the whole family.

"As Diane began to have less energy and feel like sleeping more, we were able to get a hospital bed brought to the house, and we put it in the living room, and the grandkids would come over and gather around the bed and sit with Diane," Carl says. "They would look at pictures, show her their drawings, and do quiet things that she enjoyed, and I think Diane was happy and at peace."

"And the hospice team was there when we needed them but also left us alone to have a lot of family time. They didn't hover around. And when it began looking like Diane wasn't going to be with us a lot longer, they made sure she wasn't in pain. The whole family was here, in the house that she loved, and we all held hands around the bed. When she went, it was very peaceful."

If you and your family are faced with the need to make a decision around hospice care, feelings of anger and confusion are normal, and making that first call to a hospice provider can be difficult. But know that — as was true in Carl and Diane's case — once you've taken that first step, having care in place can make your loved one's last weeks and months more relaxed and meaningful for all. ■

Ward Phillips is vice president of market strategy and business development for WesleyLife, which offers a broad network of health- and well-being-focused communities and services, including home hospice services, for older adults. Call Ward at 515-669-2205 to learn more.



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NEW student art displayed in Veridian branches

New collections of local student art are now on display in select Veridian Credit Union branches across Iowa, including in Ankeny, Waterloo, Cedar Rapids, Coralville and Waverly. Each collection is sourced by local high school art classes and is also available online at veridiancu.org/artshare. It's made possible by ArtShare, a partnership between Veridian and 11 Iowa high schools to publicly display approximately 125 pieces of student art each year in five Veridian branches across the state. Each piece is professionally framed or enclosed for display in a branch for one year.

"ArtShare is a beloved, 20-year tradition of displaying art from local students in Veridian branches," said Ashtin Hotek, Veridian's public relations strategist. "We're grateful to the teachers and students who allow us to display these pieces, and we hope our branches and website help expand the audience for their talents."

Twenty-eight pieces of art created by students from Ankeny High School, Ankeny Centennial High School and Ankeny Christian Academy are now on display in the Veridian Credit Union branch at 1201 S. Ankeny Blvd. in Ankeny.

Veridian also offers an ArtShare Scholarship for \$2,000 toward tuition for an education leading to a career in the arts. The application deadline is April 28, and inclusion in an ArtShare collection is not a requirement for eligibility. Details about the ArtShare Scholarship are available at veridiancu.org/scholarships. ■



Lacie Reitsma - Ankeny Christian Academy



Lillie Hamlin - Ankeny High School



Ava Kronenburg - Ankeny Centennial High School

DISHING out the facts on good fats

(Family Features) For those seeking to be more health-conscious, the idea of eating nutritiously seems simple. However, understanding what's truly “good for you” can sometimes be confusing.

In honor of National Nutrition Month and Healthy Fats Day, Avocados From Mexico is sharing how avocados — a delicious food and source of good fats and several vitamins — make everything better. Avocados From Mexico conducted a survey and found that while 76% of respondents believe fat is an essential component of a healthy diet, less than one-third are confident they know why it's important to have “good fats” in their diets.

For starters, according to the survey, nearly half of Americans didn't realize foods with good fats, like avocados, can help with weight management. However, monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats found in avocados can lower the risk of becoming overweight, according to research published in “Nutrients.”

Virtually the only fresh fruit with good fats, avocados can help people meet both good fat and fruit and vegetable recommendations in the same bite with approximately 6 grams of good fats per serving (one-third of a medium avocado). They are nutrient-dense, making avocados a delicious food with super benefits. Avocados are also free of cholesterol and sodium and have nearly 20 vitamins and minerals.

Dietary fat helps the body absorb vitamins A, D, E, and K. These vitamins are fat soluble, which means they can only be absorbed by the body with the help of fats. Per one-third of a medium avocado (50 grams), avocados contribute 6 grams of unsaturated fats, which are known to be essential for normal growth and development of the central nervous system and brain.

Make good fats a part of your next trip to the grocery store with this avocado-inspired Harvest Bowl Salad with Balsamic Vinaigrette certified by the American Heart Association's Heart-Check Food Certification Program.

To find more nutritional facts and figures, along with recipes, visit AvocadosFromMexico.com. ■

Harvest bowl salad with balsamic vinaigrette

Servings: 8

Balsamic Vinaigrette:

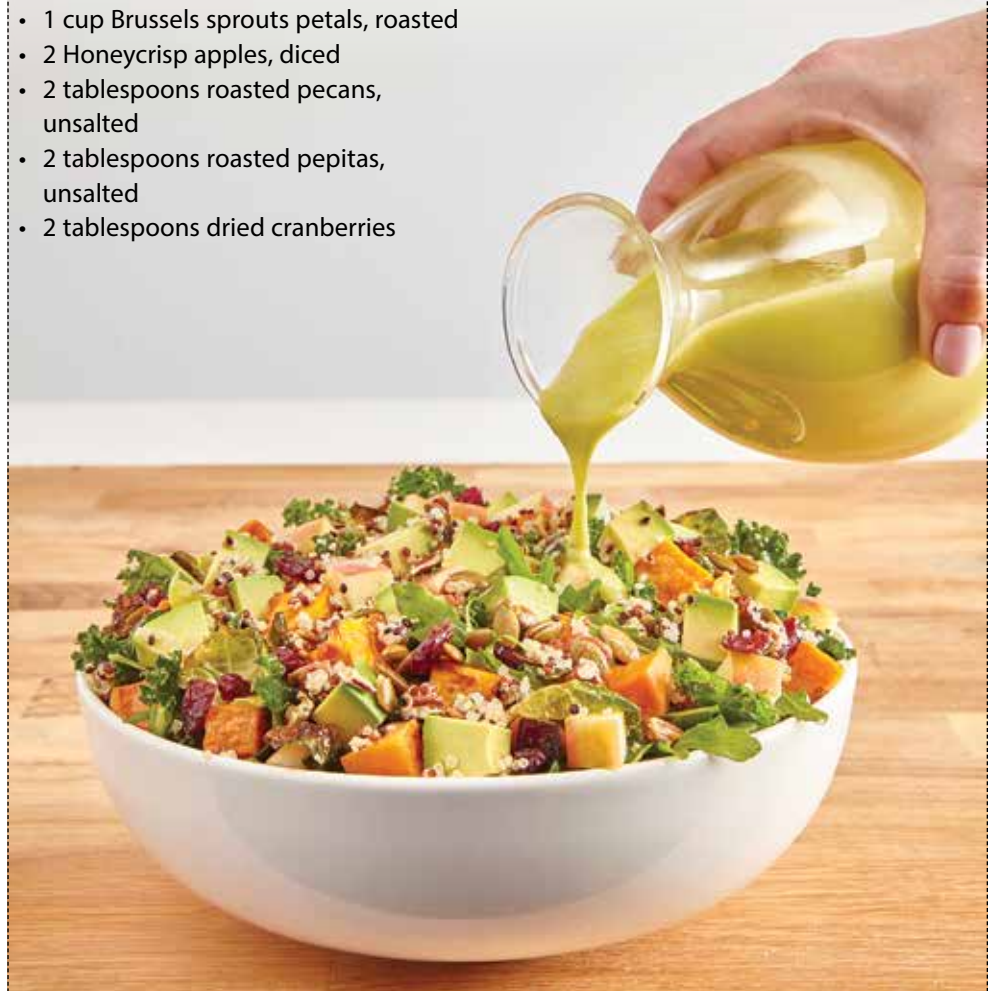
- 1/2 Avocado From Mexico, diced
- 1 tablespoon avocado oil
- 2 tablespoons shallots, minced
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 3 tablespoons white balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 3 tablespoons water

Salad:

- 2 Avocados From Mexico, diced
- 2 sweet potatoes, roasted and diced
- 2 cups quinoa, cooked
- 2 cups arugula
- 2 cups kale
- 1 cup Brussels sprouts petals, roasted
- 2 Honeycrisp apples, diced
- 2 tablespoons roasted pecans, unsalted
- 2 tablespoons roasted pepitas, unsalted
- 2 tablespoons dried cranberries

- **To make balsamic vinaigrette:** In food processor, process avocado, avocado oil, shallots, Dijon mustard, balsamic vinegar, honey and water to smooth consistency. Set aside.
- **To make salad:** In large bowl, combine avocados, sweet potatoes, quinoa, arugula, kale, Brussels sprouts petals, apples, pecans, pepitas and dried cranberries. Pour balsamic vinaigrette over salad mixture.
- Toss salad to coat. Keep refrigerated until ready to serve.

Nutritional information per serving: 390 calories; 16 g total fat; 0 g saturated fat; 0 g cholesterol; 370 mg sodium; 55 g total carbohydrates; 11 g dietary fiber; 12 g sugar; 15 g protein.



MEET Jane Smith

Mentors supportive in pursuit of counseling career.

Jane Smith is currently in her 18th year as a school counselor in the Ankeny Community School District; she serves students now at Rock Creek Elementary. Smith graduated from Northwest Missouri State with a teaching degree in elementary and special education and earned a master's degree in school counseling from Iowa State University. She started her teaching career at Parkhill School District in Kansas City before working in Des Moines, Johnston and then Ankeny.

"I knew I wanted to be a counselor for as long as I can remember. I was so fortunate to have wonderful parents, teachers and mentors who really encouraged me to pursue my passions. Whether it was sports or working with others, the message was always about helping and caring for others. I absolutely love working with kids to help them develop academic and social skills they need to succeed in life."

When Smith moved to Ankeny Community School District, she started at East Elementary. She enjoyed the opportunity to work in a smaller building where you could better get to know the students, teachers and families. She spent eight years at East then transferred to Rock Creek when it opened in 2014.

"I feel very blessed to be able to live and work in Ankeny. My girls graduated from Centennial, and my husband, Matt, grew up here, so we knew we wanted to raise our family here."

Ankeny has had tremendous growth over Smith's time with the district, which can be a challenge to keep up with. Despite that, Smith is thrilled with the families she serves and her colleagues.

The specials team, which includes art, music, PE, media and AELP teachers, meet for lunch every day to check in on each other.

"We started this when COVID hit, and we needed a place to eat, so we started spreading out in the art room for lunch. I am so grateful for these ladies. It is one of the best parts of my day."

Smith likes equipping her students with skills to ensure their future success. One of her favorite things is when they come back to visit. Last year was the first class to graduate who had opened Rock Creek as fifth graders, and Smith found it rewarding to see young people doing such amazing things in the community.

When she's not at school, you'll find her spending time with her husband, Matt, and their beloved dog, Oreo. Their daughters, Kate and Abby, are both grown and have started their own careers as a physician's assistant and clinical mental health counselor, respectively.

"My newest hobby right now is playing pickleball with friends. I love tennis, so pickleball has been a nice transition for me. Recently, I have become a doggy grandma to Ollie and Whitley, which has been a lot of fun for our family." ■



Jane Smith is a counselor at Rock Creek Elementary. Its first fifth graders to attend when it opened graduate high school this year.

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MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

INVESTMENT

By Luke Boyd

ARE YOUR goals 'must have' or 'nice to have'?

Like everyone, you may have a lot of financial goals. But are they all of equal importance? Probably not. And do they share a similar timeline? Again, it's unlikely. So, your first step may be to prioritize your goals — and then follow a process that can help you achieve them.



This process should include the following steps:

• **Identify your goals as “must have” or “nice to have.”** Making sure you can retire comfortably and won't outlive your resources is a “must have” goal. For this goal, you can't compromise — you need to be certain of achieving it, or at least as certain as possible. But if you want to someday own a vacation home by the beach, and you can't ever quite afford it, you might find an acceptable substitute, such as renting. So, it seems fair to say that achieving this goal would be “nice to have.”

• **Prioritize your investment dollars.** Unless you have unlimited sums to invest — and very few of us have that luxury — you'll probably need to prioritize where your investment dollars are going. For your main “must have” goal — retirement — you'll be helped by the ability to automatically invest through your 401(k) or other employer-sponsored retirement plan. If you're on track toward this goal, and you budget carefully and potentially receive salary increases over the years, you may also find space to keep contributing toward the “nice to have” goals.

• **Put “price tags” on your goals.** You need to know what your goals will cost. Of course, you may need to estimate the costs for some goals based on different factors. For example, when you think about your goal of retiring comfortably without outliving your money, you'll need to consider some key questions, including these: When do you want to retire? What sort of retirement lifestyle do you envision? Do you see yourself downsizing your living arrangements? For other goals, though, such as purchasing a vacation home, you could get more specific on how much money you'll need.

• **Follow an appropriate strategy.** The nature of your goals, and their estimated cost, along with your appetite for risk, should drive your investment strategy — but another key factor is time. So, for a long-term goal like retirement, you'll likely need a reasonable amount of quality growth-oriented investments in your portfolio. While these investments — such as stocks and stock-based mutual funds — will fluctuate in value over shorter periods of time, your hope is that, over several decades, they will ultimately provide the growth you need to meet your retirement goal. However, to achieve a goal you want to meet in a year or so — perhaps you're paying for a wedding or planning a long vacation — you may want to consider more stable investments, such as certificates of deposit (CDs), short-term bonds or even cash or cash equivalents. They may not provide much in the way of growth, but you can essentially count on them to provide the amount you need when you need it. You'll need to regularly review the performance of your investment strategy for each goal to assess your progress.

Achieving any goals — whether they're “must have” or “nice to have” — can be challenging. But by identifying and prioritizing these goals, following an appropriate strategy to meet them, and consistently reviewing your approach, you can help yourself get to where you want to go. ■

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Edward Jones. Member SIPC. Information provided by Luke Boyd, 1200 SW State St., Suite B, Ankeny, 515-964-2089.

ABOUT special needs trusts

Social benefit programs designed to help people with disabilities typically have restrictions on how much money the beneficiary can have. Caps on monthly income and total assets owned are a major restriction on parents trying to complete an estate plan.

Leaving money directly to a child with disabilities will jeopardize the ability to receive any help from means-tested government programs like Social Security's Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Medicaid (Title XIX). A special needs trust can be the answer for parents.

A special needs trust (SNT) can hold money given to or inherited by a disabled individual. Because the SNT owns the assets, the assets are excluded from asset limit tests for SSI or Medicaid. The trust can fund quality-of-life improvements for the beneficiary not covered by Medicaid. The SNT is also a way to ensure that other family members — like the siblings of the individual with a beneficiary — aren't left with the responsibility and cost of lifelong care.

The SNT must be drafted so that a beneficiary cannot direct distributions from the trust; the distributions must be purely discretionary. There are restrictions on how the money in the trust



can be used. There are also reporting requirements to the State. The existence of a trust of any kind must be disclosed for eligibility purposes, but a properly-drafted SNT will keep assets excluded from resource calculations.

Most importantly, the SNT must be drafted so that it avoids any Medicaid payback through Estate Recovery when the beneficiary dies. Standard language that is found in other trusts (like a typical minor child trust or a revocable living trust) risks making the entire balance of the SNT subject to repayment for Medicaid costs.

Choosing a trustee who can not only manage funds but also predict the needs and challenges of the beneficiary can be tricky. The trustee needs to understand the specific guidelines under which the SNT can operate.

Because every state has its own system for administering disability benefits, the SNT must be tailored to match those state-specific rules. The SNT is a highly-specialized legal document that requires knowledge of local Medicaid rules and Federal Social Security law. If you have questions, contact an attorney who specializes in estate planning and planning for clients with special needs. ■

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

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BEFORE YOU GO

By Jan Shawver

WHAT WILL your memorial say about you?

Decoration Day (now known as Memorial Day) was first observed in 1868 when people placed flowers on the graves of those who had been killed in the Civil War. After World War I, the day was adjusted to honor the deceased in all wars and became a national holiday in 1971. Today, we observe not only the death of our veterans, but of all loved ones who have died.

It is interesting to walk through a cemetery and read the words on various memorials.

"Loving parents and grandparents," "Always in our hearts," "At home with God," "Gone, but not forgotten." These words can give a glimpse of what was important to those who lie beneath the soil. Some endearments are humorous: "I'd rather be fishing!" or "Sorry I can't get up!"

Does your family know how you want to be remembered? The wisdom you wish to share? When planning for your future memorial, take time to reflect on what you want future generations to know about you. One hundred years from now, the only thing most will know is what they see on your memorial. Choose your words carefully.

Memorial Day — a day to remember loved ones but also a day to begin thinking of how you wish to be remembered. ■

Information provided by Jan Shawver, family services representative, Highland Memory Gardens Cemetery, 1 N.E. 60th Ave., Des Moines, 515-289-2230.



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HEALTH

By Dr. Jesse Kahnk, OD

EYE exams reveal much about rest of body

You've heard the expression that eyes are the windows to the soul. In our world, as eye doctors, eyes are the windows to the rest of the body.

You've likely heard that, if you have diabetes, you need to get your eyes checked. The reason is that the vessels of our retina (the inside of our eyes that contains the photoreceptors we use to see) are some of the smallest blood vessels in our body. They are also some of the only vessels we can actually see to examine. So cardiovascular problems, such as diabetes, can often be detected here first.

Some diseases are first detected on an eye exam, such as cases of acute, painful, red eyes in auto-immune disorders or even changes within our central nervous system.

Dry eyes are also frequently associated with the rest of the body. Some medications, CPAP machines, and some inflammatory or auto-immune disorders can cause anterior surface dryness. I saw a patient this week who was surprised to learn that I can see signs where her rosacea had affected her eyelid's oil glands (called meibomian glands).

I'd encourage you to consider your eyes as a part of your overall health to determine if you need to get them examined. ■



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CASE of the blues?

Your Bs could be to blame

Are those winter blues sticking around into the springtime? Taking a look at your source of B vitamins may alleviate these feelings. Suffering from hormone imbalance, metabolism disturbance, anxiety or depression may be the result of deficient B vitamins.

B vitamins are commonly known to help the body convert carbohydrates into fuel for the body to produce energy. They also help the body metabolize fats and protein. B-complex vitamins are needed for healthy skin, hair and eyes. B vitamins are essential for DNA production, neurotransmitter function and maintenance of the nervous system.

Oral contraceptives are associated with depleted B6, B12 and folate levels. This can be detrimental to neurotransmitter production, energy, memory and mood. Alcohol consumption, even at the social level, can deplete vitamin B1, Thiamine. Thiamine deficiency is shown through headache, fatigue, irritability, depression, and chronic fatigue.

Supplementing B vitamins may be through oral, intramuscular and intravenous routes. Intravenous and intramuscular routes are absorbed almost instantaneously and utilized by the body most efficiently. Start supplementing your Bs and kick those blues today. ■

Information provided by Alex Townsend, BSN, RN, assistant clinic director, IV Nutrition, 2405 S.W. White Birch Drive, Suite 105, Ankeny, 515-686-8400. www.ivnutrition.com



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BEWARE of ticks

With the arrival of spring, many of us are eager to get outside. But beware... the ticks are waiting for us. So, how do we enjoy nature without becoming lunch?

Ticks thrive in wooded and grassy areas. When exploring, it's best to stay on trails. Wear long sleeves and lighter-colored clothing to more easily spot the tiny hitchhikers. Tuck pant legs into socks or boots, and apply a DEET-containing bug repellent to clothing. After being outdoors, remove clothing, shower, and perform a thorough inspection of skin and scalp.

If you find a tick, don't panic. Remove it by grasping with tweezers and pulling gently at the level of the skin. Don't squeeze the body as this can cause regurgitation and increase risk of disease transmission. Wash the wound with soap and water, and apply antibacterial ointment.

In order to spread disease, ticks must be attached for 24-48 hours. In Iowa, the most significant tick-borne illness is Lyme disease. Lyme disease is transmitted only by deer ticks, which are smaller than dog ticks, and the only ticks with black legs.

If you develop symptoms after a tick bite, such as rash, headache, fever or joint aches, see a doctor. ■

Information provided by Dr. Laura Myers, MD FAAD, co-owner, Iowa Dermatology Consultants, 2675 N. Ankeny Blvd., Suites 101/103, Ankeny, 515-348-4097.



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For acute and chronic pain

"Patients with chronic low-back pain treated by chiropractors showed greater improvement and satisfaction at one month than patients treated by family physicians. Satisfaction scores were higher for chiropractic patients. A higher proportion of chiropractic patients (56% vs. 13%) reported that their low-back pain was better or much better, whereas nearly one-third of medical patients reported their low-back pain was worse or much worse." - *Nyiendo et al (2000), Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics*

In a randomized, controlled trial, 183 patients with neck pain were randomly allocated to manual therapy (spinal mobilization), physiotherapy (mainly exercise), or general practitioner care (counseling, education and drugs) in a 52-week study. The clinical outcome measures showed that manual therapy resulted in faster recovery than physiotherapy and general-practitioner care. Moreover, total costs of the manual therapy-treated patients were about one-third of the costs of physiotherapy or general practitioner care. - *Korthals-de Bos et al (2003), British Medical Journal*

In comparison to other treatment alternatives

"Acute and chronic chiropractic patients experienced better outcomes in pain, functional disability, and patient satisfaction; clinically important differences in pain and disability improvement were found for chronic patients." - *Haas et al (2005), Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics*

"In our randomized, controlled trial, we compared the effectiveness of manual therapy, physical therapy, and continued care by a general practitioner in patients with nonspecific neck pain. The success rate at seven weeks was twice as high for the manual therapy group (68.3% as for the continued care group - general practitioner). Manual therapy scored better than physical therapy on all outcome measures. Patients receiving manual therapy had fewer absences from work than patients receiving physical therapy or continued care, and manual therapy and physical therapy each resulted in statistically significant less analgesic use than continued care." - *Hoving et al (2002), Annals of Internal Medicine*

For headaches

"Cervical spine manipulation was associated with significant improvement in headache outcomes in trials involving patients with neck pain and or neck dysfunction and headache." - *Duke Evidence Report, McCrory, Penzlen, Hasselblad, Gray (2001)*

"The results of this study show that spinal manipulation is an effective treatment for tension headaches. . . Four weeks after cessation of treatment . . . the patients who received spinal manipulation experienced a sustained therapeutic benefit in all major outcomes in contrast to the patients that received amitriptyline therapy, who reverted to baseline values." - *Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics, Boline et al. (1995)* ■

Information provided by Christopher M. Renze, D.C., D.I.B.C.N., of Renze Chiropractic Clinic, P.C. For more information, visit www.renzechiro.com or call the office at 965-3844.

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'Atalanta'

In my head, there's a whole interwoven universe of feminist mythological retellings. Like a Marvel Cinematic Universe, but for ancient stories badly in need of a revival. Next up in this wide and wonderful series of stories is perhaps the greatest heroine in all of Greek mythology, the incredible Atalanta.

Born an unwanted daughter of a king and left to die as a result, the wild and free Atalanta grew up under the care of a mother bear and the goddess Artemis, who gave her the kind of freedom most other women could only dream of — at a price, of course. Atalanta becomes something unique in a world built for men, a woman who embraces her femininity while also going toe to toe with every male hero she meets.

This incredibly beautiful retelling of an ancient, inspiring myth is everything I want in a historical story — action-packed, heartfelt, accurate and startlingly relevant. Jennifer Saint is a master storyteller, and I can't imagine anyone imbuing this tale with more care and precision. Don't let this incredible story stay forgotten; it's too good to miss. ■ — *Review by Julie Goodrich*



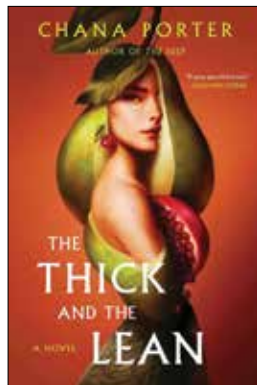
By Jennifer Saint
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304 pages
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Flatiron Books

'The Thick and the Lean'

It used to be that dystopian novels that take things to seemingly fantastical extremes were simply meant as allegories, a lesson and a warning wrapped in the shape of a far-fetched future. And yet these days a future in which a fascist, religious extremist government controls arbitrary aspects of individual lives seems less unrealistic and a little more horrifyingly prescient.

Beatrice grew up in a culture in which pleasure from food was strictly forbidden. Every calorie counted, every bite scrutinized. Her secret love of cooking and her joy in eating threatens to upend her entire life, until she discovers a book that will change everything. Parallel to Beatrice's story, Reiko is a brilliant student caught in a classist net with only a few bad choices left — until she, too, finds the same book and takes control of her life in dramatic fashion.

Issues of class, body-shaming, misogyny, racism and more weave through this thought-provoking and powerful story that ends on an uncertain note, leaving room for interpretation and reflection in the best way. Haunting and exhilarating. ■ — *Review by Julie Goodrich*



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ENJOYS growth of Ankeny

Thompson moved her business — and herself.



Sara Thompson, pictured with daughter Hana, has lived in Ankeny for seven years and enjoys what it has to offer.

When Sara Thompson decided to expand her Ames-based house cleaning business, phClean, Ankeny seemed like a natural option. So, too, did moving to town herself.

“I wanted to live in the community the new business was in and loved the growth happening here, as well as the proximity to what the metro has to offer,” she says. “Since my daughter was grown, I was free to move.”

Today, Thompson has chalked up seven years of living in Ankeny. Her current home near one of the town’s golf courses on the edge of town backs up to a wooded area.

“I knew this was the home for me when I saw the backyard and the deck,” she says. “I love getting birds, deer and other critters visiting while also having a quiet, friendly neighborhood in the front yard.”

Thompson also enjoys the little sitting area in the front of her home, as well as looking out the windows in her home office.

As for her neighborhood, “people walk!” she says. “They say hello, walk their dogs and

walk with their families. I enjoy making a loop around the neighborhood and burning some energy.”

As a small business owner and member of the chamber herself, Thompson appreciates how Ankeny is welcoming to new businesses and is growth minded.

“The Ankeny Area Chamber of Commerce is great to work with, and the City and organizations that hold events for the community put in a lot of planning and hard work for our benefit,” she says.

Thompson attends Keystone Church, which has been a great resource and community of friends and support for her, she says.

She can also be credited with starting the Ankeny People Community Group on Facebook as a way to stay connected and have a kind and respectful place for others to share community information and ask questions. Additionally, Thompson is an alumna of the local Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses group that DMACC sponsors.



Ultimately, there are many reasons to love Ankeny for Thompson.

“Living in Ankeny allows me to be in the center of our house cleaning business growth between our Ames office, Ankeny office and upcoming Waukee office,” she says. “We have DMACC, we have growth and networking opportunities here, and we have Saylorville, with walking and biking paths, which I love using. I’m not too far from my parents in Nevada, which is important to me, and I can drive to the airport quickly when it’s time for an adventure!” ■

HOW DOES home care promote senior independence?

The importance of senior independence

Independence is a vital part of life that can affect your mental and physical health. For seniors, difficulties with mobility and health conditions can adversely impact their level of independence and confidence. It is no secret that keeping seniors healthy, both physically and mentally, is the key to living independently longer. Home care is an invaluable resource for seniors who wish to maintain their independence in the comfort of their own home.

In-home caregivers work to improve the quality of life for seniors in many ways. From a few hours a day to 24/7 care, in-home care is extremely helpful in promoting senior independence.

Assisting with daily tasks

Household chores can be a challenge for seniors as they may deal with mobility issues or other



chronic health concerns. In-home care services can help with daily tasks, allowing seniors to remain independent and healthy in their own homes. These services include meal preparation, medical reminders, light housekeeping and more.

Transportation assistance

With transportation assistance, seniors can travel to important appointments, grocery stores, and other social activities. By giving seniors access to consistent transportation, they can save time and avoid the stress of figuring out ride share programs or working around someone else's schedule. Transportation assistance is a necessary resource for seniors to maintain their autonomy and stay engaged with their peers.

Emotional and mental stimulation

Emotional support and mental stimulation are essential in promoting independence and quality of life for seniors. Caregivers can provide emotional support by assisting seniors in staying connected to their community or staying in

touch with loved ones. Engaging in storytelling, arts and crafts, online games, and other hobbies can be a great way to promote mental stimulation for seniors.

Safety

In-home care can help seniors remain in their home by assisting in making necessary safety adjustments such as installing durable medical equipment (DME) or removing potential hazards. This can help seniors remain safe and independent in their own home for longer by reducing the risk of falls or other accidents.

Peace of mind

In-home care is a great way to help seniors stay independent and promote their overall wellbeing. Knowing that your aging loved one's needs are being met in the comfort of their home can bring peace of mind to everyone involved. ■

Information provided by Jeff Raines, owner, Senior Helpers, 2301 W. First St., Ankeny, 515-964-7297.



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AYP summer bash

The Ankeny Young Professionals (AYP) is a group of professionals that reside, work, or have a special interest in the Ankeny area. AYP offers professional development opportunities, as well as multiple events each month for networking, community outreach, and socializing.



AYP began in 2004 as a small sub-committee of the Ankeny Area Chamber of Commerce with only a handful of members. Over the years, it has grown to have its own board of directors, and membership has climbed to more than 140, most of that just within the past year.

On top of networking events and professional development opportunities, AYP puts on a handful of larger events throughout the year: UnCorked (wine event), Summer Bash, Tailgate, Boos & Brews, a HolidAYParty, Annual Kickoff, and a St. Patty's Day Party. Coming up in June are UnCorked and Summer Bash.

AYP Summer Bash is held annually in June. It is a free, family-friendly community event that provides food and numerous activities for families to enjoy, such as a petting zoo, face painting, balloon artists, mascots, princesses and superheroes. For a number of years, this event was held in Sunrise Park and saw a couple hundred attendees. The AYP Board was responsible for providing and grilling the food that we served.

Enter the pandemic and AYP Summer Bash (and the majority of events) were canceled. When everything began to open back up, we were approached about moving our event to a new location, Uptown Ankeny. We were a little hesitant at first because we had been in the same spot for so long but, in the end, we made the choice to move, thanks primarily to the Uptown Ankeny Association that became our Presenting Sponsor.

In 2022, Summer Bash, as AYP and the community had known it, changed drastically. Located right in the heart of Uptown Ankeny, next to the Ankeny Market & Pavilion, Summer Bash blocked off streets, brought in even more vendors and activities for kids and families to enjoy: face painting, balloon artists, inflatables, petting zoo, princesses, superheroes, mascots and even Pikachu, and nearly doubled its normal attendance. 2022 also saw a change in support from Ankeny businesses. Not only did we see an increase in sponsorships, we also saw major support in the form of in-kind donations, from the food we prepared, along with the grill and someone to run it.

This year, 2023, we will be back in Uptown Ankeny. We look forward to bringing back some of the same vendors, along with some new ones. Come check it out Saturday, June 17 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

If you are interested in joining AYP or supporting events and programming, email chairperson@ankenyyoungprofessionals.org. ■

Information provided by Tiffany Tope, Ex-Officio of Ankeny Young Professionals. Community Relations Representative at Ankeny Funeral Home & Crematory.

OUT & ABOUT



A ribbon cutting was held for ETCH Outdoor Living at 389 S.E. Oralabor Road, Suite 101, on April 10.



A ribbon cutting was held for Big Al's BBQ at 1615 S.W. Main St., Suite 106, on April 18.

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A ribbon cutting was held for Floor Coverings International at 121 S.E. Shurfine Drive, Suite 3, on April 20.



Dr. Colton Mentzer and Dr. Kevin Bloyer, Bloyer Chiropractic and Wellness, receive their Residents' Choice certificate.



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