

ALTOONA

SEPTEMBER 2023

Living

MAGAZINE

Making a house *a home*

Residents share their home
improvement experiences

Hokanson's Iconic pumpkin arch

WHERE WE LIVE

Mac and cheese with pecan breadcrumbs

RECIPE

Apprenticeship program helps bridge the gap

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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 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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FEATURE

Making a house *a home*

**Residents share their home
improvement experiences**

By Chantel Boyd

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.

Jessica Kimberley has gradually taken on more daunting home improvement projects.
Photo by Michelle Gritters,
Digital Galleria

FEATURE

BEFORE

Building skills and confidence

Jessica Kimberley of Altoona was inspired to flip her home like many homeowners after the pandemic. The longer many people sat at home, looking at their finishes and décor, the more they realized how outdated their homes were. Many sought inspiration for a new look.

“Ever since college, I have had an eye for DIY projects,” Jessica says. “I moved to Minnesota after college, bought a completely remodeled home from a house flipper, and soon after decided to achieve this goal myself.”

AFTER

Jessica Kimberley was not a fan of the “golden oak everything” in her home so remodeled her kitchen with more modern colors and textures.

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BEFORE

When Jessica moved back home, she bought her first “mini fixer-upper” and had great success. So, she decided to tackle a more significant project.

“When I first walked through the house I’m currently in, I had a modern vision in mind that would allow me to wake up in the morning and feel ‘at home,’ all while being able to host friends and family in a fun, inviting environment.”

Jessica’s renovation wish list involved a complete update.

“The house was golden oak everything, which to some people is still a dream, but, for me personally, I enjoy modern colors — whites, blacks and more modern hues of wood.”

Jessica ripped out everything from carpet to trim, bathroom floors,



AFTER

Jessica Kimberley remodeled the fireplace, and it now makes a statement.

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FEATURE



AFTER

Jessica Kimberley's bathroom was transformed from dated fixtures to a modern look.



BEFORE

countertops and even the fireplace.

"Let me tell you, the kitchen and the fireplace were the most rewarding projects," she says.

To choose products for the project, Jessica leaned on inspiration from browsing online sites. She also turned to friends in the construction industry for ideas.

"I am always reaching out to them and bouncing my ideas off them for the best outcome," she says. "My inner circle has been amazing to help with this entire home remodel."

She says the most considerable improvement has been to the main area of the house — the entryway, kitchen and living room.

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"I love coming home daily with my fresh white oak floors, cozy concrete fireplace and modernized two-tone kitchen," she says. "The best part about a remodeled, fresh, crisp home is being able to sit on my couch at night and look around and realize how much blood, sweat and tears went into making my home what it is today."

Jessica advises would-be home renovators to start small.

"I started by building a kitchen table, end tables, etc., to grasp woodworking and all the tools that come with it," she says.

After she got her hands dirty, she said she was ready to try bigger installments.

"Next, I recommend trying board and batten, shiplap, or even painting your kitchen cabinets for trial and error," she says.

Jessica says she is proud of how far she's come in her home improvement journey and encourages others to pursue their DIY dreams, too, even if reaching the end result is a longer process.

"DIY is all about learning and growing and making plenty of mistakes along the way," she says.

One step at a time

Maria and Christian Ruby were among those who did something during the pandemic they might have considered too risky to do before 2020. They bought their home sight unseen.

The couple was living in California where Christian was serving in the Marine Corp. After his service, the couple decided to move to Iowa, where Christian is from originally.

"We saw the home online and bought it while still in California, never having visited," says Maria.

Christian quickly got to work updating both the inside and outside of the home for his wife and their children. Maria and Christian are relatively young and bought their home at the ages of 25 and 24.

"When we were looking at houses in the California area, there was no way at 25 years old I could afford those houses, especially everything we wanted," says Maria.

The couple was pleasantly surprised to find a home in Iowa with the space they needed and a large backyard.

"The houses are way cheaper and nicer here in Iowa," says Maria.



Maria and Christian Ruby have a "one step at a time" philosophy when it comes to remodeling their home for their family's needs. They plan for yearly projects.

They updated the paint, floors, trim, backyard patio and fencing to enhance their home.

"Our house used to have carpeting, two different tiles in the kitchen and dining room, and now we have one solid tile and cohesive trim, too," she says.

The couple installed a fence and a concrete

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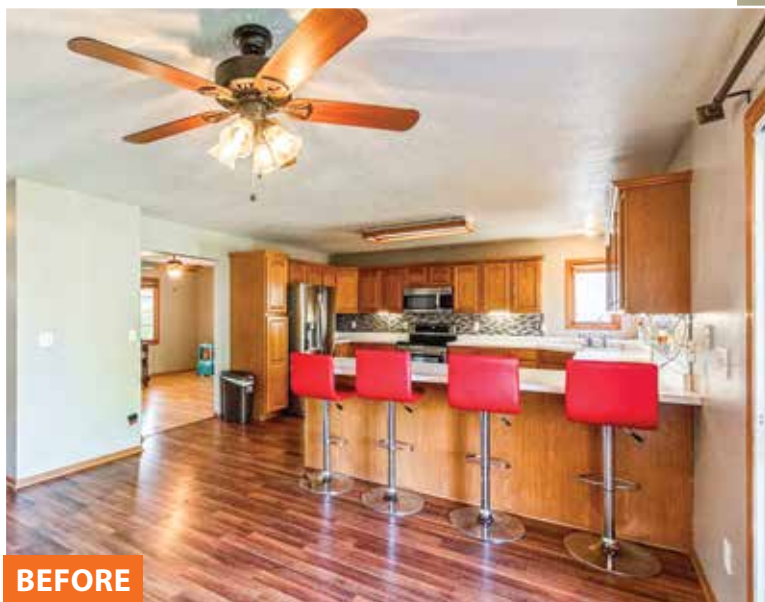


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BEFORE

The main level of Maria and Christian Ruby's home had different flooring in every room. They installed new flooring throughout the rooms to make a seamless transition and tie the space together.



AFTER



BEFORE

Maria and Christian Ruby enjoy entertaining outdoors so one of their first projects was to get rid of the run down deck at the back of their home and add a patio with fence for more room and privacy.

porch in the backyard to replace a rickety old porch. The projects added some privacy and an outdoor space perfect for hosting.

"We wanted to add a fence in our backyard since we didn't have a fence and add a patio where the old porch was," says Maria.

"My husband had a friend that does this kind of work help him, and then he helped him with the flooring and the fencing, too," she adds.

The Rubys' main goal was to make the house feel like home, especially since they were moving so far away.

"We wanted to add our touch to the house," Maria says.

Inside, Maria and Christian wanted to update the entire main floor.

"We had carpet in one section and two different flooring tones,"

Maria says.

Christian chose the products, materials and colors throughout the home updates. Maria helped him decide what would be the best fit. After the flooring was updated, the couple chose the paint colors and trim.

"We decided to paint the walls white and add gray trim," she says.

Maria says she was the most excited about removing the old, unsafe



AFTER

and unsightly deck.

"The wood deck we had needed to go, and then we added our concrete slab in the back," she says.

Maria is motivated to keep adding to the patio and the rest of the house.

"The best thing about these updates is that we have a great new foundation, and my ideas are endless," she says.

Maria says Christian is happy to help her create the home of her dreams but has asked her to take it year by year.

"We still have so much left to do, but, like my husband said, 'a year at a time.'"

They suggest others also try not to do too much at once.

"Our advice is to take it step by step," says Maria. "We chose to save up and do one project per year. It gives you a year to choose what you want, how you want it, and to see who can do it with you." ■

HOKANSON'S Iconic pumpkin arch

Halloween decorations a tradition

Jodi Hokanson loves Halloween.

That is particularly evident by the iconic pumpkin arch she has put up each of the four years since moving to her Altoona home on Eighth Street S.W.

The display began even earlier — a decade ago when she lived in Mitchellville. Her husband, Jeff, made the base from steel so the arch could withstand the wind and anything else mother nature threw its way.

The couple then went out and bought as many plastic pumpkins as they could and drilled holes in the bottom of each. They string lights through each pumpkin by hand and, one by one, assemble the pumpkins to the arch.

"It turned out better than I could've imagined, and it brought lots of people by the house just to get a glimpse," Hokanson says. "We have been doing it year after year. It has been kind of my signature Halloween decoration."

She initially came up with the pumpkin arch 10 years ago so that she could enter a Halloween yard decoration contest. Hokanson ended up winning, and, ever since, people look forward to the display.

"I am so happy that the pumpkin arch is loved as much as I love putting it up year after year," she says. "Halloween Queen has been a nickname given to me for my love of decorating for Halloween. I try to add something new to my yard decorations each year. This year, along with the arch, will be a graveyard/cemetery."

After Halloween each year, the fun continues as Hokanson swaps out the pumpkins for something more Christmas related.

"The community seems to really enjoy driving by each year and seeing the arch," she says. "I get a lot of compliments and thank yous, and the kids seem to look forward to it every year."

Aside from the love she feels from the community for her annual decorations, Hokanson appreciates living in Altoona for its big-city comforts and small-town feel.

"Altoona is the perfect blend of urban and rural living," she says. "We love it here." ■



Jodi Hokanson enjoys decorating for Halloween and has included a lighted pumpkin arch for years.



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CORNIVAL FALL FAMILY FESTIVAL

Altoona's summer of CORNival caps off with the Fall Family Festival on **Saturday, Sept. 23**. Held at Intrinsic Ag (102 1st Ave N) from 11 a.m. – 3 p.m., this event takes the celebrations right into the corn fields where history was made 100 years ago with a custom corn maze. Most activities are free, including the maze, an inflatable, pumpkin painting (while supplies last), and the CORNival CORNvoy. The event will also feature food for purchase and a farmers' market. All events celebrate the end of CORNival, the celebration marking the 100th anniversary of the planting of the first acre of commercial hybrid corn which happened right here in Altoona. More details are available on the City's Facebook page, or online at Altoona-iowa.com.



FINAL BRUSH DROP-OFF

The final brush drop-off for Altoona residents will happen from 8 a.m. – Noon on Saturday, Oct. 7. To access the brush drop-off site, enter the Utilities Department service road from 8th Street SW. Continue south on the road, past the Utilities Department buildings and continue up the hill, brush drop-off will be on your left.

Please have information identifying you as a City of Altoona resident ready when you drop off brush. No leaves or bushes.

FALL YARD WORK REMINDERS

The City of Altoona appreciates your cooperation in keeping Altoona beautiful and maintaining the storm drains by raking and mulching your leaves on your own property. If you have a huge amount of leaves or you choose not to mulch, please remember not to blow the leaves into the street where they can clog the storm sewers (City Ordinance 135.05). Also, burning leaves is not allowed with city limits (City Ordinance 105.05).

- Yard waste can be placed in Compost it! bags or store-brand bags with a green Compost It! sticker attached. Or, throw everything in your 96-gallon Compost It! cart and take it to the curb on your regular collection day. Cart service for yard waste is renewed annually.
- Learn more about Metro Waste's Compost It! program and what's accepted by visiting www.WhereItShouldGo.com/YardWaste, or by calling 515.244.0021.

PARK BATHROOMS CLOSING SOON

The permanent bathrooms located at Haines, Lion's, and Village parks and Sam Wise Youth Complex are closing on approximately **October 15** for the season. Portable bathrooms located throughout the city parks will also be removed around that date. These closures help the city to protect the pipes from freezing. Although, we may have some beautiful, warm, fall days, freezing temperatures are common in late fall overnights. Bathrooms will open, and be replaced, at parks for the spring, around **April 15**, weather permitting.

Rentals of the outdoor park shelters also end for the season on **October 15**.

SAVE THE DATE FOR HALLOWEEN FUN

There are several opportunities for ghosts, ghouls and goblins to scare up some fun this Halloween. The Altoona's Chambers annual Business Trick or Treat event will be held on **Wednesday, Oct. 25** from 5-7 p.m. More information is available at altoonachamber.org. Citywide trick or treating in Altoona will happen on Beggars' Night, **Monday, October 30** from 6-8 p.m. For any new residents, local tradition includes children sharing a joke or riddle with homeowners who are handing out candy. Happy Haunting!



DIVERSIFICATION, patience and consistency

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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THE RUTHLESS elimination of hurry

I don't know about you, but, for me, most of my worst moments as a husband, father, pastor and as a human being are when I'm in a hurry. Late for an appointment, behind on my unrealistic to-do list, trying to cram too much into my day. I can ooze anger, impatience and tension. I ignore and rush by people. This is the opposite of love. Hurry and love are like oil and water — they simply do not mix.



Can you imagine a stressed-out Jesus?

Snapping at Mary Magdalene after a long day, "I can't believe you spilled the olives! What were you thinking?" Can you picture Jesus half talking to you and half texting on his iPhone, giving you some "uh-huhs" as he tries to multitask? Can you imagine Jesus saying, "I'd love to heal your leg, but I have a plane to catch. Good luck!"

That just doesn't sound like Jesus, does it? But it does sound like us. There was something different about Jesus' life and his relationship to time that made him present, patient and full of love. I want to learn this way of life.

I love how Jesus modeled for us an unhurried life. Jesus was relentlessly present to people. He didn't ignore or rush by. He was so locked into the moment, attentive to those God put in his path. With margin and slowness, he really noticed people, really listened, and really loved.

It's like Jesus had an internal cruise control that was set to the speed of love. Love is slow. Love takes time. Love means being present, not hurried. No matter what happened, no matter what the interruption, no matter the demand, Jesus just kept cruising at the speed of love.

This is why Dallas Willard, when asked what his most important spiritual advice was, said, "You must ruthlessly eliminate hurry from your life."

But that's hard. There's something in us that, despite our best intentions and our best efforts, derails our attempts at living at the speed of love. It's like something is unsettled in our souls. We feel a need to prove ourselves by what we accomplish. We feel a need to compete against others by living a better life. We have a fear of missing out.

Jesus doesn't just model the speed of love; he also has a word of love for you from the cross: "You are loved. You are forgiven. You have nothing to prove and no one to compete with. You are mine, and you are loved." You can rest in that love. That kind of love sets us free from hurry by changing our inner motivations. That love enables us to live at the speed of love. ■

Information provided by Pastor Nathan Anenson,
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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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WAYS your business can give back

There are many compelling reasons for a business to give back to the communities it serves. It can expose your business to potential new customers, build goodwill for your company brand, and boost employee engagement and morale. Of course, the primary reasons to give back are to help others and make the community stronger.

Over the years, I've been fortunate to work with many businesses that are committed to giving back in ways that are authentic and impactful. In that time, I've noticed the most successful charitable giving programs:

- **Align with company values:** The most effective way to ensure authenticity is to align your efforts with your company's mission and core values. For example, if your company values education and development, consider book drives, volunteer reading programs or



other efforts that support youth or adult literacy.

- **Address important community needs:** Business leaders understand the best environment in which to grow their company is a strong community. When considering ways to give back, look at the biggest issues facing your community.

- **Consider employee passions:** To keep employees engaged in your efforts, be sure to ask about what's important to them and find ways to connect your giving to those interests. Survey your team members to learn which organizations or issues are most important to them, and then make donations and/or create volunteer opportunities to support those causes. You could also create a program that matches a portion of employee contributions to the nonprofits they support.

Once you've created a program that aligns with your company values, addresses community needs and connects with employee passions, it's time to act by:

- **Giving your time:** Volunteering is a great,

low-cost way for you and your employees to give back. Many nonprofits post volunteer needs on their websites, and organizations like United Way maintain a list of community-wide volunteer opportunities. Your organization can choose an ongoing volunteer effort or a once-and-done activity.

- **Using your talents:** If your employees are highly skilled in a specific trade or profession, consider sharing those talents via in-kind donations of time and/or related supplies.

- **Sharing your treasure:** Whether your organization is donating millions to the local food bank or a few hundred dollars to support an after-school program, your generosity makes our community stronger.

After reading this, I hope you're even more inspired to start or expand your business' charitable giving. ■

Information provided by Mary Simon, VP, Altoona Branch Manager, 3820 Eighth St. S.W., Altoona, 515-245-5480, MSimon@BankersTrust.com. Bankers Trust NMLS ID: 440379.



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VP, Altoona Branch Manager

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Fall Market on Hubbell

Saturday, Sept. 30, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
3232 Hubbell Ave., Altoona



NAMIWalks Iowa

Saturday, Sept. 30,
Terra Park, Johnston

The public is invited to join one of the biggest mental health awareness events in the state. Register yourself, your family, your book club, your workplace, your church group, and any loved ones who are passionate about mental healthcare for this fun and empowering event. Registration is free and easy. Kids, families and well-behaved dogs are welcome. You'll hear from moving speakers, meet amazing people, engage with vendors to learn more about services and supports in Iowa, and walk either a 1K or 5K around beautiful Terra Park Lake. Register at www.namiwalks.org.



One Million Steps for OCD Walk

Oct. 14, 9:30 a.m.

Gray's Lake, 2101 Fleur Drive, Des Moines

OCDIowa announces the Des Moines One Million Steps for OCD Walk will take place this October. Co-hosted by the International OCD Foundation, the One Million Steps for OCD Walk is the nation's largest grassroots awareness-building and fundraising campaign to highlight obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) and related disorders. To learn more, visit ocdiowa.org or www.iocdf.org.

Comedy in the Pyramid

Saturday, Oct. 14,
doors open 7 p.m.
Za-Ga-Zig Shrine,
1100 Shriners Parkway, Altoona

Enjoy a stand-up comedy show featuring Lewis Bissett, Andy Hartley and Dannie T. This show is for 21 and older. Cost is \$15 general admission and \$40 VIP. Tickets can be purchased at brewmeisters.simplenetix.com.



Harmony Central Chorus of Des Moines concert

Sept. 30, 3 p.m.

First Baptist Church of Greater Des Moines, 8250 N.W. 62nd Ave., Johnston

Harmony Central Chorus of Des Moines, a four-part a capella harmony chorus, will present a concert. Tickets are \$20 per adult and \$15 per student and may be purchased at the door.

Business Trick or Treat

Wednesday, Oct. 25, 5-7 p.m.
Civic Plaza, 360 Center Place,
Altoona

This free family event features more than 30 booths from the business community, a scavenger hunt, and lots of candy. There will be one entrance and one exit. You will enter at Civic Plaza and follow along the bike trail to get your treats. Participants are encouraged to carpool and park in the larger community lots without taking away from customer parking for those businesses in the area trying to serve patrons.



Benefit show for Maui

Oct. 8, 3-7 p.m.

xBk Live, 1159 24th St.,
Des Moines

A show to benefit those affected by the fires on Maui will feature the local group Aloha Wind, led by Ilima Young-Dunn, and will include chants, music and more. Tickets are \$20 in advance and will be \$25 the day of the event. Proceeds will be going to the Hawaiian non-profit organization 'Aina Momona to help families affected by the wildfires.

2023 Madison County Covered Bridge Festival

Oct. 14-15, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The Madison County Covered Bridge Festival features family fun, including parade and tours of the namesake bridges. Vendors, demonstrations, kids zone, live entertainment, car show, quilt show, Madison County Historical Complex tours, and much more are sure to please crowds. Festival admission is \$3 or two for \$5 and free for children younger than 11. For more information, visit www.madisoncounty.com/covered-bridge-festival-2/. ■



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



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ALTOONA Public Library news

Library of Play

Looking for something to perk up your party? Keep the kids busy? Build your skills so adult leagues beg you to play? Thanks to funding from a Prairie Meadows Community Betterment Grant, we have a collection of outdoor equipment and games, like volleyball, pickleball, mini-golf, a telescope and more to borrow. Reserve your fun now at altoona.polarislibrary.com.

ADULT PROGRAMMING – AGES 18-PLUS

Scary Movie Trivia, Thursday, Oct. 12, 6-8 p.m. Test your knowledge of all things scary. If you are a fan of scary movies, you won't want to miss it. We'll bring the popcorn and candy. Registration required.

DIY Haunted Doll Houses, Tuesday, Oct. 17, 6:30 p.m.

Transform a plastic doll house into spooky home décor. All supplies provided. Registration required.

Interactive Mystery Night, Tuesday, Oct. 31, 6 p.m. Join us on Halloween for a very mysterious, interactive whodunit at the library. Appetizers will be served. Space is limited and registration is required. For ages 18-plus.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING

Fun Size Kitchen, Monday, Oct. 2, at 12:30 p.m. Measure, mix and

cook a snack based on a book. This month we will be making mummy pizzas. For ages 5 and younger. Registration required.

Pipsqueak Playdate, Fridays from 10-11 a.m. Come play and socialize at the library. We will have toys and activities set up for your little one to explore. For ages 5 and younger. No registration required.

Crafty Kids, Monday, Oct. 23, 6-7 p.m. Bring your creativity and we'll provide the supplies for a fun and festive craft. For grades pre-K to sixth. Registration required.

TEEN PROGRAMMING

Painting and Perler, Thursday, Oct. 5, 6-7 p.m. Create some melted bead or painted masterpieces. We'll have patterns on hand for Perler beads and all the supplies you need for a beautiful painting. For grades 7-12. Registration required.

Ghost Hunt, Friday, Oct. 13, 6-8 p.m. Ever wondered if the library is haunted? So have we! Join us as we welcome TNA Paranormal Society to talk about their ghost investigations, the equipment they use, and what they've found. Then, stay for a real-life ghost hunt here at APL. Pizza will be provided. For grades 7-12. Registration required.

Teen BYO Book Club, Thursday, Oct. 19, 6-7 p.m. Ever have a book give you the creepy crawlies? Let's chat about it. Join us to talk all things scary and spooky books. Bring a book to share (spooky or not) or join just to chat about books. For grades 7-12. Registration required. ■

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:

MILITARY BRANCH:

RANK AT DISCHARGE:

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.

Email to tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com or mail to:

Big Green Umbrella Media, 8101 Birchwood Court Suite D, Johnston, IA 50131

SUBMISSIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY NOV. 8.



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.



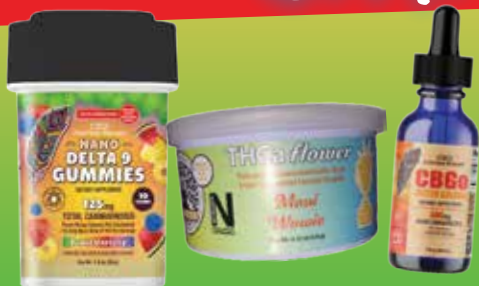
Many people use CBD or THC for relief from discomfort, and studies have shown users get better results when using a product that combines both. This enhanced result is known as “the entourage effect.” Other popular combinations include CBD with CBG. Since they both have similar effects but are not psychoactive, 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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APPRENTICESHIP program helps bridge the gap

Students are able to learn and work toward a career.



Registered Apprenticeship coordinator Joseph Phillips, students Karson Green and Corbin Capman, and Diesel Mechanic Apprenticeship educator Darell Butcher.

The Registered Apprenticeship program first began at the Southeast Polk High School as a way to bridge the gap between high school and a career field. Registered apprenticeship programs are certified and approved through the Iowa Department of Labor. The Southeast Polk program started with Diesel Mechanic Apprenticeship because it was a high-need field, and the school had a business partnership with Trivista.

“I love working one on one with a student and an employer and sharing in the successes of the students as they progress through the program,” says Registered Apprenticeship coordinator Joseph Phillips. “I love helping a student achieve financial independence for their life. I do not want any student to ever have to worry about financial stability, and I think that really fuels why I became involved.”

The program is currently available for students who have identified their skills and aptitudes as a match for a particular career.

The Diesel Mechanic Apprenticeship is three years long, and, ideally, students start in their junior year and work through the program until graduation. Students then complete their competencies one year after high school. Some examples of competencies include using diagnostic tools to read trouble codes, service braking system components, and more. The program is graduated so that apprentices receive a wage increase every time they meet a year’s worth of competencies.

“I love giving a student the skills to have a rewarding life-long career and the coaching that goes along with it,” says Phillips. “The financial stability piece and the fact that students are earning while they are in school learning is a real game changer for some.”

In order to participate in the program, students must complete an application process that includes their reason for wanting to be an apprentice and their career aspirations. Students are then interviewed and address three metrics: GPA, attendance, and behavior referrals. In addition to Diesel Technician, the Registered Apprenticeship program has grown to include Vet Technician, CNC Operator, Welding, Medical Secretary and Automotive Technician. District officials are looking for ways to expand into new career fields and with new business partners.

This school year, the Registered Apprenticeship Program is offering a new opportunity for Southeast Polk students. Intro to Apprenticeship will explore all the apprenticeship opportunities in the metro area, both union and non-union. The course is recognized with the North American Building Trades Union and will certify students who complete the course. This certification is recognized as a value-added benefit for being admitted to any union-based apprenticeship program in the metro. ■

SIMON says, be involved

Volunteer supports community.

Mary Simon believes in being involved in her community, and the long list of organizations she volunteers with and serves is clear proof of that. Simon, who is vice president/consumer services manager at Bankers Trust in Altoona, currently serves on the Altoona Board of Adjustments, Prairie Meadows board, Altoona Chamber of Commerce, East Polk Innovation Collaborative, Altoona Economic Development Corporation, Crime Stoppers of Central Iowa, Altoona Library Foundation, Visit Altoona, and Caring Hands Outreach Center Food Pantry. She recently stepped down from serving on the board of Altoona Palooza, saying she wanted give others with different perspectives the opportunity to step up and become involved.



Mary Simon is a devoted Altoona booster.

Simon has worked in banking for more than 30 years and has been with Bankers Trust for the past 16 years.

"When my kids were younger, I did a little bit of volunteering, when I could, through their elementary schools," she says. "In the early 2000s, I started getting involved with the Altoona Chamber. I got involved with what, at the time, was called their Ambassador group, which is the welcoming arm to new business members. Eventually I ended up on the board of directors, and I served as the director in 2009."

From there, Simon has gradually joined more groups and served on more boards. One might wonder how she finds the time for her many commitments.

"Time management," she says. "I have learned how to say 'no,' politely."

Simon said her goal is simply to help Altoona be the best community it can be.

"I get to know a lot of different people from all different walks of life, all different ages, and just being able to develop those relationships with people over the years, that is also really rewarding," she says.

One of her most rewarding endeavors is helping at the food pantry.

"It's really rewarding to be able to be there to help out and get people some food and supplies," she says. "It really is heart-warming."

She said her overall belief about volunteering and serving others is, "It's one of the best ways to pay your civic rent back to your community."

In addition, her employer supports volunteerism.

"The bank is a big supporter of volunteering and giving back to the community that you live and work in, and we do offer paid volunteer time to bank employees," she says.

Simon's family includes her husband, Pat, and their sons, Alex and Harrison, both of whom are Southeast Polk High School graduates and still live in the area. ■

EAGLE RIDGE holds Rock the Block Party

The Eagle Ridge Neighborhood had a Rock the Block Party On Saturday, July 15, from 5:30-8:30 p.m., with Smokey D's food truck serving up BBQ and the band Slipstream playing some good old time rock and roll. The neighbors chatted, and the kids played. They also enjoyed ice cream sandwiches and root beer floats. This was the third block party the neighborhood has had in recent years, and organizers say they hope to continue this new tradition. ■



Slipstream performed for the Eagle Ridge block party.



Neighbors from Eagle Ridge enjoyed a block party with food, music and visiting.



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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.

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HEALTH

By Dr. Kari Swain

IMPROVING allergy symptoms

One of the primary causes of allergies is an impaired immune system. The immune system becomes stressed due to an overload of toxins and inability to adapt to environmental stressors. To improve immune system function and reduce allergic reactions, your body needs to be able to better adapt to stressors. A healthy nervous system can adapt to environmental, physical and chemical stressors. Chiropractic adjustments remove interferences to the nervous system, increase the body's ability to adapt, and improve immune system function. In addition to chiropractic care, consider these lifestyle changes to reduce your toxic load: avoid sugar as it overtaxes the body during digestion; avoid dairy products as they increase the production of mucus and can mimic allergic reactions; eat only whole foods; drink ice cold water; supplement with vitamin C and zinc; shower every evening and any time after being outside; wash and dry bed linens frequently; replace old pillows, rugs and blankets; stimulate lymphatic drainage with practices like lymphatic massage, dry brushing and castor oil packs.

Chiropractors recognize the important role a healthy nervous system plays in a healthier immune system. Most over-the-counter and prescription allergy treatments adversely affect the nervous system, which means they will adversely affect your overall health and wellness. Over-the-counter allergy medications are focused only on relieving the symptoms. These medications do not get to the source of the symptoms, and they come with many side-effects. While treating the symptoms may seem easiest, it's important to understand that the side-effects of these chemicals increase in severity with long-term usage and may even eventually worsen the symptoms. Many people report allergies improve as their nervous system regulates with consistent chiropractic care. ■

Information provided by Dr. Kari Swain, Swain Chiropractic, 410 Center Place S.W., Altoona, 515-967-9300.

BEST USES of popular apples

Did you know there are more than 750 varieties of apples to choose from? So, what's the difference between Fuji, Honey Crisp and Granny Smith? How do you know what to use to bake with, serve up raw or put into cider?

Not all varieties of apples are meant to be eaten straight off the tree or off the grocery store shelf. Some are meant for baking into pies or brewing into ciders, while others are ideal for snacking or savory dishes. Here are some popular varieties and their best uses:



- **McIntosh Apple.** If you're looking for a creamy, softer apple, McIntosh is the apple for you. They're perfect for applesauce or soup. In terms of flavor, they're juicy and often tart. Since they're a bit mealy in texture, I wouldn't suggest baking with them.

- **Fuji.** The Fuji, named for its hometown of Fujisaki, Japan, is world famous for its sweetness. They are a lovely light rose or a rich crimson, ultra sweet, flavor forward, refreshingly juicy. Though not a standout in any specific arena, its versatility makes it a welcome addition to snacks, salads, pies, ciders and whatever else you've got planned.

- **Jonagold.** Tart-sweet flavor and high in fiber, Jonagolds (and all apples) can help lower blood pressure, cholesterol and the risk of colon cancer. Due to their softer skin, these apples are great in juices, soups, smoothies and cider.

- **Gala.** Galas are a popular choice and can be found anywhere. They feature mildly sweet flavors with hints of vanilla. For a mellow, easy-eating apple, you're in the right spot. They are great for dipping, as part of a snack spread, or tossed with salad. They are better fresh than baked.

- **Granny Smith.** The quintessential tart apple. Beyond the iconic light-green skin of this apple awaits a lemon-like acidity with just enough sweetness to satisfy. This apple was discovered by none other than Granny Smith on her farm in Australia and is now available all over the world. This apple is all-purpose when you want an extra tart apple flavor. It pairs well with a flavorful cheese and bakes exceptionally well in pies and desserts as it balances out the sweetness.

- **Honeycrisp.** Crisp and famously sweet. The name really says it all. This popular, versatile apple can satisfy most anyone. The best Honeycrisp apples are yellow with a red blush covering the whole fruit. Look for them earlier in the season. This apple is best eaten out of hand or pressed into juice or cider.

- **Pink Lady.** Notably pink in color, this apple's acidity and sugar give it an initially tart flavor, which develops nicely into a sweet and floral finish. The acidity also provides a refreshingly bright "fizzy" sensation on the palate, leaving a lingering floral aftertaste. Popularly eaten out of hand for its effervescence, it also holds its shape exceptionally well when baking. It is also great in savory recipes. ■

Information provided by Caitlyn Ferin, LD, RD, corporate dietitian, Fareway, 620 Eighth St. S.E., Altoona, 515-252-9962.



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A SEASON of grief

As fall draws near, we expect change. Inevitable change. The vibrant greens of leaves turn to hues of orange and brown. Bright, cheerful colors of summer flowers wilt into clumps of brown, and even the stems seem to lay down to rest eventually. Fall is a season of transition. It's unavoidable, but it is not without purpose. On the other side of fall is winter. Both are necessary to achieve their purpose, which is life anew in the spring.

Grief is much like fall. We will all experience seasons of loss in our lives. Losing a person we love due to death brings about unavoidable change — a shift that chauffeurs us into our next season. Like the leaves that fall in their own time from the branches, over time, we let go of the initial shock of the loss and the waves of pain and loneliness as we try to adjust to the absence of their presence as well as the parts of our identity that we feel left with them. Sometimes there are a couple of leaves that we cling to through the bitterness of winter until spring proves that new life is coming, and we find our purpose again.

If you're grieving this season, give yourself grace. In time, the pain of loss will bring about healing and new purpose.

Give your family the gift of love, and care for your future end-of-life needs in advance. ■



Information provided by Tosha Edmundson, Family Services Representative, Highland Memory Gardens Cemetery, 1 N.E. 60th Ave., Des Moines, 515-289-2230.

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MEDICAID and long-term care

If you do not have enough savings to pay for needed care, you could be eligible for assistance from Medicaid. In long-term care facilities, Medicaid helps with the cost of care, but you must medically and financially qualify.

Medicaid is a state-managed service that offers medical coverage for people who have low income. In Iowa, the Department of Health and Human Services defines Medicaid eligibility as "A person who is elderly (age 65 or older). A person who is disabled according to Social Security standards. An adult between the ages of 19 and 64 and whose income is at or below 133 percent of the Federal Poverty Level." The person must be a resident of Iowa and a U.S. citizen.

Often times, you may qualify for Medicaid in a long-term care facility based on your monthly income, but your assets may disqualify you for assistance. When this situation occurs, you are required to do a "spend down." A spend down requires you to spend all of your assets. To be eligible to receive Medicaid in a long-term care (LTC) facility, you must have less than \$2,742 in assets each month. Meaning, if you own a home, you would be required to sell it at market value to qualify for Medicaid. You would then be required to use the funds from your spend down to pay the LTC facility privately until your resources are low enough to apply for Medicaid. In addition to the sale of a home, any other liquid assets would need to first be used for private pay to qualify, including stocks and bonds, life insurance policies, and 401k funds.

To qualify, Medicaid also does a "look back period." A look back period is meant to prevent Medicaid applicants from gifting assets or selling them under fair market value to meet the required asset limit. The look back period is typically five years. All financial transactions during that period will be reviewed to determine eligibility. A house sold to a loved one for far less than it is worth in that time period or a large donation to charity could be a disqualifying factor.

Long-term care can cost more than \$100,000 per year. We don't like to think about getting sick or growing older, but it is important to plan in advance and to not wait for a crisis. If you think you may need to utilize Medicaid's services, start planning and gathering appropriate paperwork around five years in advance. ■

Information provided by Stephanie Proper, executive director, Valley View Village, 2571 Guthrie Ave., Des Moines, 515-265-2571.



NEW BEGINNINGS and learning opportunities

What does fall mean for us in the business world? For many, it's a new rush of business as we head toward the holidays. For others, it's time to refocus on making annual goals... only three months left! Sometimes it's business as usual. I like to think of it as a new beginning.

That, of course, is a challenging change in perspective when you've gotten well into a routine that will carry you through the end of the year. I say, "What better time to break the routine and re-evaluate?"

This year has posed several challenges, from the financial environment, political volatility and tax uncertainties, and many businesses are trying to cut spending, which, in larger sectors, has led to layoffs. Now, as the kids head back to school, we find ourselves in a good position to do some learning of our own. How have the challenges you've faced shaped your decision making these first nine months of 2023?

We've faced several challenges in our businesses and try to see each of those as a learning opportunity. Whether it be a singular issue, like an unhappy client, or a larger problem, such as a huge increase in the workload due to market conditions, these are all opportunities for improvement.

We never want to have an unhappy client, but, if we failed to do something right, we are going to learn from our mistake and value that failure and the opportunity it creates for us to be 1% better today. We want to take a similar approach to larger issues. If we can't keep up with the work, it's an opportunity to improve our systems and get faster while maintaining work quality.

Then there are those times where you just don't have the answers. I've run into that a few times in recent years. We've learned the value of utilizing qualified consultants in specific areas of our business. The cash outlay seems a little daunting, but, if you can business plan around the expense and see the upside, it can be a profitable investment.

Whatever you're up to for the fall, it's a good time for us all to head back to school. Find a fresh start in your thinking. And use those lessons to push into the final quarter of 2023 armed with new knowledge and a plan. ■



Information provided by Melissa Horton, Executive Director,
119 Second St. S.E., Suite A, Altoona, 515-967-3366,
melissahorton@altoonachamber.org.

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OUT & ABOUT



Kelsey Redmond and Tim Guiter at Altoona Noon Networking on Aug. 15 at Perkins Restaurant.



David Fast and Julie Jordan at Altoona Noon Networking on Aug. 15 at Perkins Restaurant.



Kyle Lee, Shawn Kinnison and Matt Kiernan at Altoona Noon Networking on Aug. 15 at Perkins Restaurant.



Melissa Horton, Janzal Taylor and Shawn Kinnison at Altoona Noon Networking on Aug. 15 at Perkins Restaurant.



Melissa Horton and Mark Vander Tuig at Altoona Noon Networking on Aug. 15 at Perkins Restaurant.



Kelsey Redmond, Twila Shreves, Carson Odle and Christine Clark at Altoona Noon Networking on Aug. 15 at Perkins Restaurant.



Chrysti Berry, Kristin Dunwoody and Mary Simon at the Women of Vision event with Dr. Rachelle Keck, president of Grand View University, as speaker on Aug. 30.



Annie Lass and Amy Jensen at the Women of Vision event with Dr. Rachelle Keck, president of Grand View University, as speaker on Aug. 30.



Lexi Shafer and Lacie Sibley at the Women of Vision event with Dr. Rachelle Keck, president of Grand View University, as speaker on Aug. 30.



Miriam Cody at the Women of Vision event with Dr. Rachelle Keck, president of Grand View University, as speaker on Aug. 30.



Corinna King, Dr. Rachelle Keck and Kendall Dillon at the Women of Vision event with Dr. Rachelle Keck, president of Grand View University, as speaker on Aug. 30.



Jenny Leonard, Scott Hoffman and Kaylie Fields at the Women of Vision event with Dr. Rachelle Keck, president of Grand View University, as speaker on Aug. 30.

RIBBON Cutting

A ribbon cutting ceremony was held for the completion of the Southeast Polk Multi-Purpose Stadium on Aug. 17.



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Corrine Stout



Marisol Molstre, Tyler Stout and Cindi McClure



Amy Robbins, Jill Moberly and Karianne Lundgren



Ron and Feryl Bouchard



Sophia Kuhns, Kate Wolfe, Lauren O'Dell and Haidyn Brown



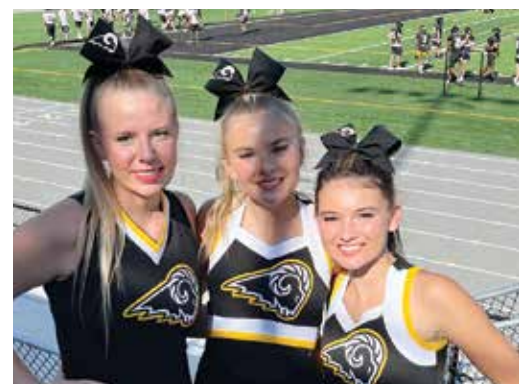
Joanne Moeller



Lindsey Hrodey, Kerri Perry, Emily Zelenovish and Mae



Jessica Boeke and Patrick Wolfe



Brooke Goodrich, Josie Osborn and Rylee Winkelman

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