

GRIMES/DALLAS CENTER

SEPTEMBER 2023

Living

MAGAZINE

Making a house *a home*

**Residents share their home
improvement experiences**

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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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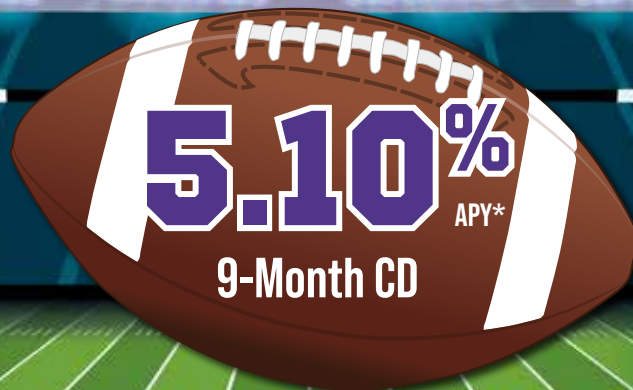


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Making a house *a home*

Residents share their home improvement experiences

By Ashley Rullestad

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.

Luke and Tori Reese tackled a major renovation shortly after moving into their home. Photo by Todd Rullestad



FEATURE

Potential appealed to couple

Luke and Tori Reese purchased their home in Grimes in December 2021 and moved in the following April. When they were searching for their first house, they wanted to find a suburb near their parents in Waukee and Johnston, and they liked that Grimes was a growing but still close-knit community. While the house wasn't a perfect home, it was perfect for them.

"We knew when we bought the place that there was a lot of potential to make the place our own," Tori says. "That's why we loved it so much."

The first thing they tackled was a living room and mud room renovation, using a single-car garage that the previous owner had already converted into living space. The couple wanted more storage options right off the bat. There wasn't a good place for shoes or coats, and the space they had for kitchen items was minimal. For the project, storage and functionality were the main goals.

They found local contractors, like Deaver Electric, to help them with their vision. For the drywall, they hired a local handyman.

"We knew if we hired out, we wanted



BEFORE

someone local and smaller rather than chain or big builder," Tori says.

Tori has a passion for interior design, so she used online resources to find things she liked and wanted to incorporate in the space. She created mockups to see everything all together, and, from there, Luke made a CAD model in order to get proper measurements.

They say having a clear vision helped. The couple would spend weeks, sometimes months, discussing what they wanted, what materials they planned on using, what color they wanted to paint things. It was a bit tedious, but it helped ensure they ended up with something that truly made them happy.

They say they are thrilled with



AFTER

When Luke and Tori Reese moved into their home, they wanted to turn a converted garage area into a more functional part of their home. The space now includes a second living room, along with a pantry and mudroom.

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the result, and the project has given them everything they needed and more. The couple uses the space every day and say it's like the home was made for them.

"I love that it gives us a more formal space," Tori says. "I use the second living room a lot to read in, and it gives us more space for our energetic puppy to run around in. The pantry and mudroom have been so helpful for storage and added working space as we added outlets to the pantry so we can use appliances on the countertop."

In addition to this project, they have also tackled adding a basement bar and have done some renovations to the bathroom. Of course, as homeowners, they have realized the cycle of home improvement wish list items never ends. Soon, they are hoping to move their attention to the exterior.

"We have some big plans for the backyard," Tori says.

Main floor makeover

Debi and Drew Zahn and their big family moved to their home about a year and a half ago. When they chose it, they knew the fixer

upper would need some substantial work.

"It's a beautiful 1920s Craftsman, but it had been a rental for a while, so it was in pretty rough shape," Debi says. "She definitely needed some love. We have a large family, and the kitchen was tiny and removed from the rest of the house, so we knew that would be our first priority."

When they say large family, they mean it. The Zahns have 16 children — six of whom are married — and eight grandchildren. They wanted the renovation to focus on the heart of the home — the kitchen and dining room, along with their laundry room and a bathroom — over half of the main floor. They chose to work with Fry Construction on the project because they were already familiar with their work.

"They were already friends of ours, so we not only knew how beautiful their work is, but we also knew their character," says Debi. "They were an absolute joy to work with."

Drawing floor plans and designing spaces, especially kitchens, has been a hobby of Debi's since high school. Curtis Fry understood her vision, and they worked together to bring

the design to life. Fry communicated well about everything that was going on and accommodated Debi's "quirky" choices, like the vintage 1940s sink and antique library doors.

Once they started on the project, the space was gutted down to the studs, although they did keep the original hardwood floor in the dining room. Then they determined how to make the space unique and special — like the coffee bar with the exposed brick, which was Fry's idea, and Debi says she absolutely loves it.

"The dining room island with the pillars was my design, but he did an amazing job crafting it," she says. "He's a carpenter by trade, so, while he's a great contractor, he is also able to create absolutely beautiful pieces."

Debi says she is pleased with how the new flooring weaves into the old so you can't even tell what's old and what's new. After living in the new space for about eight months, Debi says she wouldn't change a thing. The care given to the project achieved literal perfection in her eyes.

Now the Zahns have more phases of work to do in other areas of the house, but they are trying to be patient and do it right.



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FEATURE

“Restoration of a 100-year-old house is not a quick or easy process. We’re really trying to bring back the Craftsman charm and save all the original things that we can,” Debi says. “Our next project is removing the ugly siding and, hopefully, restoring the original clapboard siding underneath. We’ll see.”

They also have work to do on the second floor and the basement, and they’d like to refinish the floor in the living room to match the new floors, too. Another project for down the road is to redo the first section of the stairs to make them more cohesive with the home’s Craftsman origins.

Debi’s advice for anyone considering a project is to find a contractor you can trust.

“When we were starting our project, almost everyone warned us about needing to keep a close eye on our contractor,” she says. “We heard horror stories about work being delayed, not being finished, and



BEFORE

Debi and Drew Zahn’s 1920s Craftsman style home had seen better days when they bought it. They set out to create an open-space concept while maintaining the Craftsman feel of the home.

often not even showing up. We are so thankful that we knew we could completely trust Curtis and his team with our vision, our home, our time and our money. Working with them was even better than I had hoped.”



AFTER

The updated kitchen’s island was designed by Debi Zahn and executed by Fry Construction.

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FEATURE



AFTER

Nancy and Travis Gjoraas wanted to update their basement to be more functional and aesthetically pleasing for their family.

Basement facelift

The Gjoraas family moved to Grimes from Connecticut 12 years ago, but Nancy is originally from northwest Iowa, and her husband, Travis, is from South Dakota. This house is the first they have had with a finished basement.

"We always thought there was some extra storage that could be converted into more livable space for us and the boys to use, and we also wanted some type of a fireplace, as well as a bar and kitchen for entertaining," Nancy says.

Travis worked with someone who recommended J. Thompson Builders, and they decided they were the right fit for the project. The renovation took about three months but wasn't too invasive because it was in a walkout basement.

"Our contractor was communicative and easy to work with," says Nancy. "We mostly searched for design ideas online, and we visited a variety of tile and flooring stores to pick out products we thought would modernize the space."

What was once a boring beige basement with honey oak built-ins is now modern, bright and inviting. The Gjoraases added a ping pong table, and now there is a lot more space for entertaining guests and relaxing as a family.

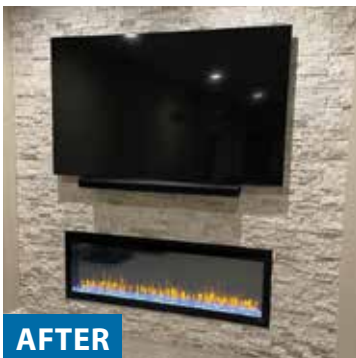
"We are so happy with the finished product, and we definitely use the space more than we previously did. Our favorite thing about the remodel is that we have a nice space for family and friends to get together," says Nancy.

The family isn't done with remodeling yet, though. They have future plans for a kitchen remodel. For those looking to give a space in their home a new look, Nancy's advice is simple.

"Start with something small at first, to be patient, and to expect delays or obstacles because they are almost always part of the process." ■



BEFORE



AFTER



INSPIRING another generation

Lane's former coaches encouraged him, and now he provides the same for his players.

Collin Lane started playing sports when he was 8 years old.

"I think my first sport was competitive swimming because all of my friends at the daycare I went to had swim practice, and I wanted to be with them. From there, I started picking up other sports and swam competitively, played soccer and baseball from about 9 years old all the way through high school, adding football to the mix in middle school and high school."

For him, playing sports was about much more than the actual game. He says he enjoyed the camaraderie of teammates and seeing how hard work in practice could pay off in a competition or race. It also helped him to gain confidence as he started to see his efforts result in success on the field and learned lessons from his failures.

Ultimately, soccer was Lane's sport of choice. Though he had many great coaches over the years, the one he says inspired him the most was Coach Jim Conlon, his coach at Wartburg College, currently a nationally respected soccer coach at Washington University.

"Coach Conlon was there for me during my transformative years when I was away from home at college and learning so much about myself through college and college sports," says Lane. "He was there to be hard on me, support me, challenge me and put me in a position to bring out the leadership that I didn't know I had. He was also the coaching figure that was in my life where my growth as a player really skyrocketed."

And skyrocket it did. Lane is a 2020 Wartburg Hall of Fame inductee, third-team All American, first team All Region, first team All Conference, three-year captain, has the most goalkeeper starts in program history, and holds the school record of .56 goals against average.

Coach Conlon was the last coach Lane played for. Although he had dreams of playing professional soccer, and even had a few tryouts post college, a livable wage seemed unlikely, so he began a career with Des Moines Public Schools after his 2005 graduation. He currently coaches soccer for Dallas Center Grimes.

Now, Lane continues the tradition of inspiring players like his coaches inspired him.

"I think it means the world to a young individual to have someone besides their parents believe in them," he says. "Whether that is in an athletic setting or anything else where a mentorship takes place, coaches are able to provide a different perspective, encourage, criticize, challenge and motivate in a way that is different from a parent. I believe that same thing for my own children. I want them to be coached by many different coaches. Then I get to be the dad and support in a different way and be a part of that total support system." ■



Collin Lane coaches soccer at DCG and strives to inspire his players the way his coaches inspired him.

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LEGAL

By Cynthia P. Letsch, J.D.

ESTATE planning 101: last will and testament

The last will and testament (will) is a document that states who is in charge after you have died and who gets what you have left, that is “orphaned.”

If you have no orphaned assets at your death, we do not use your will. An orphaned asset is an asset with some type of title; registration; account, policy, or certificate number that has no way to get to whomever should inherit it. If you own real estate jointly with your spouse, and your spouse dies, the asset is not orphaned. It still has a living owner. If you have life insurance, retirement account, investment account, or checking account with a named beneficiary who is living at your death, it is not orphaned. It goes to the beneficiary.

However, if the named beneficiary has died before you, or there is no joint owner, then the asset is orphaned. If you have a will, the first question the court asks is: Is your will valid? If so, then it gets used. We only use a will as a planning document when we plan to go through the probate process. (See next month’s article for a discussion of avoiding probate.)

If you do not have a will, and you have orphaned assets, the state has a plan for you. It is based on blood relationship. If you are single with no children, your parents are first. If you are married without children outside the marriage, your spouse is first. If you are married, chances are you own everything jointly, and there will be no orphaned asset. Having a child is the trigger for the need for a will. This will tell the court whom you want to take over care of your child, and it will provide a trust for the management of your child’s financial wellbeing until your child is old enough to start managing money on his or her own.

Think of it this way: If your child is orphaned, what was the likely cause? An accident? If so, there may be a large amount of money available to your child at the age of 18, unless you have dictated who would be in charge of it and at what intervals your child will be able to take distributions of his or her inheritance. This planning protects your child from friends and, unfortunately, other relatives, who may be waiting in the wings to exploit their relationships for personal gain. It really happens. ■

Information provided by Cynthia P. Letsch, J.D., Letsch Law Firm, 112 N.E. Ewing St., Suite D, Grimes, 515-986-2810, www.LetschLawFirm.com.





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Whether this is your first year on Medicare or you've been on it for several years, you should look at your plan each year.

Revisiting your coverage and supplements could save you money and prevent surprises when you visit the doctor or pick up a prescription.

The Medicare Annual Enrollment Period runs from Oct. 15 to Dec. 7. That's when you can join, drop or switch to another supplement plan or add or drop drug coverage.

I know what you might think: "I like my current coverage; no change needed." That may be true. But each insurance carrier frequently renegotiates provider contracts, which can ultimately change the terms of your supplement plans — impacting premiums, copays, deductibles and covered services plus the ancillary benefits like x-rays, prosthetic devices and physical therapy. Carriers can add and drop benefits like gym memberships, chiropractic visits, and meal deliveries to and from plans. That's why it's a good idea to review your providers, your prescriptions and your pharmacy each year to ensure your preferences are still covered.

Some of the most heartbreaking stories I've heard are when someone



goes to the pharmacy to pick up medication and finds out it's no longer covered or has changed. That's when out-of-pocket costs can skyrocket, and the medicine can cost hundreds more than the last time they went to the pharmacy.

During the annual enrollment period last year, I ran the numbers for one of the individuals we work with and found that Meloxicam, an arthritis medicine, costs \$12 for a 90-day refill at their in-network pharmacy and \$1,117.80 at one that was not in-network. That is not the kind of surprise you want to get when you go to pick up your medicine and the reason I run the numbers for them before making any changes.

You can switch to an Advantage Plan from a traditional Medigap supplement (like Plan F or Plan G) during annual enrollment. You can also move from one Advantage Plan to another or from one prescription drug plan to another.

There is a lot of information out there about Medicare, and the choices can feel overwhelming. A professional can help people make sense of it all, while helping them coordinate their Medicare decisions with the other aspects of their retirement plan, so every decision is made with their retirement vision in mind. ■

Information provided by AnnaMarie Morrow, Director of Medicare, Merkle Retirement Planning, 1860 S.E. Princeton Drive, Grimes, 515-278-1006.

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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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GRIMES Public Library news

Four more youngsters have completed the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program at Grimes Public Library. 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten is a nationwide program that encourages families to read 1,000 books together before a child reaches kindergarten. It is a fun and free way to start your child on the path to success with prizes at every 100 books. Stop by the Library to sign up.



Name: Abigail Ihm
Parents' names: Danielle Ihm and Jonathan Ihm
Age: 6
Favorite book: "Pinkalicious 5-minute Stories"
Favorite animal: Cat



Name: Isaac Daly
Parents' names: Ian and Sarah Daly
Age: 5
Favorite book: "Going to the Firehouse"
Favorite animal: Rhino



Names: Stella and Scarlett Quass
Parents' names: Colin and Kylie Quass
Ages: 2 and 1
Favorite books: "I Love You for Miles and Miles" and "Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?"
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BACK to school

As many of you send your kids back to school, you may think about how fast time is moving. In the blink of an eye, they will be headed to college, so now is a good opportunity to start planning how to financially help get your children through this next stage in life.



Tuition increases

From 2010 to 2022, college tuition increased nationally an average of a staggering 12% per year. For the 2022-2023 school year, the average price of in-state public universities did decrease if adjusted for inflation, but still rose by 3.5% year over year.

How to help pay for college

One of the most popular ways to pay for college is through 529 plans. 529 plans started in Iowa in 1998 to help give a tax benefit for saving for college. Much like the Roth IRA, dollars contributed to a 529 plan use after-tax contributions. Investments inside the 529 plan grow tax-deferred and can be withdrawn tax free if the money is used to pay for tuition, room and board, books or supplies. 529 plans can also be used for tuition expenses at K-12 public, private or religious schools. In Iowa, 2023 contributions into the Iowa 529 plan of up to \$3,785 per person, per beneficiary, are deductible in determining your adjusted gross income for Iowa income tax purposes. Married couples can therefore contribute up to \$7,570 to a 529 account for each child.

One reason some people do not like to use 529 plans is that they don't want their dollars trapped in the 529 plan if their beneficiary decides not to attend college. However, starting in 2024, beneficiaries of 529 plans may transfer the unused funds directly to a Roth IRA without penalties or recognition of taxable income. Here are the rules that apply to converting your 529 plan to a Roth IRA for your child:

- The 529 plan must have been open for a minimum of 15 years prior to the rollover;
- Rollover amounts cannot include any amounts contributed to the 529 plan in the preceding five-year period;
- A maximum of \$35,000 is allowed for the tax-free rollover; and
- Annual IRA contribution limits apply. In 2023, the maximum contribution amount to the Roth IRA is \$6,500, so in order to maximize the \$35,000, you would need to complete this over a 5-year period. ■

For more information, contact Wade Lawrence or Bryce Block with City State Bank Trust and Investments at 515-986-2265. Not FDIC insured. Not deposits or other obligations of the bank and are not guaranteed by the bank. Are subject to investment risk, including possible loss of principal. City State Bank does not provide tax or legal advice. Each taxpayer should seek independent advice from a tax professional. These materials are based upon publicly available information that may change at any time without notice.

Q: What is more important, counting calories or counting macros?

A: Honestly, it all depends on you and what you can stick to. To be transparent, I have tried to count my calories and do well for a few weeks, and then I fall off. It gets very confusing when you go to a restaurant and are trying to figure out all that is in it so you can log it. Now, some people are super good at staying consistent at counting calories. If that is you, keep going. I just haven't found that that works well for my success. Solely focusing on counting my grams of protein works better for me. A good example would be, when ordering chicken deburgo, it is easier for me to size up the chicken and know the amount of protein than try to figure out what is in the sauce and what my sides add up to. So many people are falling short on the amount of protein they need, so once you start focusing on that, you will feel a lot fuller. Both methods work for any goal you have. Whether it is maintenance, weight-loss or muscle gain, focusing on proteins or calories will help you achieve all. If you have or haven't tried logging, my goal for you is to give it a shot. It doesn't matter if you go the counting calories or proteins route, just try. Find the way that works best for you and the one you can stick to. That is all that matters. It will go a long way for your success. ■



Information provided by Haley Powers-Risdal, certified personal trainer/head coach at Anytime Fitness 255 S.W. Brookside Drive, 515-300-9262, GrimesIA@anytimefitness.com.

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GRIMES Farmers Market season winds down

Exciting changes and a charity 5K

Under the direction of Matt Bennett and Karena Cruse, the Grimes Farmers and Community Market implemented a number of changes this past year that contributed to a successful season.

"This year's markets have been nothing short of amazing, with many highlights that have left us excited and wanting more," the couple shares in a joint statement. "One of our proudest accomplishments has been the launch of the Young Entrepreneur Program (YEP), which has already attracted 12 talented individuals. We want more, as it is near and dear to our hearts."

Over the weekend of July 2, the Grimes Farmers and Community Market also included the inaugural InDOGpendence Day celebration.

"It was an absolute blast (even in the pouring rain) as we came together to honor and celebrate the community's fur babies," say Bennett and Cruse. "The energy and excitement were fantastic, and the turnout exceeded our wildest expectations."

What truly set each market apart, though,

were the vendors who set up shop, they say.

"Their personalities are as amazing as the products they offer," the couple says. "Engaging, witty and friendly, they create an atmosphere that sparks community. You can't help but leave the market with a smile."

A couple other changes Bennett and Cruse made were extending the Grimes Farmers and Community Market through September and hosting during the hours of 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.

This year's market will culminate with the Sock Market 5K Fun Run and Walk on Saturday, Sept. 30 at 8 a.m. The event will benefit Junior Achievement of Central Iowa.

"We believe in bringing people together to celebrate individuality and creativity," the couple says. "By hosting the 5K event, we aim to create a platform where participants of all ages can come out and have some fun with all the activities we will have for the morning."

"The Sock Market Race is not just a run or walk; it's a celebration of unity, giving back and, of course, the wackiest, most colorful socks

you've ever seen. Join us in this fun experience as we run with a purpose and take steps toward a brighter future together for our youth."

Folks can start looking forward to the 2024 season as well, which will begin next June.

"Whether you are a vendor, a part of the community or a current or potential YEP participant, 'You Belong Here' is our motto for a reason," Bennett and Cruse say. "We want to see everyone out at the market and join in the fun in the way that suits them best."

The couple also wants to thank the community for their outstanding support during their first year taking charge of the Grimes Farmers and Community Market.

"We appreciate everyone who has supported the vendors and helped create an amazing space to start your Saturday morning," they say. "We always want more of the community supporting the vendors who work hard to perfect their craft and set up their spaces."

Visit www.thegrimesfarmersmarket.com to learn more. ■



Jennifer Grove, D.D.S., P.C. • Mark W. Platt, D.D.S., P.C.
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Andrei Murphy
President

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.

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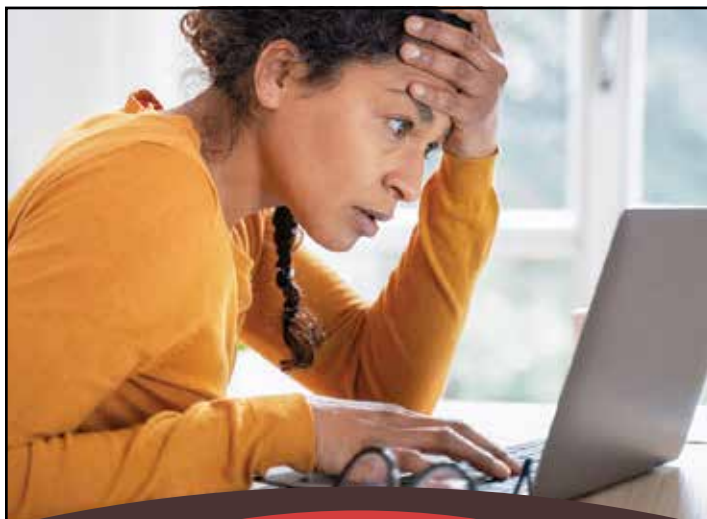
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EDUCATION

By Ashley Rullestad

MEET Interim Superintendent Scott Blum

Focused on creating an environment where every student and staff member feels welcomed

The name Scott Blum shouldn't be a new one to Grimes residents and parents. The newly named interim superintendent has been a part of the district since he was hired to be the dean of students at Dallas Center-Grimes in 2013. In 2016, he became the high school principal at DCG until this past school year. Blum

started his role as interim superintendent on July 1.

Blum graduated from Waukee High School and received a bachelor's degree in history (with a secondary teaching license) from Iowa State University in 2004, a master's degree from Iowa State in educational administration in 2008, a superintendent endorsement in 2020 from Drake University, and a doctorate in educational administration in 2022 from Drake.

Prior to his time at DCG, he taught social studies (mainly American government and advanced placement American government) at Waukee High School from 2004-2013. This fall marks his 20th year in education.

Blum says his goals as interim superintendent are to be relationships-focused, to be a servant leader, and to create an environment where every student and staff member feels welcomed, valued and heard.

"We are so incredibly blessed at DCG with the best kids, staff members and families. My goal is to celebrate the amazing things that happen every day together and to make sure our partnership with our families is stronger than ever. There is no doubt we can have high expectations for our kids and love them, encourage them and support them at the same time."

This year, DCG welcomes three additional new district administrators. Blum is also excited to see teachers move into different roles within the district and continue to share their gifts and talents with DCG students.

"We also added 41 brand new teachers to DCG, 11 of them entering their very first year in education. I have been so impressed with the work ethic, the dedication, and the passion to make a difference in the lives of our kids from this group."

More than 600 DCG teachers and staff will serve more than 3,800 students this school year.

"DCG is simply the absolute best school district around. Dallas Center and Grimes have such phenomenal people everywhere you go," says Blum.

Blum and his wife, Kara, who met in high school, are also DCG parents. Their oldest son graduated from DCG in 2020 and is now a junior at Iowa State studying elementary education. Their other boys are currently students at Oak View and Dallas Center Middle School.

"We enjoy watching our kids participate in all of their activities, vacations, and we are pretty dedicated Iowa State Cyclones fans." ■



Interim DCG Superintendent Scott Blum and family

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.



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LAWN CARE

By Kevin Johnson

FALL fever

When it comes to our lawns, many of us suffer from "spring fever," thinking that spring is the best time to improve a lawn. Unfortunately, it would be better if we suffered from "fall fever" when it comes to improving our lawns.

Why is this? Fall is generally regarded as the best time of the year by the experts to improve your lawn. I refer to this phenomenon as the turfgrass trifecta due to the fact fall provides the best response to the following three factors:

Feeding/fertilization of the lawn: The lawn utilizes fall feeding of fertilizer in a way that truly benefits the overall health of the plant. Improved root storage of necessary nutrients occurs during this time frame, resulting in a healthier plant next year.

Seeding of your lawn: Agronomists agree that fall is the best time of the year to seed thin or damaged spots in your lawn. Newer, improved varieties can be introduced that improve the overall health of your lawn. Spring seeding often interferes with weed control and doesn't allow the seedling a chance to get established before the hot dry summer.

Weed control of broadleaf weeds: Control at this time of year is very effective — especially for harder to control weeds.

If you are looking to improve your lawn next year, get started this fall by contacting your local lawn care company or expert. ■

Information provided by Kevin Johnson, All American Turf Beauty, 311 DeSoto Road, Van Meter, 515-996-2261.



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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:

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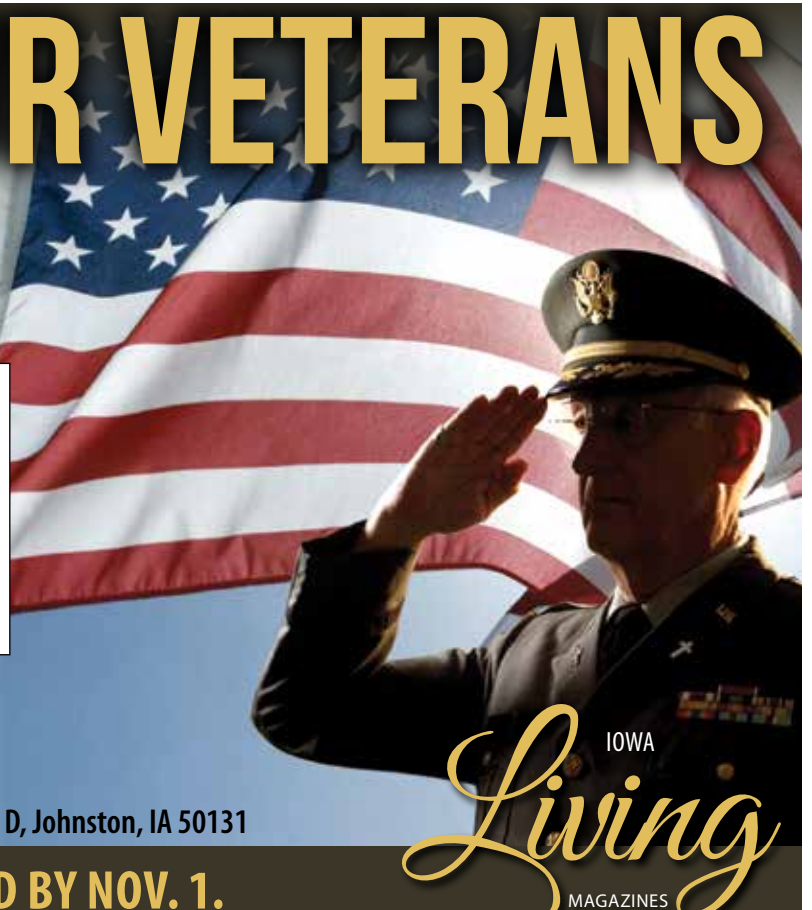
"How can the public best honor veterans?"

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

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EVENTS IN THE AREA

Be sure to check for cancellations.

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

Harvest Home Dinner

Oct. 8, 4:30-7:30 p.m.
Grimes First Presbyterian Church, 410 S.E. Third St.

This annual fundraiser for Grimes First Presbyterian Church is a drive-thru event only. There is no on-site meal served. The menu is turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes and gravy, green beans, cranberry sauce, roll and pumpkin pie.

Oktoberfest

Oct. 1, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Heritage Park

The City of Grimes is partnering with Destination Grille to help provide Oktoberfest specialties, beer and food. Live music and a bags tournament will be held throughout the event, along with a keg squatting contest and the City of Grimes' very own sausage toss.

Rock Around the Clock Concert Series

Thursdays, through
Oct. 12, 5:30-8 p.m.
Heritage Park, 1055 N.E. Beaverbrooke Blvd.

Introducing the Grimes Rock Around the Clock Concert Series sponsored by Aquilo Financial Group. Enjoy performances by local bands and multiple food trucks with food available for purchase.

- **Sept. 21** – The Cardinal Sound
- **Sept. 28** – Vinyl Vagabonds
- **Oct. 5** – Mike Moody and the Outlaws
- **Oct. 12** – Cherry Pickers

Attendees are asked to bring a nonperishable food item or a monetary donation to the Grimes Storehouse for admission.

Kiwanis Mini Golf Fundraiser

Saturday, Sept. 30, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Puttmasters at the Pines, 2977 N.W. 66th Ave., Des Moines

Join the Johnston Kiwanis for the first-ever Mini Golf Fundraiser. Bring the whole family for fun, food and a great cause. Proceeds will support scholarships for high school seniors, books for third-grade classes, sponsoring a Kiwanis Miracle League team, and supporting Mentor Iowa. In addition, half of the mini golf fees will be donated to support the Fisher Lake Wildlife Preserve. Pancakes will be served from 9-11 a.m. and hamburgers and hot dogs from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Prizes will be given for hole-in-one shots. Registration is \$9 for mini golf only, \$8 for meal only, \$15 for combination and \$50 for foursome golf and meal with additional family members \$12.50. Children under 3 play and eat for free.

Fall Festival

Oct. 7, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
South Sports Complex, 750 S. James St.

Come for the candy and bouncy houses, stay for the food trucks, games, vendors, face painting and more. Grimes Parks and Recreation and the Polk County Sheriff's Office are teaming up once again to host the annual Fall Festival. The Polk County Sheriff's Department and The Grimes Fire Department will also be onsite with interactive opportunities for families and friends. Costumes are highly encouraged at this free event. Rain date is Saturday, Oct. 14. ■

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HARTNETT making friends through volunteering

Lots of opportunities in Grimes to do so

The decision to move away from Manchester, after living in the town for 27 years, was a tough one for Jane Hartnett and her husband, Don. But almost four years ago, that's exactly what they did.

Hartnett was the small-town family medicine doctor there, while Don conducted research at the University of Iowa.

"It was a difficult decision to leave, but, like many folks here, we moved to Grimes to be closer to family and are so happy here," Hartnett says. "We have a daughter, two sons and extended family that we now see more often."

When the couple moved, the pandemic was in full swing, and primary care transitioned largely to virtual visits. Hartnett decided to retire and look for volunteer opportunities in which her experience would be useful. One of those was with the Red Cross Disaster Health Services, helping assist clients in the Nebraska/Iowa region to replace medicine and medical items lost in home fires and other disasters. Other opportunities with the organization have included staffing RAGBRAI first aid stations and teaching hands-only CPR at the Iowa State Fair.

Hartnett is also active with Grimes Volunteer Support Services (GVSS), where she serves as a board member and driver, taking clients to the grocery store, medical appointments and elsewhere.



"The clients are really appreciative of the assistance," she says. "It's easy and flexible. There's much camaraderie between the volunteers, and it's a great way to make friends in Grimes. It's truly rewarding and, like most things in this short, earthly life, you'll get back much more than you give."

In addition, Hartnett served as the medical person for Vacation Bible School at a local church this past summer and enjoys supporting Grimes Hope 50+ and other groups.

"I'm Christian, so I enjoy spending time with and getting to know others and help however I can to show the love of Jesus," she says.

One of her favorite memories from volunteering thus far was with the Red Cross when they were sheltering clients and their pets in the Veterans Memorial Building in Cedar Rapids when they were displaced due to a fire at their apartment building.

She says she'll never forget one conversation she had.

"There's a large stained-glass window by



Tim Short, Edward Jones, presents the Good Neighbor certificate to Jane Hartnett.

Grant Wood which just looks brown in the dark," Hartnett shares. "At the end of my night shift, a client asked me to get a coffee and just sit with him. As the sun rose, he pointed out to me how the light slowly brings out all of the intricate details of the soldiers' faces and brings them to life."

Hartnett has gained a lot from volunteering and encourages others to volunteer and get involved in the community by using whatever skills they have.

"Everyone has a gift to share," she says. ■

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LIFE and leadership

This past month, Grimes Chamber & Economic Development and the community we serve lost a great friend. It is common in successful communities, businesses and organizations that influential leaders emerge. These leaders vary in their styles and skills. They are sometimes extremely visible but often work quietly and humbly to help those around them. Leaders play important roles, and I've come to appreciate those who lead humbly.



We believe that it is in the best interest of the business community and, more generally, in the community, that more leaders are identified and equipped so they feel confident to accept leadership roles. Our community is blessed with people who are typically very proficient and well educated. The potential for leadership here is significant.

The inaugural class of the Grimes Leadership Academy (GLA) recently began a 10-month journey of learning. The class is comprised of 18 diverse and talented people who work and/or live in the community. They come from different backgrounds and professions. They have a sincere desire to improve their individual talents so they can be an asset to those around them. The curriculum has two primary themes: personal leadership development and knowledge of the community.

Upon graduating from the Grimes Leadership Academy, members of the class will be more prepared to assume or expand their leadership footprint. However, whether they choose to accept and exercise their call to leadership will be up to them as individuals.

That great friend that I mentioned earlier: I was referring to Rick Hutcheson. He was more than a friend. He was a generous community leader with a beautiful, kind-hearted soul. During his life, Rick made a tremendous impact on Grimes and beyond. He was a decorated war veteran, who, following his time in the service, returned to Grimes and made it better.

For 32 years, he served as a local volunteer firefighter; 13 of those years, he was the chief. He then went on to become the fire chief in the neighboring community of Granger for nine additional years. Rick built homes, started businesses, gave his time and talents to organizations too numerous to mention. He was a renowned woodworker and was the fastest scroll saw operator in the world. His talent, like his love for Grimes, was immense.

I came to know Rick when I arrived in Grimes in 2007. He provided great leadership as we worked together with a great group of people to organize Funtastic Days (a festival he helped to start), which is now called Governors Days. The community will miss Rick. I'll miss Rick. All current and future community leaders, including those participating in the Grimes Leadership Academy, would be well served to learn from his good example.

#lovegrimes ■

Information provided by Brian Buethe, president | CEO,
Grimes Chamber & Economic Development, GrimesIowa.com,
brianb@grimesiowa.com.

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OUT & ABOUT



Brian Buethe with the Grimes Chamber of Commerce presents a plaque to Mark Mills with Republic on Aug. 17.



The Grimes Chamber of Commerce organized a ribbon cutting ceremony for Republic on Aug. 17.



Barry Fortner and John Palmer at McAlister's Deli ribbon cutting on Sept. 11 in Grimes.



Mike Bleskacek and Greg Means at McAlister's Deli ribbon cutting on Sept. 11 in Grimes.



BobbiJo Wolfe and Joan Warren at McAlister's Deli ribbon cutting on Sept. 11 in Grimes.

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OUT & ABOUT



McAlister's Deli ribbon cutting on Sept. 11 in Grimes.



Barry Fortner, Randi Gustason, Erik Moen, Aaron Colyer and Kito Cody at McAlister's Deli ribbon cutting on Sept. 11 in Grimes.



Andrea Sabus and Steve Davis at McAlister's Deli ribbon cutting on Sept. 11 in Grimes.



Grimes Chamber President Ryleah Cross and Mark Judge, McAlister's Deli general manager, at McAlister's Deli ribbon cutting on Sept. 11 in Grimes.

END-OF-SUMMER SPECIALS!

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FIRST Responders Lunch

The Grimes Chamber of Commerce First Responders Lunch was held on Aug. 18.



Tim Short and Grant Goodenow



Ron Schipper and Barry Brown



Joan Warren, Madison Taiber and Greg Means



Rona McMurphy and Mark McMurphy



Chris Bengtson, Casey Woodside, Michael Wright and Dan Gehlbach



Jake Anderson and Jim Clark



Harley Hadley, Alissa McMillen and Gordon Kratz



Brandon Sjullie, Jeff Hawbaker and Robert Vaughn

"It's been through the addition of MAPLE that we have been able to get the kids to talk."



Paws With A Cause

To learn more about **Paws With A Cause** and to find out how you can help, just download this app and watch the story come to life:



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Provided as a community service by this civic minded publication in conjunction with the Association of Community Publishers and Community Papers of Michigan



Casey Woodside and Sean Versouis



Wanda Armstrong and Gloria Perry



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WHAT TO DO WHEN EXPECTING

1. Choose a pediatrician
2. Schedule your first prenatal appointment
3. Start taking prenatal vitamins
4. Discuss medications with your doctor
5. Make a work plan
6. Cut out alcohol and substance use
7. Decrease your caffeine intake
8. Brush up on your nutrition

WHEN DO I CHOOSE A PEDIATRICIAN?

We offer parents-to-be prenatal appointments before your child is born. You can get acquainted with our office and our doctors and have your questions answered. Dr. Waggoner is one of only a couple remaining Des Moines area pediatricians who will still come see you in the hospital after your child is born. Waggoner Pediatrics is also one of the few clinics in town where you can get ahold of your pediatricians 7 days a week after office hours.

HOW DO I SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT?

Call 515-987-0051. We'll schedule you for an appointment within a few days of your call, or another day that fits your schedule.



Waggoner Pediatrics of Central Iowa

Call today to schedule your child's appointment!

515-987-0051

2555 Berkshire Pkwy, Suite A, Clive
waggonerpediatrics.org