

WAUKEE

SEPTEMBER 2023

Living

MAGAZINE

Making a house *a home*

Residents share their home
improvement experiences

Mac and cheese with pecan breadcrumbs
RECIPE

Waukee Theatre Arts performance upcoming
EDUCATION

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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

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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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Making a house *a home*

Residents share their home
improvement experiences

By Jackie Wilson

Ryan and Jolisa Davis enjoy their
new game room in the basement
of their Waukee home.
Photo by Jackie Wilson

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

FEATURE



AFTER

Ryan and Jolisa Davis finished their basement to accommodate their blended family. After photos by Jackie Wilson

Basement

When Ryan and Jolisa Davis combined their households, each brought two kids to the family. Their search for a home right before the 2022 school year lead them to a house in Waukee; however, it was only a four-bedroom home. They knew they needed a fifth bedroom and that it would have to go in the unfinished basement.

"We wanted a five-bedroom, but it's hard to find any house with five bedrooms," Ryan says.

Their son used the couple's home office as a bedroom for more than a month while a new bedroom was being finished downstairs.

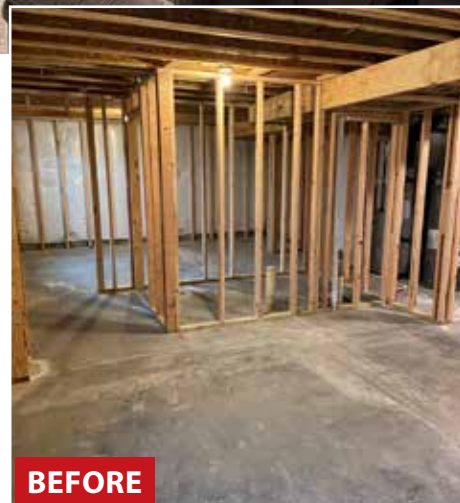
The Davises called contractor Cody Bailey Construction and Remodel. They explained their dilemma about needing a quickly finished basement.

"Cody was Johnny on the spot," says Ryan. "We needed it super quick, and it was done in 30-40 days."

As the upstairs already had new carpet, they



AFTER



BEFORE

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chose to match the basement's colors with the rest of the house.

With about 900 square feet to work with, a bedroom and bathroom were top of the list for the basement. Next, they added a game/playroom and recreation spot for the couples' four children.

"The kids love to play video games, watch movies and sports on TV," says Ryan.

The family watches Iowa State football games. Jolisa prefers the Kansas City Chiefs, while Ryan likes the Dallas Cowboys.

After the family room was completed, they added a ping pong table.

"The game room is a great addition," says Jolisa.

To finish the look, they created a small bar area with seating close to the big-screen television set.

Ryan says the remodel was smooth and quick.

"It was a blank slate. When we moved in here, there were no walls. It was nothing. I don't think I could see it for what it might be," recalls Ryan.

Ryan and Jolisa are happy with the outcome

and surprised they stayed within their budget.

"We made all the right choices," says Ryan. "There were a lot of contractors backed up. Ours was here almost every day. They had a really good crew with super reliable workers."

Jolisa adds, "The kids love the ping pong table. This is our own chill space to hang out with the kids or to watch movies and sports."

New dock overlooks pond

When Martin Wiesley returned to Iowa from serving in the Marines and living in California, it was to care for his aging father, who moved into a care facility. When he arrived at his childhood home in Waukee, not much had changed. The home, built in 1986, was great to grow up in; however, the place needed updates, including the patio that had rotted.

The home and patio overlook a small private pond shared with neighbors. Martin wanted to capitalize on the view of the water, along with the large mature trees.

He enlisted the help of Hansen Home Renovations of West Des Moines. Owner Aaron Hansen replaced the patio a few years back. The pair then brainstormed about other



Martin Wiesley enjoys his new dock off his pond in Waukee.

updates. Why not install an all-season dock just off the pond? Both agreed it would be a great addition, highlighting the pond.

The beach was formerly located just off the property, but it proved to be too much maintenance. Aaron installed a new dock over the former beach. The dock includes a large space with casual seating. A gazebo provides shade, while a hammock offers a relaxing vibe.

Metal sculptures throughout the back yard,

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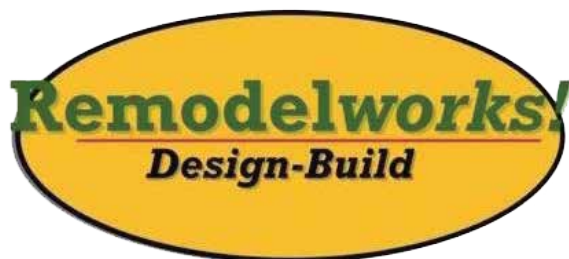
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AFTER!



Before



AFTER!



Before

“They were very professional and very easy to work with. They showed up on time. I'm very pleased with my basement. **I highly recommend Remodelworks!** for your home improvement projects. -Annette S.

FEATURE



BEFORE

A beach area by the pond was difficult to maintain so didn't get much use.

including a palm tree, are made from rusted old machinery welded together.

A few years prior, a large deck completed by Aaron was extended with a few built-in seating areas. A firepit was made with the spare wood. Martin told Aaron he likes to sit outside in the mornings, eating his breakfast. So, Aaron



AFTER

An expansive deck and dock make entertaining on the shoreline a breeze.

created a breakfast bar area with a built-in wood railing along the inner railing of the upstairs patio.

"I like sitting out here. This was perfect," Martin says.

The large patio and dock are perfect for hosting parties. Martin volunteers for the

National Alliance on Mental Illness and recently hosted a fundraiser in his backyard, raising \$9,000.

"It was my first event with the new dock," he says. "It just keeps getting bigger every year."

Martin also hosts events, such as a hockey tournament on the pond, for his business,



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Strong Mind Apparel. He gives a portion of the funds to Mindspring Mental Health Alliance.

"My father, who served in Vietnam, was a Methodist minister. He and my grandfather both instilled a service to help others," he says. "By having a large, welcoming home, I can host a positive atmosphere for people. It's a blessing to have this space for others."

Martin also assisted with the renovations.

"It was one reason I chose Aaron because I was able to help with the renovations. I did the grunt work whenever I could help out," he says.

He says Aaron was incredible with his vision.

"He was extremely willing to work with me. He was honest if he couldn't do something," he says. "But, now that I think of it, he was able to do everything."

Besides providing a space for entertaining, Martin likes his backyard oasis.

"It's relaxing to sit here. I like the tranquility."

He is already thinking of his next project, which involves a playful space.

"I always wanted to build a tree fort. It's been a childhood dream of mine — even at this age," he reflects.

Self-taught homeowner

Early on as a homeowner, Larrey Bankole wanted to save money on home repairs and remodeling. He worked construction while attending college for an aviation degree, so he had some experience.

However, when it came to home repairs he wasn't experienced doing, he consulted the Internet.

"I learned how to do repairs and went to YouTube college," he laughs. "I watched for 10 hours how to tile a floor."

His first remodel was a red kitchen with patterned wallpaper that needed updates. Prior to the remodel, everything was demolished.

"There was nothing left," Larrey says. "It was a blank kitchen. It was hideous."

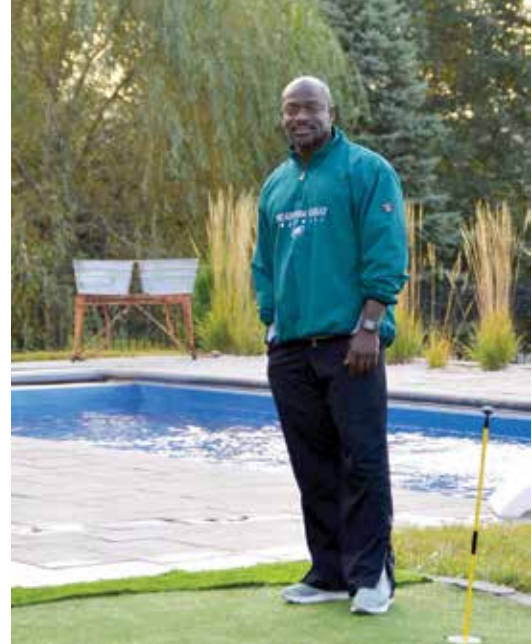
He pondered what to do with a door that had a 4-foot drop to the garage.

"We decided to close the door and refinish the walls," he says.

He put in a new ceiling and walls. However, the design was done by his wife, Megan.

"Ladies have better taste. She picked out all the stuff and the design work," he recalls.

When finished, they were ready to move in,



Larrey Bankole enjoys learning how to do home projects. He recently added a putting green to his yard.

but, instead, they got an offer on the house.

Since then, they have made various renovations to their homes. Larrey says he tries to do work himself, not only to save money but save time. This summer, he intended to install a putting green in his back yard in Waukee.

"They put us on a six-month waiting list,"

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FEATURE

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Red counter tops and two wallpaper patterns in Larrey Bankole's kitchen were enough to motivate him into remodeling. A gray and white color palate, along with stainless steel fixtures, gave it a modern vibe.

BEFORE

AFTER

he says. "I figured out how to do it, and now I'm already done with it a month later."

For various remodels, he and Megan go "treasure hunting" at the Habitat ReStore. They find one-of-a-kind deals at a lower cost, plus it helps fund Habitat for Humanity homes for those in need.

Throughout the process, he makes sure he's capable and knows his limits.

"I always check for a permit first and have a structural engineer look at it — especially if I take down walls. Certified electricians always double check my work. I have a plumber come in to make sure I did it right," he explains.

He continues to study or read up on new remodeling techniques. He feels good when he accomplishes a project.

"I'm not an expert," says Larrey. "I try to do most of the stuff myself. There's a sense of pride when you do it by yourself." ■



Future Clients,

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MBG Renovation is a boutique firm specializing in design and residential remodeling with the capacity to deliver on any scale of project you can envision.

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We are constantly aspiring to improve ourselves and our processes to deliver a finished product that enhances everyday life while creating lasting excitement for your new space.

It is our sincere hope that by doing our best for our customers, we will be the first call for their next project and when it's time for their family and friends to remodel, we have left an impression that makes it easy to eagerly recommend MBG.

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NEWS BRIEFS

STIVERS breaks ground on commercial service center

Stivers Ford Lincoln broke ground on a new Ford Pro Elite Commercial Service Center, a commercial vehicle facility that will provide businesses in the Des Moines area and surrounding communities with specialized maintenance solutions designed to reduce vehicle downtime associated with service needs, keeping trucks and vans on the road and getting the job done.

Elite Commercial Service Centers are part of an all-new network of dedicated large-bay service hubs at Ford™ dealers across the country. These service facilities are designed around the needs of commercial customers and will feature state-of-the-art equipment, extended hours, mobile service vans, Elite trained technicians, and electric vehicle certification. Ford Pro aims to open more than 100 such facilities by 2027.

“We’ve heard from Iowa businesses that they needed more options to help keep their vehicles up and running, and we’re responding by meeting their needs,” said Scott Politte, president of Stivers Ford Lincoln of Iowa.

“Ford Pro knows that vehicle downtime means lost revenue. Together with Stivers, we’re working to keep vehicles on the road by combining exceptional service with advanced software to improve uptime and potentially lower costs,” said Anne Mazzacano, general manager, Ford Pro Service Elite. “Our goals are 100% uptime and for no customer’s vehicles to be down for more than 24 hours. And breaking ground on new Elite Commercial Service Centers like this one will help deliver on those goals for commercial customers in Iowa and beyond.”

Stivers Ford Pro Elite Commercial Service Center will feature 24 service bays for Class 1-7 commercial vehicles and five mobile service vans, which can service vehicles at a customer’s business. ■

LEAD DSM introduces class

Lead DSM announced participants in the Youth Leadership Initiative (YLI) Class of 2024. The Youth Leadership Initiative provides high school students with hands-on experiences that help them become better leaders for their schools and communities. At the conclusion of the program, students will: value community involvement; demonstrate professional skills and an understanding of career opportunities; demonstrate the five practices of exemplary leadership; and have developed lifelong relationships with peers, mentors, and community members.

The Youth Leadership Initiative Class of 2024 includes 37 students from 19 public and private schools from across Greater Des Moines, including Cooper Andrews, Waukee High School. Students will meet twice a month to discuss issues and opportunities in our region and fine-tune their leadership skills. Participation in the YLI program is tuition-free for all students, thanks to community sponsors, led by presenting sponsor, Principal®.

The Youth Leadership Initiative is also sponsored by Sammons Financial Group and Des Moines Area Community College. ■

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THIS MEDICARE step could save you money

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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EVENTS IN THE AREA

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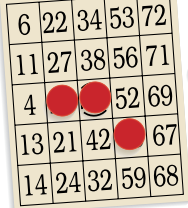
Be sure to check for cancellations.

Bingo

Friday, Oct. 6 and Nov. 3, 1-2:30 p.m.
Waukee Community Center, 675 Walnut St.

Who doesn't love yelling "Bingo" out as the victor in this classic game of chance? Gather friends or meet some new ones at this monthly bingo event. Improve your odds and play two cards at once if you wish. Cost is Bingo \$1 plus 10 cents per card played per round, with a maximum of two cards at one time.

BINGO



Movies in the Park

Friday, Oct. 13
Centennial Park

Movies in the Park will feature Disney's "Encanto." Enjoy this free movie at dusk, approximately 6:30 p.m. Bring lawn chairs, blankets and refreshments.

Wauktoberfest

Saturday, Oct. 7,
4:30-11 p.m.
Waukee Downtown
Triangle

Wauktoberfest, a German-style celebration, will feature live music from three bands, a beer garden and German food. This fundraiser is sponsored by the Waukee Area Historical Society. The Czech It Out band will kick things off with polka music starting at 4:30 p.m. The music continues with the Polka Police at 5:30 p.m. The headlining band, Suede, takes the stage at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$10 in advance or \$15 at the door. Children ages 5 and younger get in free. To learn more about the Waukee Area Historical Society or Wauktoberfest, visit <https://waukeehistory.org/wauktoberfest/>.

'The Tragedy of Macbeth'

Thursday, Oct. 12 at 7 p.m.; Friday,
Oct. 13 at 7 p.m.; and Sunday, Oct. 15
at 2 p.m.

Waukee Theatre Arts Center, 575 S.E.
University Ave., Waukee

Waukee Theatre Arts presents "The Tragedy of Macbeth" by William Shakespeare. Tickets are \$10 and can be purchased at ShowTix4U.com/event-details/76329. Visit the group's website at sites.google.com/waukeeschools.org/whsmacbeth or follow Waukee Theatre Arts on Instagram@WaukeeTheatreArts for latest information.

Halloween Open House

Thursday, Oct. 26, 4:30-6 p.m.

Waukee Public Safety
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The Waukee Police and Fire departments will open their doors to meet and treat kids to candy and activities. Costumes are encouraged but not required.



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EVENTS IN THE AREA

Be sure to check for cancellations.

Paint-a-pumpkin

Friday, Oct. 13, 5-6:30 p.m.
Centennial Park Open Shelter

This colorful, family event is sponsored by Safe Splash Swim School. Preregistered participants can



pick out their own pumpkin and will also receive paints, brushes, a glow stick and popcorn. Stick around to have your hand painted with a fun design and see a free showing of "Encanto" on the outdoor movie screen. Registration deadline for this event is Monday, Oct. 9. Cost is \$8.



Beggars' Night

Monday, Oct. 30,
6-8 p.m.

Dress in your favorite costume and head out for trick or treating.

The Table: free community meal

Last Monday of the month, Oct. 30, Nov. 27 and Dec. 18 (not on the last Monday due to holidays), 5:30-6:30 p.m.
Waukee United Methodist Church, 2075 S.E. LA Grant Parkway

Those in need, financially or just for fellowship, are invited to The Table. Congregation members rotate menus such as lasagna, walking tacos, Maid Rites, and grilled hamburgers/hot dogs.

Tuesday Night Trivia

Tuesdays, 7-9 p.m.

Central Standard Burgers, 1222 S.E. University Ave., Waukee



Come one come all and test out your thinking skills while having a great time. Trivia night is every Tuesday, with featured themed trivia nights once a month. Hosted by Think and Drink Entertainment.



Family Bowling Fun

Various dates

Warrior Lanes, 190 S.E. Laurel St., Waukee

Family Fun events are planned at Warrior Lanes, with glow-in-the-dark bowling, "Mom-approved" music and black lights. Cost per lane includes 90 minutes of bowling, shoe rental, a large one-topping pizza and pitcher of soda for up to five guests per lane. Sunday, Oct. 22, noon to 1:30 p.m. is Halloween Party (reservations due Oct. 20); Sunday, Nov. 19, noon to 1:30 p.m. is Turkey Time Party; Sunday, Dec. 10, noon to 1:30 p.m., is Ugly Sweater Party; and Sunday, Dec. 31, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 31 is Countdown to Noon Year's Eve. Reservations can be made at warriorlanes.com/family-glow-reservations.

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:

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QUOTE: Please answer the question,

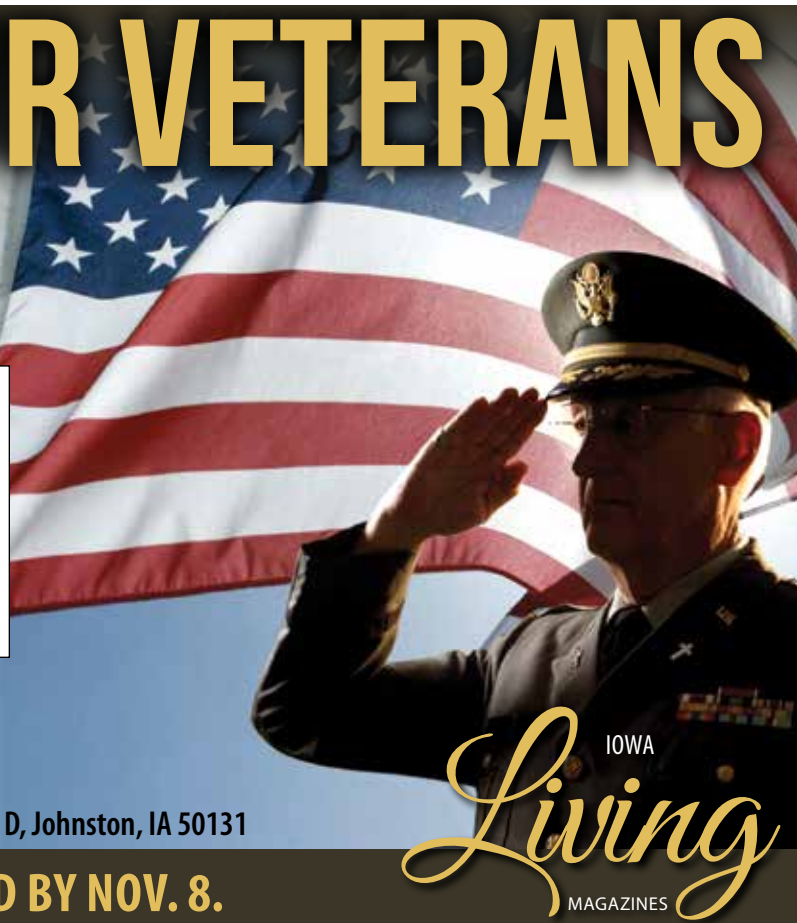
"How can the public best honor veterans?"

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:

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SUBMISSIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY NOV. 8.



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Identity theft presentation

Tuesday, Oct. 10, 6:30-8 p.m.
West Des Moines Elks Lodge,
2060 N.W. 94th St., Clive

Ever been a victim of a scam? Do you know anyone who has? Would you like to learn about the latest scams in Iowa and ways to protect yourself and others? The West Des Moines Elks Club invites you to a free Fraud Watch presentation. Financial crimes target Iowans of all ages. The lists of scams are growing and the scammers are not going away. Learn the latest data on fraud trends and receive tips and resources to protect yourself and your family. The presenter is Neil Shultz, a member of the AARP Iowa Fraud Watch team since it began in 2014 and a retired chief at the Polk County Sheriff's Office.



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.



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.

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 \$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.



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EVENTS IN THE AREA

Be sure to check for cancellations.

Marine Band to perform in Urbandale

Thursday, Oct. 12, 7:30 p.m.

Urbandale High School Performing Arts Center, 7111 N.W. Aurora Ave., Urbandale

For the first time in five years, "The President's Own" United States Marine Band returns to the Midwest on tour, performing a free concert in Urbandale. Organizers from Urbandale High School have helped bring the ensemble from the nation's capital to Urbandale for this community event.

For full details and free tickets (available starting Sept. 12, limit four), visit www.marineband.marines.mil/Tour. Seating is general admission and ticket holders must be seated by 7:15 p.m.; remaining seats will be released to the standby line at that time.

Marine Band Director Col. Jason K. Fettig has programmed musical selections in the style of the band's 17th Director John Philip Sousa, who initiated the concert tour tradition in 1891. Concertgoers can expect a mix of works including traditional band repertoire, Sousa marches, contemporary compositions, vocal and instrumental solos and a patriotic salute to the Armed Forces. ■



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*(APY) Annual Percentage Yield. Rates accurate as of September 11, 2023. Rates and terms may change without notice. Early withdrawal penalties may apply. Fees may reduce earnings.

THINGS TO KNOW

- **City Council Meetings**
Oct. 2 & 16, 5:30 p.m.
City Hall and Zoom (See info at Waukee.org)
- **Snacks & Facts: DNA Basics**
Oct. 6, 11 a.m.
Waukee Community Center
- **Bingo**
Oct. 6, 1 p.m.
Waukee Community Center
- **Movie Matinee**
Oct. 12, 10 a.m.
Waukee Public Library
- **Drug Take Back Day**
Oct. 28, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
Public Safety Building
- **Waukee Public Safety Halloween Open House**
Oct. 26, 4:30-6 p.m.
Public Safety Building
- **Beggar's Night**
Oct. 30, 6-8 p.m.
Citywide

For more information scan to visit our website.



Cooking Safety Tips to Prevent House Fires



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Did you know that cooking fires are the leading cause of home fires and home fire injuries? That's why this year's theme for Fire Prevention Week is "Cooking Safety Starts with You. Pay Attention to Fire Safety."

This daily activity comes with potential fire danger, but you can take simple steps to prevent a fire – and the burns or home damage that comes with it.

- Never leave pots or pans unattended on the stove. Leaving the kitchen makes it easy to get distracted and forget to come back.
- Turn pot handles toward the back of the stove, so they don't hang over the edge where you could easily bump them.
- Use a timer to remind yourself that you're cooking. Make sure it's loud enough to be heard in other rooms if you're baking or roasting for a long period of time.

If you have a small (grease) cooking fire and decide to fight the fire:

- On the stovetop, smother the flames by sliding a lid over the pan and turning off the burner. Leave the pan covered until it is completely cooled. Don't put water on the grease fire!
- For an oven fire, turn off the heat and keep the door closed.

If you have any doubt about fighting a small fire...

- Just get out! When you leave, close the door behind you to help contain the fire.
- Call 9-1-1 from outside the home.

Follow the Waukee Fire Department on Facebook at WaukeeFire and Instagram at WaukeeFD throughout Fire Prevention Week, October 8-14, for more tips on cooking safety. Find resources and fun activities for kids and adults at NFPA.org.



Waukee
THE KEY TO GOOD LIVING



Outdoor Tips for Summer's End

Reduce or Turn Off Sprinklers: Save water and money by reducing run days and length or turning off your sprinklers for the season.

Store Portable Irrigation Meters: Take your portable meters inside for the winter and report your final meter reading at Waukee.org/UtilityBilling.



Empty Your Pool or Hot Tub with Care: Chlorine and other chemicals used to keep your pool or spa clean cause BIG problems for fish and other aquatic life. As you prepare to drain your pool or hot tub/spa, allow the pool or spa to sit for at least 7 days without adding chlorine or other chemicals; the chlorine content should be 0.1 milligrams per liter. Ensure the pH of the pool or spa water is between 7 and 8. Drain water through at least 15 feet of a grassy landscape first (i.e., not directly onto concrete) to allow remaining chemicals to dissipate before reaching the storm drain. Keep the flow of water low (aim for 700 gallons per hour = about 12 gallons per minute) to prevent erosion or damage to landscaping. If you have a saltwater pool, discharge water into the sanitary sewer, so the water can be treated.

Safely Dispose of Unneeded Prescription Drugs on Saturday, Oct. 28

Prevent pill abuse and theft by ridding your home of potentially dangerous prescription drugs that you no longer need. For National Prescription Drug Take Back Day, police officers will collect pills and patches on Saturday, October 28 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Waukee Public Safety Building (1300 SE L.A. Grant Parkway).

Halloween Fun is Coming!

Join Waukee Parks & Recreation for Paint-a-Pumpkin on Friday, October 13 from 5-6:30 p.m. at the Centennial Park Open Shelter. Sponsored by Safe Splash Swim School, this family activity lets preregistered participants pick a pumpkin and receive paints and brushes to create a GOURD-geous masterpiece! Visit waukeee.org/registration by Monday, October 9 to register for the fun!



The Waukee Police and Fire Departments will open their doors for the Halloween Open House, treating kids to candy and more on Thursday, October 26 from 4:30-6 p.m. Costumes encouraged but not required.

Choose the perfect costume and head out trick-or-treating on Beggars' Night, Monday, October 30 from 6-8 p.m. Stay safe by traveling in a group and wearing light or reflective clothing, if possible. Drivers, be extra alert and aware, especially when driving through residential neighborhoods.

Dallas County Local Housing Trust Fund Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation Program

Funding is currently available through the Dallas County Local Housing Trust Fund (DCLHTF) to help low-income residents complete house repairs and fix code violations. Dallas County residents in single-family houses who meet certain income thresholds can apply now for a 5-year forgivable loan for eligible repairs, such as basic structural repairs, building systems, weatherization and handicap accessibility.

This assistance is only available for the applicant's primary residence. Mobile homes, homes being bought on contract, duplexes or rental units are not eligible. For more information, call 515-273-0770 or visit <https://www.wdm.iowa.gov/housing>.

Review Gas Safety Information

If your home is heated by the City-managed natural gas utility, watch your mailbox for a natural gas safety brochure. Please review the information about safe digging, carbon monoxide, gas meter care, identifying gas leaks and more. If you smell gas or suspect a gas leak, leave your property immediately and call the City's emergency gas hotline at 515-249-1212.

Waukee Public Library Helping Hands Supply Drive

The Waukee Public Library is accepting supply donations for the AHeinz57 Pet Rescue and Transport in honor of National Adopt a Shelter Dog Month. All donations can be dropped off at the Library's front desk during October. Needed items include dog and cat food, squeaky toys, cat litter, paper towels, and more. View a complete list of supplies at aheinz57.com/wish-list.

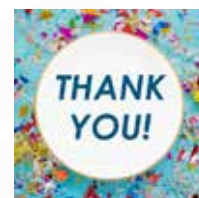


Get Homework HelpNow Through the Waukee Public Library

Your Waukee Public Library card grants you access to dozens of online resources, including Brainfuse's HelpNow. HelpNow provides online tutoring for all learners, including adults! You can interact with a live tutor, get career support, create flashcards, practice standardized tests, and more. Visit waukeeepubliclibrary.org to access HelpNow this school year.

Thank you to seasonal staff

To ensure our parks, city properties, infrastructure and more are in great shape for residents, the City of Waukee employs a number of seasonal staff throughout the summer. Shout out to all the staff members who helped make it a great season! We appreciate your contributions and hope to see you on staff again next year.



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A SPACE for school

Vowles family chooses home with bright, central space for homeschooling.

When Amy and Brett Vowles' oldest daughter was 18 months old, they decided they wanted to homeschool her. At the same time, they were looking for a new home. The biggest must-have was a space on the main floor that could be a dedicated home school.

"If the ground floor didn't have a space for that, it just wasn't a house that we were interested in," says Amy Vowles.

The couple decided on a home with a formal dining room located right off the entryway and next to the kitchen. The central location, combined with ample natural light, creates a perfect space for learning.

"For me, it's my favorite room in the house," says Amy. "The way the sun comes in, it's always bright and cheery in there. Everybody is kind of together, but it's still a secluded place where we can go and also where we can make messes and not have it spill over into the whole rest of the house."

Nowadays, the Vowles homeschool two of their three kids. They participate in a home school co-op through West Des Moines Community Schools. They typically spend one full day a week there with the rest of their learning done at home. Each day looks a little different for the family, but most days consist of running through each subject.

"We always start the day with math for both of them," Vowles says. "Just because we know, if we wait till the end of the day to try to start math, it doesn't go very well for any of us."

One of the biggest challenges of living and learning in the same space is potential distractions in the home. However, having designated times and space for school helps to create a productive learning environment, she says.

"There's not really much else that we do in that space," said Vowles. "So, the kids kind of know to focus a little bit more when we're in there."

When looking for a space to homeschool kids, Vowles recommends finding a space that flows with the rest of the house.

"It's right here in the mix of everything," she says. "I can even be doing other things while the kids are working, and I can pop in and check on them. If we had a home school space, say in the basement, or totally separate from the living space somehow, I don't think that would work as well for us."

Using their home for schooling offers a lot of freedom and flexibility



Amy and Brett Vowles knew when they were looking for a home for their family that they needed space to dedicate to homeschooling.



for the family, she says. Keeping their kids at home means they can flex and alternate their schedules.

"Because we are on our own schedule, we can take a week off and travel and then come back and get to school," Vowles says. "And even just flexibility throughout our week. So, if there are fun things we want to go do during the week, we can take a break during the daytime and do that and then schedule our school hours around that."

"I feel like there's been a lot of positive memories," she adds. "Just being able to spend the extra time together at home — we wouldn't get to do that as much if the kids were in school." ■

WAUKTOBERFEST offers German-themed fun

Festival's second year at Triangle features music, food, beer and more.

Grab your lederhosen or dirndl and get ready for the second annual Wauktoberfest.

Wauktoberfest, a German-style celebration, will be held Saturday, Oct. 7, at the Downtown Triangle in Waukee. Festivities start at 4:30 p.m. and end at 11 p.m.

This is the second year for Wauktoberfest, a fundraiser sponsored by the Waukee Area Historical Society (WAHS). The WAHS is a local nonprofit established in 2012. The event goes beyond merrymaking as it also supports a great cause: preserving, honoring and recognizing Waukee's proud history.

Last year's inaugural festival brought more than 800 people to the Triangle. WAHS raised more than \$20,000 for events and programs.

Currently, historical elements of the WAHS are located inside the Waukee Library. Money raised helps fund the expansion of their collection and event programming. The WAHS hopes to eventually have their own space.

This year's event features German beer and a variety of food, including a German-style menu from Waukee Hy-Vee. The beer trailer is sponsored by the Waukee Downtown Business Group, Triangle businesses and West Bank.

Jake Larson, event committee chair for the WAHS, says local businesses are helping to sponsor the event. "Hy-Vee has partnered with us since our inaugural event, and we are grateful for the lasting partnership and local business support."

Musicians from the Czech It Out band will kick things off with polka music starting at 4:30 p.m. The music continues with the Polka Police at 5:30 p.m. The headlining band, Suede, takes the stage at 8 p.m.

Larson says he's thrilled for the chance to have the community come together for the annual event. "I'm excited about the community connections and the exciting entertainment lineup the committee put together. Prepare to raise your steins, polka the night away and rock out to your heart's content at Wauktoberfest. The entertainment is set to make this Octoberfest celebration memorable.

"Join us for a toe-tapping, heart-pounding extravaganza that captures the true essence of the season. Let's raise a glass and cheer to a good time, German-style. Prost!"

Tickets are \$10 in advance or \$15 at the door. Children ages 5 and younger get in free. To learn more about the Waukee Area Historical Society or Wauktoberfest, visit <https://waukeehistory.org/wauktoberfest/>. ■



The 2022 Wauktoberfest drew a crowd for the German-themed celebration.

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RECIPE

POWER weeknight family meals with pecans

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

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

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

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

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

Mac and cheese with pecan breadcrumbs

Cook time: 50 minutes

Servings: 6

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



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RECIPE

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.

Superfood Pecan Energy Bars

Cook time: 40 minutes

Servings: 14

- 15 Medjool dates (9 ounces)
- 1 cup pecan pieces
- 1/2 cup gluten-free oats
- 1 tablespoon chia seeds
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt

DIRECTIONS

- Preheat oven to 200 F.
- In food processor, process or pulse dates until chopped and rough texture forms. Add pecan pieces, oats, chia seeds, vanilla extract, cinnamon and kosher salt; process about 1 minute until crumbly dough forms.
- Line baking sheet or jelly roll pan with parchment paper. Dump dough into center of parchment paper and use rolling pin to roll into 6-by-10 1/2-inch rectangle. Cut dough into 14 bars about 1 1/2-by-3 inches or into desired shapes.
- Bake bars 30 minutes. Cool bars to room temperature then refrigerate in sealed container between sheets of wax paper.
- To package for on-the-go snacking, cut 4-by-6-inch rectangles of wax paper, wrap around bars and secure with tape.



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INHERITANCE tax and estate planning

Are you worried about your family paying extra taxes when you die? There is some good news that can affect your estate planning.

Every estate is liable for a few different kinds of tax. Whether it is federal estate taxes, income taxes, inheritance tax or capital gains tax, your heirs may be writing checks to the government. Iowa is one of six states that still implements inheritance tax. But that is changing as Iowa phases out its inheritance tax law.

In general, inheritance isn't taxed as income; you won't pay income tax on a bequest. But when you inherit money or property from someone, you potentially owe tax to the state of Iowa. Inheritance tax is owed on all assets



passing to an individual. Some beneficiaries are exempt: a spouse, children, stepchildren, grandchildren and parents all have a 100% exemption from inheritance tax.

Other beneficiaries have no exemption. Siblings, sons- or daughters-in-law, nieces and nephews, and friends all owe inheritance tax. The tax rate can be as much as 15%. For this reason, some clients avoid leaving money to a family member because of the tax implications.

New legislation changes this by phasing out the inheritance tax. For deaths occurring in 2021, the tax rate is reduced by 20%. The rate will continue to be reduced by 20% each subsequent year until Jan. 1, 2025 when the exclusion will be 100%. No inheritance tax will be owed for individuals dying after Jan. 1, 2025, regardless of the relationship of the beneficiary.

This change to the law presents an estate-

planning opportunity for many clients. Clients can include a sibling or beloved son-in-law or daughter-in-law in their will or trust without worrying that the State of Iowa will take some of the inheritance. Nieces and nephews are now viable beneficiaries, without the risk of having tax imposed.

Your legacy to your loved ones can now be more inclusive. Many clients are now looking at their options for revising and updating their estate planning documents. If you have a last will and testament or a revocable trust and would like to include new beneficiaries, make sure that you contact an attorney who specializes in estate planning and who understands the new tax laws. ■

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

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THE Table

Schrodt passionate about serving monthly meals

Michael Schrodt is passionate about serving his community of Waukee. One way he does that is by serving a monthly meal called The Table.



The Table is available for anyone who wants a free meal and is held at the Waukee United Methodist Church at 2075 S.E. LA Grant Parkway.

Schrodt has been a member of the church since 2008. As he served in various leadership roles, he approached the church in 2017 with a new idea to support the hungry.

“We discussed how the image in the Waukee community is that it’s affluent,” he explains. “But there is a pocket of need in the community. Nobody will come and say they need help. So, we wanted to step up and take action.”

He took his proposal to the church council, which praised his efforts. The congregation chipped in and raised enough seed money to start the project.

Since 2017 — with time off for the COVID pandemic — volunteers have made and served a home-cooked meal, available for anyone, on the last Monday of the month. Children are welcome, and an activity is available for them.

Volunteers sign up, offering to help cook, serve and host each month. Lauren Kratz, a volunteer, says their mission is to simply serve the meal and provide fellowship.

“It’s not a recruiting effort for the Methodist Church,” she says.

Schrodt says the meals are open to anyone who wants to share in the blessings.

“We’re not here to judge. I’m not here to break into a discussion about religion. We’re here to give a good meal, conversation and fellowship.”

Schrodt says he feels blessed to help out.

“I recognize, in my life, I don’t have as much need as others. It’s important to serve and help your fellow man.”

Attendance varies, with about 30 people each month.

“If we serve one or 100, it’s completely worth it,” says Schrodt.

Organizers would like to partner with other churches or service organizations to provide a meal every Monday at their church.

“This is a call for community. We know there’s a tremendous need to fulfill,” says Schrodt.

The remaining dates for the Table are Sept. 25, Oct. 30, Nov. 27 and Dec. 18 (not on the last Monday due to holidays). Anyone is welcome to attend. To donate food, volunteer or help serve, visit <https://waukeechurch.life/the-table>. ■



Scott Victor, Edward Jones, presents Michael Schrodt with the Neighbor Spotlight certificate.

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CREATING a sensory-friendly library experience

Several Des Moines Metro area libraries are once again teaming up to offer Sensory Spaces — designated hours for individuals and families to enjoy a sensory-free experience in the libraries. This collaborative program started in 2019, paused for a couple years, and returned earlier this year.

Sensory Spaces will offer quiet browsing, special programming, and other adaptive services that will vary by location. The Waukee Public Library will offer a slightly spooky monster-themed party with a simple craft and dancing on Oct. 7 and simple winter crafts on Dec. 9. Both will feature a dimmed calm room, computer availability, and access to library materials.

The Waukee Public Library, much like the Waukee community, is rapidly growing in users and can be overwhelming for those with special sensory needs. While everyone is always welcome during regular hours, Sensory Spaces



create opportunities for individuals, families, and caregivers to enjoy the library in a new, sensory-friendly way.

Other participating libraries include Grimes Public Library, Urbandale Public Library and West Des Moines Public Library. Please check with each library to learn about all times and

services being offered.

Learn more about Sensory Spaces and view event dates online at waukeepubliclibrary.org/sensoryspaces.

To find out more about the Waukee Public Library, go to waukeepubliclibrary.org or contact us at askme@waukee.org or 515-978-7944.

Let's celebrate!

Grand Opening Celebration
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LIBRARY

PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

Most events require advanced registration and can be viewed at waukeepubliclibrary.org/upcoming-events.

Art Gallery Exhibit: "A Season of Study," Oct. 2-28, Jane Shank

KIDS

Monster Mash, Friday, Oct. 27, 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Join the Library for some (slightly) spooky fun at a monster-themed party. We'll have simple crafts, games and a mini dance party. Feel free to wear a costume. Registration required.

TEENS

Teen Snacks and Crafts, Saturday, Oct. 14, 10 a.m.

Get snacky and crafty or just hang out with friends. Coloring and craft supplies will be provided for tweens and teens to be creative. Snacks and a structured activity will be provided, but students will also have the option to color or craft what they wish from the available supplies. October's craft will be sewing Franken-animals. For students in grades 6-12. Registration required.

ADULTS

LGBTQ Genealogy (Online), Saturday, Oct. 21, 2 p.m.

This live Zoom presentation by professional genealogist Stewart Blandon Traiman focuses on spotting clues in the genealogical records to find



ancestors that may have been LGBTQ. Clues to ancestors can be found in photographs, census data, newspapers, obituaries, cemeteries, military records, marriage records, and LGBTQ Archives around the world. The presentation is both factual and emotional in portraying LGBTQ people in past centuries. Registration required.

MULTI-AGE

Pride Party, Saturday, Oct. 14, 4:30 p.m.

All ages of LGBTQ+ individuals, families and allies are invited to celebrate LGBT History Month. Attendees can make a craft, play bingo and eat rainbow snacks. Activities will be led by library staff. Registration required. ■

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EDUCATION

WAUKEE Theatre Arts performance upcoming

"Double, double toil and trouble; fire burn and cauldron bubble..."



Wesley McPike

Waukee Theatre Arts presents "The Tragedy of Macbeth" by William Shakespeare. Performances will take place in the Waukee Theatre Arts Center, 575 S.E. University Ave., Waukee, on Thursday, Oct. 12 at 7 p.m.; Friday, Oct. 13 at 7 p.m.; and Sunday, Oct. 15 at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$10 and can be purchased at ShowTix4U.com/event-details/76329. Visit the group's website at sites.google.com/waukeeschools.org/whsmacbeth or follow Waukee Theatre Arts on Instagram (@WaukeeTheatreArts) to get the latest information.

Shakespeare's "The Tragedy of Macbeth" follows its anti-hero, who receives a prophecy from three witches, as he realizes absolute power is within his grasp. Join Macbeth, in a world haunted by nuclear destruction and warfare, as he succumbs to unchecked ambition. Watch as alliances are made and broken. Question if fate simply took its course, or if the tragedy of Macbeth was the consequence of his own unbridled ambition. Would you follow the same path as Macbeth? ■



Jo Hallagin, Eliza Gagen and Lily Jeffryes



Katelyn Retzlaff and Isabelle Meyer



Coria Chaloupecky

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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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SENIOR

By Brooke Baker

ADULT daycare is beneficial for caregivers and their loved ones

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

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

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



Information provided by Brooke Baker, Grace Estates, 801 N.E. Venture Drive, Waukee, 515-518-0977, www.graceestatesadc.com.

HEALTH

By Dr. Jason Brown

KEEPING teeth healthy

As they say in golf, "give me a mulligan on that hole" — mulligan referring to a do-over or second chance because the first shot wasn't a good one. Baby teeth are considered mulligan teeth by some because we lose these teeth to make room for our permanent ones later in childhood. These baby teeth are, in fact, important in keeping the shape of our jaw bone and holding space for our permanent teeth to take their place. They also allow us to chew our food and function normally as we grow into adolescence.

Promoting healthy eating and hygiene habits should be instilled in our children as they grow up. This will show the importance of choosing the right foods to eat and how effective and often to brush our teeth to keep them as healthy as can be. A balanced diet is key — eating fruits, vegetables, grains, dairy and protein throughout the day. Minimize or eliminate empty calories such as candy or sugar-containing foods. Group acidic foods such as tomatoes with a meal. Limit snacking between meal times.

Brushing with a fluoridated toothpaste twice and flossing once daily is ideal for reducing risk of tooth decay. Brush in a circular motion at a 45-degree angle towards the gums to sweep bacteria out of the gum pockets. Flossing can be accomplished with traditional hand floss, Flosspiks, proxy brushes or Waterpiks. Lastly, always maintain at least six month routine visits to your dentist. ■



Information provided by Dr. Jason Brown DDS, Timberline Family Dental, 515-644-2264, 2153 S.E. LA Grant Parkway, Waukee.

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FLU vaccine: when, why and who?

Now is the time to get your flu vaccine. Flu season typically runs from October to May and causes symptoms of fever, chills, cough, body aches and headaches. Every flu season is different, and we know flu vaccines can vary in how well they work. However, receiving a flu vaccine every year offers the best available protection and has been shown to reduce illnesses, hospitalizations and deaths from the flu.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends everyone 6 months of age and older receive a flu vaccine every year, ideally by the end of October. Flu vaccination is especially important for people who are at high risk of developing serious complications from the flu including:

- Children younger than 5 years of age — about 80% of reported child deaths occur in children who have not been fully vaccinated. A flu vaccine can be lifesaving for children.
- Pregnant women — flu vaccine during pregnancy helps protect the mother from the flu and protects the baby for several months after birth.
- Adults 65 and older — most influenza-related hospitalizations and deaths occur in this age group.
- People with chronic medical conditions such as heart disease, diabetes and asthma.

Call your provider to schedule your flu vaccine. Remember, it not only protects you, but can help protect those around you. ■

Information provided by Dr. Amy Petersen, Cornerstone Pediatrics & Family Allergy, 6800 Lake Drive, Suite 260, West Des Moines, www.cornerstonepfa.com.



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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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Waukees Area Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Tropical Smoothie Cafe, 426 Hickman Road, Waukees, on Aug. 17.



Ciara Halverson and Kelly Troxel at the Waukees Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Tropical Smoothie Cafe on Aug. 17.



Erin Hullermann, Terry Snyder and Amber Rhoades at the Waukees Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Tropical Smoothie Cafe on Aug. 17.



Afton Prohaska and Greenlee Jones at the Waukees Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Tropical Smoothie Cafe on Aug. 17.



Kaleb Chingren and Andrew Hanse at the Waukees Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Tropical Smoothie Cafe on Aug. 17.



Ricky Sandquist and Nick Osborne at the Waukees Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Tropical Smoothie Cafe on Aug. 17.



Bo Bechler and Sierra Pradhan at the Waukees Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Tropical Smoothie Cafe on Aug. 17.



Chief Chad McCluskey and Zach Elsbecker at the Waukees Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Tropical Smoothie Cafe on Aug. 17.



Larry Lyon and Rob Grove at the Waukees Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for LOF Xpress Oil Change on Aug. 10.



Randi Willard and Travis Gaule at the Waukees Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for LOF Xpress Oil Change on Aug. 10.



Dayron and Maria Aguillon at the Waukees Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for LOF Xpress Oil Change on Aug. 10.

RIBBON Cutting

Waukeez Area Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for LOF Xpress Oil Change, 250 S.E. Alice's Road, Waukeez, on Aug. 10.



Waukeez Area Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for LOF Xpress Oil Change, 250 S.E. Alice's Road, Waukeez, on Aug. 10.



Ted Sage and Amber Rhoades



Jamie Stoltenberg and Dan Katelsen



Kelly Troxel and Rob Grove



Blair Randell and Samantha Daily



Michael Bartos and Travis Gaule



Zach Vander Ploeg and Peter Bailey



Michelle and Aaron Sage



Mike Davis and Brittany Price



Natalie and Marty McDonald

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