

WEST DES MOINES
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SEPTEMBER 2023

Living

MAGAZINE

Making a house *a home*

**Residents share their
home improvement
experiences**

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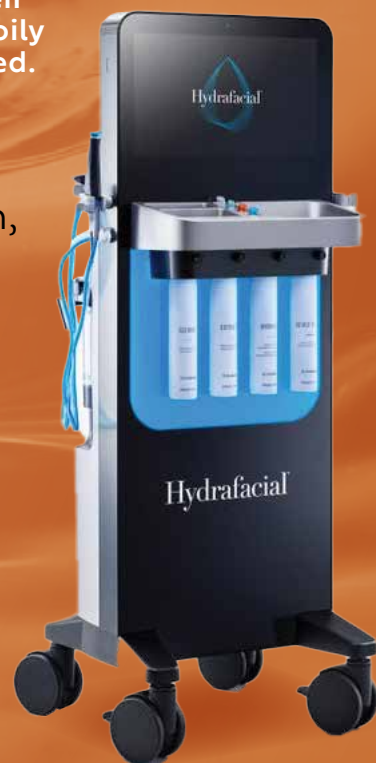
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1: Storgard, Maurico-Lee, Zaiac, Karnik. Efficacy and Tolerability of Hydrafacial Clarifying Treatment Series in the Treatment of Acne Vulgaris. J Clin Aesthet Dermatol. 2022; 15(12): 42-46.



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WELCOME

BACK TO the project list

Days are getting shorter. Nights are getting cooler. And the home improvement project list keeps getting longer.

Sound familiar?

Well, the "I-will-get-to-it-after-summer" excuse won't work much longer, as the fall season approaches. The real trick is to start and finish these projects before the holiday season arrives. Unfortunately, we all only have 24 hours in a day, and other tasks and responsibilities often take priority. As such, we need to turn to local professionals to do the jobs right. You are in luck, as we once again are offering ideas and solutions from businesses and contractors that may help push your projects along.

We are here to help with another issue featuring the home improvement stories packed with examples of what area residents have done to spruce up their properties.

If you are one of the fortunate ones who have your projects completed and would like to be featured in an upcoming issue, please send me a note. We would enjoy sharing your successes, too.

Thanks for reading, and good luck on those fall projects. ■



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Making a house *a home*

**Residents share their
home improvement
experiences**

By Jackie Wilson

Ever think how much nicer it would be to sit in your comfy chair in the evening if only your living room weren't drab — and you didn't have orange shag carpet? Or imagine stepping into a roomy shower instead of that tiny pink bathtub like the one in Grandma's house? Or dream of a laundry room on the main floor instead of in the musty basement? Or maybe turning that basement into a family room and entertainment hub? Residents with similar dreams decided it was time to make some changes, and they share their home improvement experiences to inspire others.

Stephanie Gates' kitchen remodel was prompted by water damage. She now has the kitchen of her dreams. Photo by Jackie Wilson



FEATURE

Water leak spurs remodel

Stephanie and Zachary Gates moved into their West Des Moines home in 2016. The house included all the amenities, but the home's interior was "too brown."

"The house made all of our checklist, but it was all the wrong colors. We wanted to lighten things up and thought we could do it after we bought the house," Stephanie says.

Several years passed. The home was livable, but a major house catastrophe made their decision move quickly.

The home had a water leak from the top floor through the wall and floor. At the time, they considered repairing it. Then, they realized it was a perfect time to finally address the list of things they wanted when they first moved in.

They enlisted help from Red Door Remodeling. Besides the obvious repairs, they wanted several other modifications in the home.

"We felt like the microwave was the focal point and didn't want that taking over the kitchen when you first walked in,"



AFTER

The Gates' kitchen underwent a drastic makeover, from black countertops and wood finishes to bright colors.

Stephanie says.

The floor and cabinets blended together with dark colors, and the family room looked cut off from the kitchen.

"We wanted it to look like one room instead of separated," she says.



BEFORE

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AFTER!



Before



AFTER!



Before

“””

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The dark brown kitchen cupboards with their black crown molding were both painted soft gray. They extended the center island so there was more counter space, along with bar-height seating options. The microwave moved out of sight to an expanded pantry area.

The original wood flooring was in good shape, but with two kids and a dog, they chose to overlay it with a more durable luxury vinyl plank flooring.

“We kept the real wood underneath, so, if another owner wants, they can revert to that original flooring,” she says.

Canned lights were replaced with pendant lights. Stephanie says she was pleased when they finally removed a random kitchen light that was placed awkwardly and uncentered.

The honey oak staircase railing was replaced with a black one.

“We tried to open it up with color and replaced the railing,” she says.

The process took a while since other homeowners were remodeling homes during the pandemic.

“We had to wait our turn. Red House offered a great plan, and the biggest benefit is that they

did everything — they kept it organized with all the contractors coming in.”

Stephanie’s favorite redo is the fireplace, which now serves as a focal point. They kept the fireplace, took out the black tile and installed brick to the ceiling. She likes how bright everything turned out.

“It’s more cohesive. Everything was the same brown,” she says.

The Gates still have more remodeling in the works. They want to redo a dining room and complete other small projects in the house.

“It’s never-ending,” Stephanie says.

Imperfect home offers potential

Sarah Trone Garriott and her husband, Will Garriott, were on a deadline for purchasing a new house. Sarah is a state senator, and her district was in Windsor Heights. In 2021, her district shifted west, so she needed to establish residency in West Des Moines quickly to be able to run for office for Senate District 14.

It was 2021, and the demand for houses was high, which meant few homes were available, nor could they build anything quickly enough. They found a home that included ample room

for two dogs and two sons, and it was in a good neighborhood. It wasn’t perfect, but there was potential. The biggest downfall was the previous owner smoked cigarettes, and the smell permeated the home.

“Everything needed replacing, resurfacing or painting. It scared off a lot of buyers,” Sarah says. “We didn’t have much choice, but it had exciting possibilities.”

They wanted to remodel immediately and fix up the place before they moved in, but the timing didn’t work out. Sarah began painting the “ugly” taupe ceilings and numerous walls until workers could come in.

Tearing out all the carpet in the family room and updating the kitchen was their priority. They replaced the dark wood cabinets and re-did the layout of the kitchen. A new window added above the kitchen sink brightens up the place.

They put in black granite for a center island, which was a more affordable option. Sarah was going to put in a backsplash behind the kitchen counters but opted for unique brick instead.

“We like the natural stone colors,” she says.

The couple wanted to install the cabinets before installing the wood floors, but the

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BEFORE

cabinets were on back order. While waiting for cabinets, the family of four lived in the basement for four months.

“We had a lot of family togetherness and ate out a lot. Life was chaos. We moved stuff into the garage, and we lived out of boxes,” Sarah recalls.

She enlisted the help of Remodelworks! for several projects. Wolfgang Studios offered design work in laying out the kitchen. Architectural Surfaces in Grimes provided natural stones for several surfaces.

Sarah is a DIY-er and enjoys fixing up items on her own. It’s not just to save money, but it’s the satisfaction of doing it herself, she says.

As the remodel slowly came together, the sunroom became an ideal dining area. She built



AFTER

The kitchen layout was altered and a variety of materials used to give it an updated look. After photo by Jackie Wilson

a kitchen table just in time for Thanksgiving by first purchasing the table legs, staining and refinishing the wood while Larry put the pieces together.

“We went with wood floors, which should last the lifetime of the home,” she added.

A favorite spot is the open kitchen, which is now more welcoming to guests.

“We love the counter space, and now our family can all be together. It’s a better space for



Sarah Trone Garriott with husband, Will Garriott, and sons, Ian and Gus, enjoy time in the family room with pets Bruce and Puddin’. When the family moved into their home, they began the process of remodeling to suit their needs. Photo by Jackie Wilson



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FEATURE

entertaining,” she says.

The rest of the decor is combining old with the new. Her grandmother’s reupholstered chair is a favorite spot in the family room. Antique lamps and tables add finishing touches.

“Everything feels unique to me. When we walked in initially, it was dark and basic builder grade. Now, everything is brightened up and makes us feel more like us,” she says.

The couple has more upcoming projects on the upper level, including redoing the bathrooms and landscaping outside. Yet, Sarah is up for the challenge.

“It’s been so much work. I love to paint. The house had exciting possibilities, and now it feels like it’s ours.”

Formal dining out; more kitchen space in

Jamie and Ben Rempe’s home in West Des Moines is in an ideal location, close to amenities, nestled in a great neighborhood.

Yet, the layout inside wasn’t functional. With three kids, they needed a large landing spot for shoes and backpacks. The wood was too dark, and a formal living room went unused.



AFTER

Ben and Jamie Rempe of West Des Moines, along with their dog, Agnes, enjoy their new kitchen. Photo by Jackie Wilson

As the pair discussed options, they hired an expert from Red House Remodeling. They say they were thrilled with the designer’s unique suggestions.

“We told her what we were looking for,” Ben says. “We thought we needed to add on. Instead,



BEFORE

Isabella, Charlotte and Alice in their kitchen before color and texture was added in the remodel. The navy color ties in the upstairs and downstairs. After photo by Jackie Wilson

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FEATURE

they were able to rearrange with the square footage we already had.”

The biggest change was in the kitchen. The formal dining room was eliminated as they pushed the kitchen walls back two feet. In a portion of the old dining room is now a bigger laundry room, mudroom and a place to store kids’ items.

“Now we don’t have to look at dirty shoes, as it’s out of sight,” Ben says.

The other side of the old dining room includes a large walk-in pantry, which houses a secret door.

“When we close the pantry, it looks like it’s a cabinet face with clean lines. Ben wanted a ‘surprise’ door,” Jamie says.

Next up was changing the dark wood near the fireplace and windows, painting it a soft white. They tore out the carpet and tile, shifting the flooring to a lighter wood color. The kitchen cupboards were already white, so they painted navy on the expanded island and added copper-colored light fixtures. It was easy to figure out color schemes.

“The designer showed us ideas, and we bookmarked our favorites. The designer had a

good sense of what we liked, and we didn’t have to sort through hundreds of options,” Jamie says.

When the couple moved into their home in 2013, the basement remained unfinished and often served as a racetrack for the kids’ bicycles. It was time to update that space as well. They put in a mini climbing wall and a play and craft area. A child-size door opens to a tiny hideaway for the girls. A large screen TV with a big couch is ideal for movie nights and sleepovers. The navy downstairs coordinates with the color scheme upstairs.

A front room, which was part of the formal dining room, was made smaller and is now a music room with a painted wall feature.

“The girls can practice the violin, and the sound is more contained,” Ben says.

The family was fortunate to live temporarily in Ben’s parents’ condo during the remodel.

“It was a tight fit for four months. We were



When finishing the basement, the Rempes added a climbing wall. Photo by Jackie Wilson

fortunate to not live through the mess,” he says.

Now the place is complete. Ben says it was worth the wait.

“I love that we can each have our own space but be together,” he says. “It seems like everything opened up, and it feels so much bigger in here. We looked at other homes. We could have bought new, but it was expensive. We wanted to reinvest what we have here. We’ll be here for a while.” ■

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- Vision insurance helps pay for routine exams, glasses or contacts and can offer discounts on lasik eye surgery. Vision exams become more important as we strain our eyes using more digital technology and spending more time at work and personal time on our computers, tablets and cell phones. Vision exams are also important for children who don't understand what they should be able to

see. I got glasses when I was in third grade and remember the wow moment when I could easily see the chalkboard. (OK, I know I'm aging myself. Yes, I went to school when the teacher actually wrote with chalk on a board.)

- Short and long term disability coverage replaces income when not able to work due to an illness, accident or maternity leave. A disability, even for a short period of time, with the loss of income and medical bills on top of it, can really throw finances into a tailspin.

- Cancer and critical illness coverage can help pay for medical out-of-pocket costs and other burdens caused by an ongoing illness.

- Voluntary life insurance is an easy and convenient way for an employee to increase their life insurance on themselves, their spouse and dependents. ■

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EVENTS IN THE AREA

Check for cancellations

WDM Cops Care Pack the Patrol Car

Friday, Oct. 6, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

West Des Moines Police Department, 250 Mills Civic Parkway

The West Des Moines Police Department is looking for your help to pack a patrol car full with personal supplies. All donations will go to the West Des Moines Human Services Personals Pantry. Items needed include shampoo, conditioner, body wash, soap, toothpaste, floss, toothbrushes, baby shampoo and soap, brushes and combs, lotion, diapers, diaper wipes, pull ups, feminine hygiene products, disposable razors, laundry detergent, shaving cream, Ziploc storage bags, and other personal care products.

Book discussion

Every third Thursday, 7-8 p.m.

Jordan House Museum, 2001 Fuller Road, West Des Moines

The book discussion title for Sept. 21 is "So Big" by Edna Ferber, presented by the West Des Moines Public Library and the West Des Moines Historical Society. The Oct. 19 title is "Circling the Sun" by Paula McLain. Nov. 16, the title is "In the Time of the Butterflies" by Julia Alvarez. Dec. 21 will be a discussion of the best books participants have read.



Sunday Supper Fundraiser

Sept. 24, 5 p.m.

The annual Sunday Supper in Our Town fundraising event will be held at Fleming's. Proceeds benefit the programs of West Des Moines Human Services. Tickets are \$150 each (\$125 for young professionals). For more information and sponsorships, call 515-222-3660 or email friendsofWDMHS@gmail.com.

First Responders Appreciation Breakfast

Sept. 21

Embassy Club West

The keynote speaker for the West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce First Responders Appreciation Breakfast will be Jim Olson, a former CIA spy with an extraordinary journey and captivating story to tell. The event is presented by West Bank and supported by Aureon. Olson is a graduate of Valley High School. In addition to his remarkable achievements, Professor Olson is the acclaimed author of "Fair Play: The Moral Dilemmas of Spying." His book sheds light on the complex ethical considerations that confront intelligence professionals and provides a unique perspective on the inner workings of intelligence agencies.

The First Responders Appreciation Breakfast is held each year to honor all West Des Moines First Responders and their families. This event is a unique opportunity for our communities to ensure these brave individuals receive the recognition they deserve. Registration is now open on the WDM Chamber's website, wdmchamber.org, under events. Attendees also have the opportunity to purchase additional tickets that will be distributed to first responders. Ten percent of proceeds from registration will be given to the West Des Moines Public Safety Cadets.

IllumiFest

Sept. 23, 4-9 p.m.

West Des Moines City Campus

IllumiFest, a fall festival of light, will feature tethered hot air balloon rides, lantern painting, inflatables, face painters, balloon artist, circus demonstrations, games, food trucks, Faculty Lounge concert, fireworks and more. For more information, visit wdm.iowa.gov/illumifest. ■

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Regardless of how the markets may perform, consider making the following part of your investment philosophy:

Diversification. The saying “don’t put all your eggs in one basket” has some application to investing. Over time, certain asset classes may perform better than others. If your assets are mostly held in one kind of investment, you could find yourself under a bit of pressure if that asset class experiences some volatility.

Keep in mind that diversification is an approach to help manage investment risk. It does not eliminate the risk of loss if an investment sees a decline in price.

Asset allocation strategies also are used in portfolio management. When financial professionals ask you questions about your goals, time horizon and tolerance for risk, they are getting a better idea about what asset classes



may be appropriate for your situation. But like diversification, asset allocation is an approach to help manage investment risk. It does not eliminate the risk of loss if an investment sees a decline in price.

Patience. Impatient investors can get too focused on the day-to-day doings of the financial markets. They can be looking for short-term opportunities rather than longer-term potential. A patient investor understands that markets fluctuate and has built a portfolio based on their time horizon, risk tolerance and goals. A short-term focus may add stress and anxiety to your life and could lead to frustration with the investing process.

Consistency. Most people invest a little at a time, within their budget and with regularity. They invest \$50 or \$100 or more per month in their retirement account or similar investments. They are investing on “autopilot” to help themselves attempt to build wealth over time.

Consistent investing does not protect against a loss in a declining market or

guarantee a profit in a rising market. Consistent investing, sometimes referred to as dollar-cost averaging, is the process of investing a fixed amount of money in an investment vehicle at regular intervals, usually monthly, for an extended period of time regardless of price.

Investors should evaluate their financial ability to continue making purchases through periods of declining and rising prices. The return and principal value of stock prices will fluctuate as market conditions change. Shares, when sold, may be worth more or less than their original cost.

If you don’t have an investment strategy, consider talking to a qualified financial professional today. ■

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LIBRARY

By Maggie Martin

WEST Des Moines Public Library news

Iowa Files History Series Returns

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Program with the West Des Moines Historical Society. We're excited to have them back again for a series running monthly from September to May. This joint library and Historical Society event is free and open to the public thanks to the support of West Des Moines Historical Society members, EMC Insurance Foundation, the West Des Moines Library Friends Foundation and the Iowa Arts Council.

All Iowa Files programs will be livestreamed on the West Des Moines Historical Society's Facebook page, and all videos will be closed captioned. They will also be uploaded to their YouTube channel after the event takes place.

Next Up: Hysterical Legislation: The Early Years of Women's Suffrage in Iowa

Sunday, Sept. 24, 2:30-3:30 p.m.

In 1870, the Iowa Legislature passed a resolution that would have made it legal for women to vote after a second approval in 1872. In the intervening time, conflicts in the women's movement caused upheaval, and the second approval never came. What were these issues and just how progressive were Iowa suffragists? Join Kate Levasseur to learn about Iowa's woman suffragist leaders and their role both at home and on the national stage.

MORE UPCOMING EVENTS

We Shall Be Monsters: How Mary Shelley and Frankenstein Influenced Modern Society

Sunday, Sept. 17, 2-3:30 p.m. (adults)

Historian Kathy Wilson looks at the life of Mary Shelley to learn more about the author and understand not only what influenced her writing, but also why we still are fascinated with Frankenstein 200 years later. No registration required.

Perennial and Fall Bulb Swap

Saturday, Sept. 23, 1-4 p.m. (adults)

Now that you've learned how to split and transport perennials, bring your plants to the library to swap with other patrons. Must bring perennials and bulbs in healthy condition. No registration.

Tips on Creating Healthier Habits/ Lifestyle

Thursday, Sept. 28, 6-7 p.m. (adults)

This health presentation aims to educate and inspire individuals to adopt healthier habits in their daily lives. This presentation is given by Madisun VanGundy, Public Health communications officer, Polk County Health Department. No registration. ■

RECIPE

POWER weeknight family meals with pecans

(Family Features) Back-to-school season means many families are busier than ever, leaving less time to plan weeknight meals. While a new school year brings plenty of exciting moments, it also adds up to early mornings, long days and late evenings, making it tough to keep nutrition top-of-mind.

With new routines and jam-packed calendars, quick and easy recipes can be the solutions you need. Swapping out complicated dishes for simple dinners and make-ahead snacks allows you to make your loved ones' health a priority while also managing hectic schedules.

To help make those simple yet tasty menu additions a reality, look to a flavor favorite and nutrition powerhouse like pecans. They're the ideal nut to keep on hand to incorporate into favorite meals and after-school snacks.

Taste is just the beginning when it comes to pecans. Their nutritious punch provides a unique mix of health-promoting nutrients. Plus, they're a versatile ingredient that can shine in a wide range of flavor profiles from sweet or spicy to salty, smoky and savory.

For more back-to-school recipe inspiration, visit EatPecans.com. ■

Mac and cheese with pecan breadcrumbs

Cook time: 50 minutes

Servings: 6

- 8 ounces cavatappi pasta
- 1 teaspoon salt, plus additional for salting pasta water, to taste
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 block (8 ounces) cheddar cheese
- 1/2 cup raw pecan pieces
- 15 ounces part-skim ricotta cheese
- 4 tablespoons sour cream
- 1/4 teaspoon ground pepper
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten

DIRECTIONS

- Preheat oven to 375 F.
- Cook cavatappi in salted boiling water. Drain, reserving 1/2 cup pasta cooking water. Return pasta to pot and stir in butter.
- Using box grater, shred cheddar cheese.
- Using food processor, combine 1/4 cup shredded cheddar cheese with pecans. Process to coarse breadcrumb consistency.
- Add remaining cheddar cheese, ricotta,



sour cream, 1 teaspoon salt and pepper to warm pasta. Stir until thoroughly combined. Add egg; stir. Add 2-4 tablespoons reserved pasta water to loosen mixture; stir until smooth.

- Pour into buttered 9-inch square or round casserole dish and top evenly with pecan topping.
- Bake 30 minutes.

Substitutions: Use pre-shredded cheese in place of cheddar cheese block. Use pasta of choice in place of cavatappi.

HONOR OUR VETERANS

Iowa Living magazines will be saluting veterans in November issues. If you are a veteran who would like to be included, please send a photo (military or current) and the following information:

NAME:
TOWN YOU CURRENTLY LIVE IN:
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DEPLOYMENTS:
QUOTE: Please answer the question,
"How can the public best honor veterans?"

Family members submitting on behalf of veterans should include the veteran's answer to the above question.

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COMMUNITY

LEGACY Circle supports museum

West Des Moines Historical Society creates
membership group.



Members of the Baker and McFadden families, including Vicki Baker, attend the announcement of the Legacy Circle of the West Des Moines Historical Society.

The West Des Moines Historical Society's board of directors has established a membership group and named it the Baker-McFadden Legacy Circle in honor of two key members of the Historical Society.

Vicki Baker and Bonnie McFadden were volunteers in the early days of the West Des Moines Historical Society and were instrumental in saving the Jordan House from demolition. Once this landmark was saved, Vicki and Bonnie continued pouring their blood, sweat and tears into restoration, fundraising and educating the community on the story of the Underground Railroad.

Former West Des Moines Mayor Gene Meyer introduced the Legacy Circle at an event at the Jordan House Museum Sunday, June 11. Members of the Baker and McFadden families were present, including Vicki Baker.

"My mom, Bonnie McFadden, taught me about the importance of community through her work to save and restore the Jordan House Museum," says Dee McFadden Townsend. "What a legacy she's left us. Now you can leave your own legacy through the Baker-McFadden Legacy Circle."

For information on how you can be a member of the Baker-McFadden Legacy Circle, visit <https://www.wdmhs.org/west-des-moines-historical-legacy-society/> or call Gale Brubaker at 515-225-1286. Planned estate gifts to the Baker-McFadden Legacy Circle will help ensure that the WDMHS has future funds available to preserve and share the stories and artifacts celebrating West Des Moines' rich history. ■

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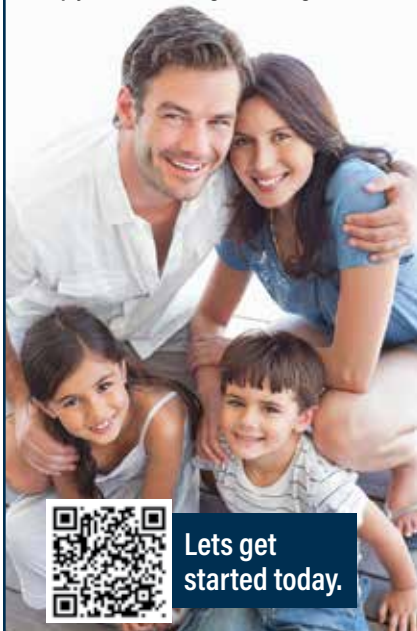


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ESTATE planning mistakes to avoid

When it comes to making an estate plan, many people are not as diligent as they should be. Because estate plans decide where your assets will be transferred at your death, it is important to have your affairs in order. Here are some common mistakes to avoid when creating your estate plan:



• **Not having an estate plan.** The most common estate planning mistake is not having a plan at all. While nobody likes to think about it, death is unavoidable and inevitable. Setting out your plan is one of the most important things a person can do. By planning, you are ensuring that your personal and financial affairs will be handled properly. Those left to handle

your personal and financial affairs after you're gone will also thank you.

• **Doing your estate plan yourself.** I know what you're thinking — attorneys are expensive. And you're right. Estate plans can be complicated documents. While you could write your own will or use a generic template, that is risky. These poorly-drafted documents could potentially be expensive for you or your heirs. Further, homemade documents may not be enforceable at all, meaning your assets would pass according to the intestacy statutes and not how you directed. Play it safe and find an attorney you trust to advise you what planning opportunities are available to you.

• **Not planning for disability.** A proper, well-drafted estate plan will not only specify what happens to your assets when you die, but also for what happens in the event you become incapacitated. It is important to

have both general and financial power of attorney documents in your estate plan. These documents appoint someone you trust to act on your behalf in the event that you cannot act for yourself.

• **Failing to update your plan.** Once you have gotten an estate plan in place, it is important to keep it up to date. Estate laws are always changing. Further, any life event could greatly affect your estate plan. It is important to review your estate plan frequently to ensure your assets are transferring in the way you wish.

To ensure that you're not making these and other common estate planning mistakes, talk to your attorney. ■

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

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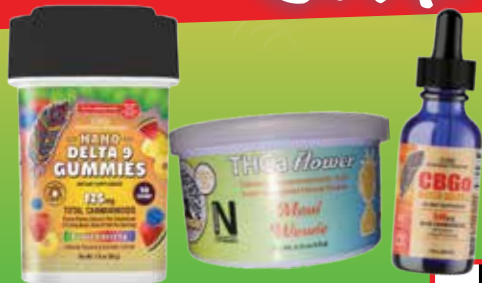
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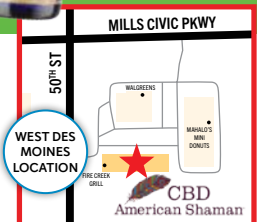


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HEALTH By Ashley Powell

THE ENTOURAGE effect

The cannabis plant has hundreds of different cannabinoids, all providing a variety of different effects. CBD and THC are the most abundant and easily the most notable. Since the cannabis industry has flourished these past years, cultivators have been motivated to combine these powerful cannabinoids to note what a difference they could make when working together.



Many people use CBD or THC for relief from discomfort, and studies have shown users get better results when using a product that combines both. This enhanced result is known as “the entourage effect.” Other popular combinations include CBD with CBG. Since they both have similar effects but are not psychoactive, users who do not want the “high” associated with THC can still benefit from the entourage effect. CBG is known for providing a boost of natural energy and focus and also helps with anxiety and depression, making it an excellent partner to CBD.

Those who are seeking help with sleep are recommended to try CBN. While isolated CBN helps many, those who desire better results should try a combination of CBN with CBD. Ask your local hemp consultant to show you what products may produce the best entourage effect. ■

Information provided by Ashley Powell, CBD American Shaman, 800 S. 50th St., #106, West Des Moines, 515-380-5251 and 3418 Eighth St. S.W., #3, Altoona, 515-967-4036. Resources: Russo, E. B. (2011). TAMING THC: Potential cannabis synergy and phytocannabinoid-terpenoid entourage effects. *British Journal of Pharmacology*, 163(7), 1344-1364. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1476-5381.2011.01238.x>

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HEALTH By Monica Meier

WAYS to help your kids open up more

School is starting, and kids' schedules are about to get more hectic. So, now is the time to talk with your kids and check in with them about how their days are going. This can be as simple as using open-ended questions about their day to get the information you are looking for. Instead of asking, “How was your day?” and getting the blah answer of, “Fine,” ask questions that require more thought. For example, “What was the best part of science today?” “Who did you sit at lunch with today?” “What was the funniest thing you heard today?” This way, the answers are more than one word and give you something to continue the conversation. When they answer who they sat with, add on to that conversation with, “Who had the best lunch? What was in it?” or “Where was ____ today?” This way, the conversation is continuing with your child without the child being pressured with the same questions every day.



Another line of questioning that can wrap around the child is asking, “What would you have changed about today if you could change anything?” Depending on the answer, it opens up a lot of different conversations with your child that have more than a standard “Fine” answer. ■

Information provided by Monica Meier, PhD(ABD), tLMHC of SS Therapy and Consulting, Ltd, 4725 Merle Hay Road, Suite 205, Des Moines, IA 50322, 515-528-8135, meier@sstherapyandconsulting.com, www.sstherapyandconsulting.com.

ORTHODONTIC FAQs

Do aligners work just as well as braces?

A good orthodontist will customize recommendations for each individual. Treatment should be determined based on the patient's concerns, goals and lifestyle. The orthodontist should take all the items into consideration to make a plan. There are some cases where aligners would be a better fit or produce a better result than braces. There are also other cases where braces would be a far better choice than aligners. The short answer is, yes, aligners can work just as well as braces, but it depends on the patient.



smile is something everyone deserves regardless of age.

When should you see the orthodontist for the first time?

Age 7. At or around age 7, baby teeth begin falling out and adult teeth begin erupting into the mouth. This is the perfect time to evaluate spacing of the current and future teeth. It is also a great time to get a baseline for jaw growth. Although age 7 is the recommendation for the first visit to the orthodontist, it is not typically the age that treatment is most often started. There is a small percentage of the population where intervention is essential to avoid future surgery and extractions. For the rest of the population, it is a great visit to provide parents with peace of mind and a plan for the future.

Do I need a referral to see an orthodontist?

No. Your dentist can refer you to an orthodontist or you can call, email, text or schedule an online appointment with the orthodontist of your choice. A dentist often will make a referral only after seeing an area of major concern or

being asked about the orthodontist by the patient. Parents or individuals are their own best advocates to seek care when it comes to seeing an orthodontist.

Is orthodontic treatment expensive?

Orthodontic treatment has a large total price tag. If that total was broken up over your treatment time, or over the time you get the benefit of your treatment (which should be for life, if you wear your retainers as directed), it would be less than pennies a day. The confidence gained alone is priceless. Patients walk out of treatment with a smile that no one can take away from them. A smile can be shared every day. A smile helps you make new relationships, spread joy, have the confidence to raise a hand in class, interview for a job, or show your teeth confidently in photos.

Orthodontics can be confusing. Finding an orthodontist that you trust to walk you through every step of the process by answering your questions and concerns is the solution. ■

Information provided by Dr. James Stork, DDS, MS, Stork Orthodontics, 4090 Westown Parkway, West Des Moines, 515-705-0644.

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ADULT daycare is beneficial for caregivers and their loved ones

Caregivers often neglect their own health, leading to a higher risk of death before those they are caring for. Adult daycare provides up to eight hours of time, per day, for caregivers to take care of themselves, including attending doctor appointments and running errands.

An estimated seven million people live with this disease. Adult daycare provides the structure and flexibility to adapt to serve each client's specific needs.

Our testimonials show the positive impact of adult daycare. Gary's wife and children have noticed that he is happier now, engaged at home and talking more. He was extroverted before dementia and became more introverted as the disease progressed. Since starting adult day care, he has become more extroverted again. Before his diagnosis, he was an art director for a large magazine and loved drawing and painting. Dementia created frustration and confusion for Gary, causing him to abandon art all together for three years. After coming to the adult day center, he started painting again, which made his loved ones cry. "Adult day care has given us more of Gary back," they said. ■

Information provided by Brooke Baker, Grace Estates, 801 N.E. Venture Drive, Waukeez, 516-518-0977, www.graceestatesadc.com.



CPI supports junior high students, staff

Helps with funding programs and more

Teenagers are learning independence by navigating the bridge between elementary and high school. And, being a parent of a teenager means supporting kids in any way possible to help set them up for success.

The Indian Hills CPI (Committee for Parent Involvement) is a group of parents supporting their seventh and eighth grade students at West Des Moines Indian Hills Junior High.

CPI has been around for years, and Tiffany Richeson-Barlow is currently the chairperson for the eighth-grade parents.

Tiffany began volunteering at Westridge Elementary School as a way to stay connected with her daughter. She assisted with the school play then was asked to become the seventh-grade chair for CPI.

"It's a way to experience their world and what they are going through," she says. "I wanted to get involved in the same thing as my daughter did."

The CPI serves as a holding committee for funds raised. The CPI helps out with different activities and funds for the students, school and staff. They help cover things that the district doesn't provide, including offering student directories and hosting dances or mixers for the kids.

"We fund career day and staff appreciation weeks. We help out with needs and activities that don't get covered by tax dollars," she explains. "Dances for the students are nice. They are developing their personalities. A year-end party is important for kiddos to provide a big celebration after all their accomplishments."

She says the resources they provide are vital to both the students and the staff.

"There are a lot of challenges in school. The more resources we can give, the better the outcome of their experiences in school," Tiffany says. "Teachers face additional challenges within and outside the curriculum. It's nice to do something positive for them."

One important event is career day, which gives students a chance to explore careers and plan for them.

"It helps in the education process to see what's on the horizon," Tiffany says, adding that she gets a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment from volunteering at school.

"I love doing it because it's a great way to give back to my community. I hope that I can make a difference in the lives of my daughter, her classmates and the teachers and staff."

Parents and the public are encouraged to help with one-time volunteer needs or to donate funds. For more information, visit the Indian Hills Junior High Facebook page or email IndianHillsCPI@gmail.com. ■



Tiffany Richeson-Barlow and Eleanor

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Information provided by Dr. Loredana Carnovale Winter, MD, DDS, Aesthetic Medicine, Iowa Face and Body, 4090 Western Parkway, Suite 106, West Des Moines, 515-225-8889, www.iowafaceandbody.com.

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COULD I end up paying more taxes in retirement than during my working years?

Death and taxes are two facts of life that one must accept. Based on that, understanding taxes in retirement can help you put in place tax-efficient strategies that will minimize their impact.

The first key to understanding the answer is to know that, in retirement, all those years of saving into tax-deferred accounts (401Ks, IRAs, SEP IRAs, etc...) still have a tax consequence. At some point, the government requires that money be withdrawn and taxes paid, known as a required minimum distribution (RMD). Under recent legislation, the required age for taking distributions changed from 72 to 73 for 2023. Adding a year to the RMD age can be a double-edged sword as it allows you to defer taking money out but also provides additional time for your account balance to potentially grow, resulting in a larger tax bill once RMDs start. By 2033, the RMD age is set to increase to 75, allowing an additional two years beyond the current required age for the balance to continue growing. Also, larger distributions can trigger Medicare's income-related monthly adjustment amount, leading to higher premiums for Medicare Parts B and D.

In addition to any tax-deferred accounts with RMDs, retirees are usually surprised to find how many other sources of income they may



have in retirement. These forms of income include pensions, part-time work, passive income and Social Security. With Social Security, up to 85% of the benefits are taxable on top of the previously mentioned other sources of taxable income.

Another overlooked aspect of retirement is that distributions are often not taken out evenly over time. You may often experience significant one-time expenses that push you into a higher tax bracket based on the distribution needed to pay for that expense.

Finally, it is essential to remember that the tax code is subject to change. Historically speaking, we are in a low tax rate environment. Tax rates are scheduled to increase after 2026 with the expiration of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. Even if Congress decides to extend or adjust keeping the rates the same or lower, it is likely a matter of time before rates change.

As you can see, taxes in retirement can be complicated. Working with a local CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ professional ensures that you work with someone with the education, experience and ethics necessary to answer this question. Take the first step in building a financial plan today by reaching out. ■

Information provided by Michael Jiskoot, Valiant Wealth, 3408 Woodland Ave., Suite 204, West Des Moines, 515-223-6068.

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REGULATING humidity as temperatures cool down

The crisp autumn air is not too far away, and our focus will shift from battling the sweltering heat to embracing the cozy warmth of indoor spaces. While temperature control is crucial, one aspect that often goes overlooked is humidity regulation. As the thermometer drops, the air becomes drier, and finding the right balance of moisture indoors becomes paramount for both comfort and wellbeing.



Understanding the correlation between temperature and humidity is essential to creating a comfortable indoor environment. As temperatures lower, the air's ability to hold moisture diminishes, leading to decreased relative humidity levels. This drop in humidity can have various effects on your home and health.

During colder months, low humidity levels can lead to discomfort, causing skin to become dry and itchy and exacerbating respiratory issues. By introducing a humidification system, you can maintain an optimal humidity level of around 30-50%, promoting a healthier indoor environment. This not only prevents skin problems and respiratory irritation but also helps to preserve the integrity of wooden furniture and musical instruments, which can crack or warp in overly dry conditions.

Regulating humidity isn't just about comfort — it also impacts energy efficiency. Moist air feels warmer than dry air at the same temperature, allowing you to lower your thermostat a few degrees without sacrificing comfort. This small adjustment can lead to significant energy savings over time, reducing your heating bills and your carbon footprint.

While it's essential to keep humidity levels in check, excessive moisture can also be problematic. When warm, moist indoor air comes into contact with cold surfaces like windows, condensation forms. This moisture can lead to mold growth, structural damage, and even health issues. To combat this, proper insulation and ventilation are key. An HVAC professional can assess your home's unique needs and recommend solutions to prevent condensation-related problems.

When it comes to choosing a humidification system, it's essential to consider factors such as the size of your home, lifestyle and budget. There are several options available, from portable humidifiers to whole-house systems that integrate with your HVAC setup. Consulting with a heating and cooling expert can help you determine the most suitable system for your needs.

By understanding the relationship between temperature and humidity, choosing the right humidification system, and practicing proper maintenance, you can create an environment that's both inviting and conducive to wellbeing throughout the autumn and winter months. ■

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

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NO FOOT Too Small

Felty facilitates support group for infant loss

When Lindsay Felty gave birth to her stillborn son, Liam, the loss was unspeakable for her and her husband, Brad. They weren't sure where to go for help or support.

As she searched for a way to honor her son and help others suffering from pregnancy loss, she discovered the organization No Foot Too Small.

After moving from Virginia to West Des Moines, she joined the group. Five years ago, she became the facilitator for moms' groups in the western half of Iowa and online.

The group meets quarterly, and people are given the opportunity to talk about their grief and loss. Their mission includes three important aspects.

The first is to celebrate "angels" through various events.

"We've missed out on milestones, such as celebrating birthdays. These events mean a lot. We can invite friends, and it's a day set aside to honor and remember him," Lindsay explains. "It's a parent's worst fear that they are forgotten. They are a real person I carried and lost."

The second mission is to unite families and provide support for their grief.

"My son would have been 11 in September. The grief is still there," she says. "This group provides a space with other moms who can understand, vent and share. The community of support is incredibly helpful."

The final aspect is to partner with hospitals to offer birthing bereavement suites. If a woman is knowingly giving birth to a stillborn infant, the private suite is comforting, especially when other healthy babies are nearby.

"My son was born in Virginia, and we had a terrible hospital experience," she recalls. "We want to provide comfort, even in a short time frame."

Lindsay says the groups are growing as folks break the silence about pregnancy and infant loss.

"It used to be a taboo subject. Often parents wouldn't even meet the baby," she says. "We want to change the landscape. People no longer want to pretend they (their babies) didn't exist."

As she now has two living children, Lindsay says she struggles when folks ask her how many kids she has.

"I usually say I have three, but two living. It's important to acknowledge angel children as well as my earthly children."

Lindsay's husband facilitates a men's group. She encourages those with pregnancy loss to reach out for help.

"It's the worst club but the best people. It can help in the grieving process," she says.

Families are invited to a bags tournament and NFTS fundraiser on Sept. 24 at Kinship Brewing. For more information contact lindsay@nofoottoosmall.org. ■



After giving birth to her stillborn son, Liam, Lindsay Felty searched for support. She has since become a facilitator for support groups held by No Foot Too Small.

2023-2024 West Des Moines Leadership Academy Class selected



The West Des Moines Leadership Academy (WDMLA), a program of the West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce, has announced its 2023-2024 class. This nine-month program will guide emerging leaders on a path to leadership effectiveness through experiential learning, critical thinking, and a community impact project. WDMLA is made possible thanks to presenting sponsor NCMIC.

"Once again, we have a strong curriculum for this year's class," said Ashley Charnetski, Advisory Council chair. "Our program is a flow from inside reflection to outside action with relationships as a constant backdrop. By educating and empowering the future leaders in our 2023-2024 class, we can help them develop strong values-based leadership skills around character development, skillful actions and relationship building."

Within the class, there are three full-ride scholarships provided by American Equity through the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Workplace Excellence Awards, West Des Moines Chamber through the Black and Brown Business Summit pitch competition, and the West Des Moines Chamber's West YP program. Congratulations to this year's recipients: Joy Hankins, Benton Maas and Jason Vang. There are also three partial tuition scholarship recipients, provided by the West Des Moines Chamber, to individuals who work for a local non-profit organization. Congratulations to this year's recipients: Emma Bireline, Kiley Fleming and Adrienne Towe.

The selected leaders for the West Des Moines Leadership Academy Class of 2023-2024 include: Elizabeth Alexander, Sammons Financial Group; Amanda Arnold, Ivory House Photography/Evoke EQ; Amy Ann Augspurger, The Iowa Clinic; Emma Bireline, The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society; Mark Broderick, Iron Horse Wealth Management LLC; Andrew Broesder, Merchants Bonding Company; Jenn Christianson, Perficut Site Management; Dr. Shane Christensen, West Des Moines Community Schools; Anthony Danti, West Des Moines Police Department; Ryan Downing, IMT Insurance; Matthew Durant, Trilix Marketing Group; Rachel Eslick, Spinutech; Kiley Fleming, Iowa Mediation Service; Taylor Funke, Optimal Health Chiropractic/Central Iowa Neuropathy; Erin Good, Hy-Vee, Inc.; Joy Hankins, The Joy of Curls; Aaron Hellenga, NCMIC Group, Inc.; Kingsley B. Jewett, Neumann Brothers, Inc.; Bryce Johnson, City of West Des Moines; Maggie Klocke, CMP, Iowa Bankers Association; Cole Kramer, AssuredPartners; Benton Maas, UnityPoint; Katelyn McCollough, Dentons Davis Brown PC; Garret Jeffrey Munch, Shive-Hattery; Jacob Olson, Palmer Group; Dalton Parrott, Holmes Murphy; Seth Ramaeker, Carrier Access, Inc.; Daniel Schmitz, Des Moines University; Reed Festing-Smith, Estes Construction; Matt Springer, Wealth Advisors of Iowa; Josie Stegman, Co-Op Solutions; Anna Stork, Merkle Retirement Planning; Adrienne Towe, Waukee Community Schools Foundation; Muhamed Tursunovic, West Bank; Liz Ulrichson, CAPTRUST; Jason Vang, Evelyn K. Davis Center; Jade Wadding, Athene.

The WDMLA is led by a group of alumni who serve as the advisory council. ■

OUT & ABOUT

RIBBON

Cutting

West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Dave and Busters, 190 Jordan Creek Parkway, on July 31.



West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Dave and Busters, 190 Jordan Creek Parkway, on July 31.



Ruth Ebke and Anthony Kottke



Mayor Russ Trimble, Renee Hardman and Zach Darbonne



Amy Gano, Melanie Mackey and Amber Rhoades



Kelsey Chaves-White, Mary Yacko and Charity Baird



Joseph Beedon and Avary Vetter



Kamsa Thephavong and Connie Blodgett



Paul and Nicole Schwegler, James White and Steven Washington



Kelly Valdez, Mayor Russ Trimble, Zach Darbonne and Brendon Shaver

RIBBON Cutting

West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Kinetic Edge Physical Therapy's 25th anniversary on Aug. 3.



West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Kinetic Edge Physical Therapy's 25th anniversary on Aug. 3.



Jill Crosser, Rob Reinard and Mary Yacko



Colby Jones and Jerry Hoehle



Lindsey Baker and Denise Beaudoin



Sara Westerkamp, Tassi Cook, Karlene Vander Wilt and Jesse McCrady



Connor, Faith Thornton, Cora and Joni Huggins



Marilyn Laughlin, Ashley Roberts, Lisa Brekke and James Laughlin



Kaity Hall and Tracey Heald-Crees



Mary Yacko, Allison Petersen and Kelsey Chaves-White



Samuel Malkasian, Ruth Ebke and Rob Reinard

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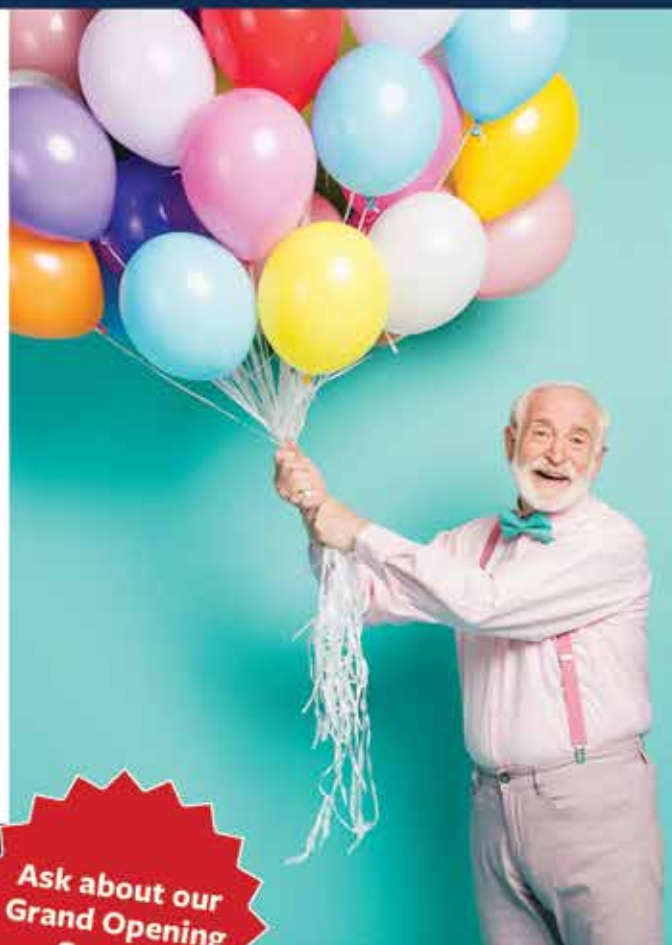
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