

GRIMES/DALLAS CENTER

JANUARY 2024

Living

MAGAZINE

Class ACT

**Residents share why they
continue to expand their
horizons through learning**

Meet Christin Grant

EDUCATION

Tree Board beautifying Grimes

COMMUNITY

BLT wraps with avocado spread

RECIPE

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WELCOME

WE NEVER stop learning

My father was one of the smartest people I have ever known. He seemed to know a little bit about everything, and if he didn't know about it, he wanted to learn. All of this came from a man who only had a formal education through eighth grade.

As a teenager, Dad started working full time to help care for his family, and then he was off to serve his country in Korea. When out of the military, he married and started his own family. Life moved along quickly, but he never stopped learning.

Meanwhile, Dad continually encouraged me to focus on my education. He supported me to go to college, and he inspired me to continue to learn throughout my life. "Once you have an education," he told me, "nobody can take that away from you." How true.

Most all of us recognize that life's lessons are taught both inside and outside of classrooms, but there is something satisfying about taking a formal class, earning a certificate or completing a degree. It's about having an end goal, finishing something you started, accomplishing a dream. And it doesn't always have to be about getting some initials behind your name.

Mary wanted to learn how to play the guitar, so she signed up for classes at the local community college.

Bob sold his newspaper while in his 50s and decided to go to law school. He continues to be a practicing attorney today.

Lyle retired as the president of a successful company and signed up for culinary classes.

Denny decided to pursue his dream of teaching and took night classes to earn his education degree while continuing in his current job.

And Gladys, well into her retirement years, continued to attend industry conferences and earned her formal sales training certification.

All of these friends of mine saw the value in continuing their education. In this month's cover story, you will discover how others have sought to continue their learning opportunities. I hope their stories will inspire you to expand your knowledge as well.

Have a great month, and thanks for reading. ■



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Class ACT

Residents share why they continue to expand their horizons through learning

Jasie McRobie turned her love of flowers into a career, starting as a floral shop employee, learning the basics of flower arranging from other florists. Photo courtesy Nicole Laing Photography

By Ashley Rullestad

You learn something new every day. Sometimes it's by accident, but sometimes it's intentional. Some people continue their education out of necessity — to maintain a license, for example — while others enroll to further their career or launch a new one. Still others simply want to learn a new hobby or expand their horizons. Whatever the case, the thirst for knowledge knows no age limit or bounds. And plenty of opportunities — in person and online — are out there to quench it.



A new career in 2024

Ben Dickerson served in the Marine Corps as an infantryman before he decided to open his own landscaping company. Now, he has decided a career in fire and EMS services is the right one for him.

“In the military, you have a brotherhood that you just can’t beat, and it seems that the fire-EMS side has a lot of that. I have also always wanted to help and serve my community and country. Seemed like I could do the most in this position.”

Dickerson recently completed his EMS training though Des Moines Area Community College. DMACC’s Emergency Medical Technician certificate provides an introductory learning experience for persons interested in the field of pre-hospital emergency medicine. The course includes practical and computer-based testing in the classroom, as well as clinical and field experience in area hospitals and with local EMS agencies. Once you have completed the course, you can do National Registry certification testing for both the cognitive and hands-on skills areas.

Right now, Dickerson is also in the fire academy though Windsor Heights. The Windsor Heights Fire Department participates with other Des Moines Metro Fire Departments in the Central Iowa Fire & EMS Testing Consortium. The consortium is a group of Des Moines metro fire departments with a mission to provide entry-level written and physical ability examinations for aspiring candidates.

In cooperation with Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) and the DMACC Fire Science Program, this consortium allows an easy method for candidates to become eligible for hire in the group of metro fire departments. Some fire departments also allow candidates to be on call to supplement their full-time staff while also gaining experience and hands-on training while finishing classwork and certifications.

Once he’s finished with his classes, he’d like to work for the Johnston-Grimes Metropolitan Fire Department, Urbandale Fire Department, Clive Fire Department or Ankeny Fire Department.

“It’s always something new. It’s been exciting to learn the more civilian side to medicine compared to the military. As an infantryman in the Marines, my role wasn’t necessarily all medical, but we do quite a bit of life-saving training in the military.”

Dickerson is excited about the future, and he gives a lot of credit to his wife, Brooke, for her willingness to help him through the new experience.

“My advice for those thinking about a career change is to jump into



Ben Dickerson credits his wife, Brooke, with supporting him on his career change.



Marty Glynn took a welding class through Johnston Community Education.

it. Give it your all and hammer down. I couldn’t have done any of it without the support of my wife and my other loved ones. It’s not easy, but doing something you love is worth it in the long run.”

A new skill

Marty Glynn became interested in learning more about welding due to his career. He works with some professional welders and fabricators and was curious about learning more. He decided to sign up for the Johnston Community Education welding class a couple of years back. Now, he’s thinking about taking it again with his son this winter. The minimum age is 16, and his son will now be eligible to attend with him.

The class covers the basics of welding, and it is designed for people experiencing welding for the first time and wanting to do it correctly. Participants learn about safety, settings, gas pressures, welding rods and techniques for basic welds. Stick welding, MIG welding, and oxy-acetylene welding and cutting are covered.

“I also help out on a farm during planting and harvest where it can be handy. The class included classroom instruction and hands-on lab time applying the classroom instruction on the various types of welding,” he says.



Jasie McRobie teaches workshops, like this one on fresh flower arrangements.

Workstations were also set up in the lab with welders of various types. Unfortunately, Glynn had to miss several sessions due to being out of town with work, which is another reason he wants to retake the class.

He's also excited to take it with his son, who is a Boy Scout and has been involved in skilled trades with scouting. He became interested after earning a plumbing merit badge, and now the pair works together to do car repairs, including things like oil changes, break jobs and wheel bearings.

"I like that I can better communicate with professional welders at work and know what to look for. I haven't welded outside of class yet because I think I need more instruction that I missed when I could not make class. Maybe it will turn into a retirement hobby."

Floral fun

Jasie McRobie has turned her love of flowers into a career, starting as a floral shop employee, learning the basics of flower arranging from other florists. Now, she's also become a teacher, using her creativity to show others how to showcase the beauty of nature.

"I have been designing flowers for the past five and a half years and recently made my own business, which specializes in weddings, events, custom designs and workshops. My workshops are through the Granger Parks and Recreation Department and also can be booked for private in-home workshops with a group of friends or family."

McRobie offers wreath, fresh flowers, planters and plant/succulent workshops. She's

also open to new ideas, too, if people approach her with something they'd like to learn more about.

In her workshops, people learn what the technical names of the products are, how to properly design arrangements, how to care for plants, and more. Besides taking home a new arrangement, it's also fun to meet new people, activate your artistic ability, learn new skills, and simply have fun.

"People enjoy working with plants. Studies show that flowers and plants are very therapeutic mentally and physically, as working with them reduces stress, enhances concentration/focus, improves mood, improves air quality and removes toxins, and also enhances creativity." ■

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EVENTS IN THE AREA

Be sure to check for cancellations.

Rhythms of Grace FUNdraising GALA

Saturday, Feb. 3

Iowa State Fairgrounds

The Rhythms of Grace FUNdraising GALA is not your typical gala. Put on your western wear (or business casual if that's more your speed) and plan on a fun night with dinner (enjoy some great barbecue), a dessert auction, live music, games, live and silent auctions, and a heart-warming program that will leave you inspired as you learn about Rhythms of Grace's equine therapy programs and the lives being transformed with horses, hope and healing. Plus meet their new miniature horses live and in person. Tickets are available at <https://my.onecause.com/event/organizations/f231ab3a-e996-4b64-8f34-83e6aaf3ff57/events/vevt:b897a05a-3946-4ca4-87b6-95731f76f8cc/home/story> or scan the QR code.



Museum open

Urbandale Historical Society,
4010 70th St.

The Olmsted-Urban House will be open for viewing the second Sunday of each month 2-4 p.m. The Historical Society will also hold monthly programs at the Urbandale Library the first Sunday of each month at 2 p.m. The topic for Feb. 11 is TBA. March 10, the topic is the Urbandale Fire Department presented by Jerry Holt.

THEATER & DANCE

ACTORS, INC. - AMES COMMUNITY THEATER

120 Abraham Drive, Ames

actorsinc.org

- Jan. 25-27, Feb. 2-4: "Holmes & Watson"

ANKENY COMMUNITY THEATRE

1932 S.W. Third St., Ankeny

ankenycitycommunitytheatre.com

- Feb. 9-18: "The Odd Couple, Female Version"

CLASS ACT PRODUCTIONS

201 First Ave. S., Altoona

captheatre.org

- Feb. 16-18, 23-25, March 1-3: "The Music Man Jr."

DES MOINES PERFORMING ARTS

Des Moines Civic Center, Cowles Commons, Stoner Theater, Temple Theatre, 221 Walnut St., Des Moines

dmpa.org

- Jan. 23-28: "Mamma Mia!"
- Jan. 27: Havana Hop
- Feb. 6-11: "Company"
- Feb. 15: Capital City Pride Presents: Brea Baker
- Feb. 17: The Peking Acrobats

DES MOINES COMMUNITY PLAYHOUSE

831 42nd St., Des Moines

dmplayhouse.com

- Feb. 2-18: "Our Town"

SIMPSON COLLEGE

513 N D St., Indianola

simpson.edu/academics/departments/departments-theatre-arts

- Feb. 16-18: "The Telephone & The Medium"

STEPHENS AUDITORIUM

1900 Center Drive, Ames

center.iastate.edu/events

- Jan. 30: "Jesus Christ Superstar"
- Feb. 2-3: Barjché
- Feb. 8: Langston Hughes Project
- Feb. 29 through March 3: "Always Plenty of Light at the Starlight All Night Dinner"

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2019 Grand Ave., Suite 100, West Des Moines

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- Feb. 2-18: "Equus"

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EVENTS IN THE AREA

Be sure to check for cancellations.

MUSIC

DES MOINES CIVIC CENTER

Des Moines Civic Center, 221 Walnut St., Des Moines
dmpa.org

- Feb. 23-24: Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix™ in concert

DES MOINES SYMPHONY

Des Moines Civic Center, 221 Walnut St., Des Moines
dmsymphony.org

- Feb. 3-4: Discover Groundbreaking Innovation

HOYT SHERMAN PLACE

1501 Woodland Ave., Des Moines
hoytsherman.org

- Feb. 6: Hélène Grimaud: Lauridsen Great Pianist Series at 7:30 p.m.
- Feb. 9: Nickel Creek at 7:30 p.m.
- Feb. 23: Postmodern Jukebox at 8 p.m.
- Feb. 24: Marty Stuart and his Fabulous Superlatives at 7:30 p.m.
- Feb. 29: Cat Power sings Dylan: The 1966 Royal Albert Hall concert at 7:30 p.m.

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

CITYVIEW's Fire and Ice

Jan. 20

Historic Valley Junction, 137 Fifth St., West Des Moines
fire-and-ice.dmcityview.com

Fire and Ice is a hockey-themed liquor sampling event that will be sure to warm up your winter blues. With your event ticket, you will receive 10 individual drink tickets to sample some of the best winter cocktails from establishments in the Valley Junction area.



Waukee Family Fest

Saturday, Jan. 20, 9 a.m. to noon
Lutheran Church of Hope - Waukee

This free, family-friendly event will help kids burn off some cabin fever energy. Check out Waukee area businesses, enjoy games and prizes and jump on inflatables. To become a vendor, visit waukee.org/familyfest. ■



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WOLFE gives back

Passionate GVSS volunteer and chamber ambassador

Long-time Grimes resident BobbiJo Wolfe has made a commitment to giving back to the community she so enjoys.

For the past five years, she's volunteered with Grimes Volunteer Support Services (GVSS) — an experience that has not only enabled her to contribute meaningfully to her community, but also makes her happy as she helps the elderly in town.

"It's a testament to the belief that, in giving, we receive far more than we could ever imagine," Wolfe says.

She also makes time to volunteer for Grimes Chamber and Economic Development as an ambassador.

"One of the most rewarding aspects of being a chamber ambassador is the chance to witness firsthand the impact of collaboration and networking," Wolfe says. "Through attending chamber events, ribbon cuttings and networking functions, I've had the privilege of meeting passionate business owners who are driving the economic and social wellbeing of our community."



Tim Short of Edward Jones presents the Good Neighbor certificate to BobbiJo Wolfe.

While Wolfe has many fond memories from her time of service, the best ones from her role with GVSS are simply listening to the people she helps serve talk about the past.

"The stories and memories they have are so fun to listen to," she says. "As an ambassador for the Chamber, my favorites are the small businesses that put their time and energy into opening up business in Grimes, and we celebrate that with them by doing a ribbon cutting, sometimes even in tears as they share their story."

In the hustle and bustle of daily life, Wolfe finds purpose by volunteering and feels blessed to have the flexibility in her schedule to do so.

"In dedicating my time to GVSS and serving as a chamber ambassador, I've come to realize that the strength of a community lies in the hands of its volunteers," she says. "I feel I am making a difference."

As for why others in the community should consider volunteering, Wolfe says, "Why not?"

"You may need GVSS in the future, and it will be easier to ask for help knowing you put your time in with them in the past." ■

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LEGAL

By Cynthia P. Letsch, J.D.

MAN'S best friend

What you need to know about Iowa dog laws:

Regulations include a requirement that all dogs over 6 months old residing in Iowa be vaccinated for rabies and wear a tag stating so. Any person may lawfully kill a dog without a tag; and, unless the city or county has a law requiring seizure, the law enforcement officer has a duty to kill it (*Iowa Code Section 351*).

Iowa county parks may require that you present your certificate of vaccination before allowing a dog into the park, in addition to requiring that the dog have a rabies vaccination tag on its collar. This is especially true if there is an event, such as the Renaissance Festival. Be prepared for this in advance.

Even if your dog is properly vaccinated and tagged, if it is caught in the act of chasing, maiming, or killing any domestic animal of fowl, or if it is attacking or attempting to bite a person, it is lawful for anyone to kill it, UNLESS the person it is attacking is committing an unlawful act or directly contributing to the injury. Well, I suppose this is what makes interesting case law.

Harsh treatment for man's best friend. But one man's best friend is another man's enemy. In fact, many Iowa cities and counties have their own laws that prohibit ownership of "dangerous" breeds, which nearly always includes pit bulls. Grimes does not have this law. There is controversy over the theory that one breed is more dangerous than any other. The opposing theory is that the aggressive tendency in the dog is due to poor training on the part of the owner.

There is a bill pending at the statehouse that would make it illegal for cities and counties to have such laws, instead making it a pet owner responsibility to ensure their animals are properly trained and restrained. However, the bill has no requirement that pet owners get any training or prove they have the knowledge, ability, or willingness to ensure their animal is properly trained. It will also allow your homeowners insurance to refuse to provide liability coverage or raise your premiums if you own a dangerous animal.

If you want to weigh in on this, contact your local state representative to let him or her know how you feel about HF561 or SF476. And if you got a puppy for Christmas, mark your calendar for that rabies vaccination due date. ■

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



RECIPE

SET the menu for a successful year

(Family Features) If your goals for 2024 include a healthier lifestyle and added nutrition, your mission is likely to start with a refreshed menu. Add a few newfound favorites to this year's rotation like wraps, salads and smoothies to power each day and propel yourself toward wellness success.

Planning and executing a more nutritious menu can often be thwarted by lunchtime cravings or busy weeknights that leave little time to cook at home. Rather than giving in to those takeout temptations, turn to easy recipes you can create yourself with just a few simple, on-hand ingredients.

Grab tortillas out of the pantry and a few favorites from the refrigerator to make these BLT wraps with avocado spread, which are perfect for meal-prepping weekday lunches or whipping up at a moment's notice for a family dinner. Bacon, a nearly unanimous favorite, teams up with a homemade avocado spread, lettuce and tomatoes for fresh taste without the hassle.

For a satisfying meal without leaving behind health goals, serve with a hearty salad or Spanish rice and banana peppers on the side. ■

BLT wraps with avocado spread

Servings: 4

- 8 slices bacon
- 1 avocado, peeled and pitted
- 1/4 cup sour cream
- 1 lime, juice only
- 1/2 teaspoon hot sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 4 flour tortillas
- 4 large red leaf lettuce leaves
- 2 large tomatoes, cut into 1/4-inch slices
- Spanish rice (optional)
- banana peppers (optional)

Directions

- In large skillet, cook bacon until crispy. Drain on plate lined with paper towels. Set aside.
- In medium bowl, mash avocado, sour cream, lime juice, hot sauce, Worcestershire sauce and salt with fork until combined and smooth.
- Spread thin layer of avocado mixture over tortillas. Layer with lettuce leaves, tomatoes and bacon. Fold sides up and roll.
- Serve with Spanish rice and banana peppers, if desired.



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YOUR PARENTS had it easy

This year, the U.S. population will reach Peak 65. This is the point at which an estimated 12,000 people will turn 65 each day, according to U.S. Census Bureau. That means 4.4 million Americans will turn 65

this year. By the end of 2030, all baby boomers (those born between 1946 and 1964) will be older than 65. And those baby boomers have more responsibility than their parents did when it comes to saving for retirement.

My grandfather retired from a 40-year career at Ford Motor Company in the 1980s. With my grandmother, he traveled the country in an RV, living off his pension, Social Security, and a little savings. In the 1980s, 60% of private sector workers were offered a pension plan. By 2020, that number dropped to around 4%.

With fewer pensions, many have to rely on Social Security, their own retirement savings



and make lots of decisions. A married couple can have up to 81 options when it comes to electing Social Security. The difference between electing at 62 and 70 can be tens of thousands of dollars. The benefit is designed to replace 30-40% of income in retirement, but with an influx of retirees, many are concerned about the future of this “guaranteed” retirement income. If no legislative action is taken, Social Security reserves would be depleted by 2034. Lawmakers have suggested boosting tax rates on benefits, increasing payroll taxes, and changes to the annual cost-of-living adjustments are all options to shore up the funds.

With a pension, saving for retirement was pretty hands off for my grandpa. His employer made the contributions, managed the plan, then gave him a couple of choices about how he wanted to receive the money in retirement.

Today’s employee-sponsored plans, like a 401(k) or 403(b), require more work on your part. You have to choose the investments and contribution amounts. Then retirement hits,

and you have even more choices. Choices about how and when to spend and invest the money — all while keeping in mind your retirement tax bill.

Whether you plan to retire this year or in ten years, there are things you can do to maximize the money you’ve worked so hard to save. Working with a retirement planner can help you take the burden out of the decision making and put together a customized plan that will show you how you are going to invest, spend, pay for health care, and more so you can enjoy RV trips, time with grandkids or whatever is on your retirement bucket list. ■

Information provided by Loren Merkle CFP®, RICP®, Certified Financial Fiduciary®, Merkle Retirement Planning, 1860 S.E. Princeton Drive, Grimes, 515-278-1006. Sources: O’Connor, B. (2023, August 16). Over 12,000 Americans Will Turn 65 Every Day in 2024. Are You Ready?; Ultimate Guide to Retirement: Just How Common are Defined Benefit Plans?; March 2023 Summary: Actuarial Status of the Social Security Trust Funds

What is the annual limit on a Roth conversion?

A. \$5,500

B. \$6,500

C. \$20,000

D. No Limit



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By Dr. Shawn Spooner

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For those grappling with stress and anxiety, Alpha-Stim® offers a non-invasive and drug-free alternative. By modulating the brain's electrochemical signals, it helps in achieving a calm and relaxed state. Users often report a significant reduction in anxiety levels and overall mental wellbeing. Quality sleep is foundational to health, yet elusive for many. Alpha-Stim® aids in improving sleep patterns by facilitating the transition into a peaceful state, conducive to rest. Moreover, Alpha-Stim® has shown effectiveness in pain management. By altering the pain signals in the brain, it can provide relief from chronic pain, muscle tension and discomfort, without the dependency risks associated with pain medication. This feature is especially valuable for individuals seeking a holistic approach to pain management.

As we continue to navigate the complexities of modern living, tools like Alpha-Stim® can be pivotal in maintaining our wellbeing. ■

Information provided by Dr. Shawn Spooner, Solace Wellness Center, 2330 Rocklyn Drive, Urbandale, 515-650-3738, www.solaceiowa.com.



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FITNESS

By Haley Powers-Risdal

Q: Can we get ahead of seasonal depression?

A: This topic may hit home for a lot of you because you or someone you know deals with seasonal depression. Time seems to be flying by these days, and, whether we like it or not, that time of year will be here before we know it. How can we be more proactive this year rather than reactive? During seasonal depression, energy decreases, you get in your head, and you go into survival mode, just doing everything you can to stay afloat. Why survive when you can thrive? We hear it all the time, but nothing is more accurate than when they say that exercising helps. You get this rush of endorphins that make you feel happy inside, your metabolism increases and gives you more energy, and you get to work on bettering yourself while surrounded by an amazing community. So why wait? Why give our brains a chance to start down that spiral? Get started now. Think of a fitness goal you have been wanting to achieve for a while and go for it. Take that leap and prove to yourself that you are worthy of that extra love and attention. Whether you have seasonal depression or someone you know does, make this year different. Come out of this winter season stronger than ever, and, just remember, you are capable of more than you know. ■



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

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HOW social activities impact older adults

Does a senior you care about seem different or withdrawn every time you talk to them? Do you feel they are isolating themselves and not taking part in usual activity? These may be signs of depression or a change in their cognitive health. It is wise to connect with a doctor to address the issue.



Numerous studies show how activities can reduce the incidence of depression — and even symptoms of Alzheimer's disease. A 2017 Mayo Clinic study shows how social activities, including crafts and games, can affect the risk of mild cognitive impairment in the early stages. (*Janovsky-Mason, Julie. 2017. "Mayo Clinic Researchers Find Mental Activities May Protect Against Mild Cognitive Impairment." Mayo Clinic News Network. January 30, 2017*)

Encouraging greater activity isn't always easy, and you may meet with resistance. Check with the local senior center or adult day center

and ask what they offer. You may need to join in that first adventure, removing the obstacle of transportation and the fear of attending alone.

Activities may include exercise classes, art, music, social gatherings and intergenerational programs. Transportation may be available.

Other ideas to combat isolation include the following:

- Promote healthy nutrition and hydration by encouraging loved ones to eat plenty of fruits, vegetables and proteins, and drink several glasses of water daily. Make these options visible and easy to access.
- Hire extra help. Weekly visits from a home health aide can bring companionship as well as assistance and support.
- Explore massage, meditation or aromatherapy. Alternative therapies can be enjoyable and healing.
- Exercise classes tailored to older adults can help them gain strength and balancing skills. Strengthening the body will not only help prevent falls, it's been proven to help with

mood and outlook, too.

- Explore technology. Video chats can help people stay connected. Virtual assistants like Alexa can provide gentle reminders.

- Classes stimulate the mind and spark new possibilities. Independent living and assisted living communities, as well as senior centers, create opportunities for people to discover new activities or skills.

While loss, transitions and changing health conditions can lead to isolation and depression, the right combination of activities, healthy nutrition, friendships and support can brighten an attitude. ■

Note: This is not medical advice. Please consult a healthcare professional for personal medical guidance. Decisions about moving or caring for a loved one can be difficult to navigate. At Meadowview of Clive and Cassia, we are here to help. To learn more, please visit www.meadowviewclive.com or contact us directly at Chris.Ruzicka@CassiaLife.org or 515-644-8740.



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THE JOYS of novelty

We're hitting that time of year when the temperature drops and we all start to settle in for winter. It's easy this time of year to fall into routines and go on autopilot from day to day. This isn't necessarily a bad thing, but, after a while, we do have to be careful with how routine can affect our mood. After a while, having the same daily routine can dull our mood and leave us more susceptible to the winter blues. If you find yourself feeling this way, it may be time to add a bit of novelty to your life.



When I talk about ways to add novelty into your life, it's important not to overthink it, something many of us are guilty of. Adding novelty to your day-to-day life just means to try something new, something different. Novelty could be something as simple as taking a different way to or from work or going to a new restaurant or coffee shop that you've been wanting to check out. Small changes to our daily pattern can allow us to have new experiences, which our brains tend to crave and help us to stave off those winter blues. ■

Information provided by Paul Guerdet, LISW, SS Therapy and Consulting, Ltd, 4725 Merle Hay Road, Suite 205, Des Moines, 515-528-8135, www.sstherapyandconsulting.com, guerdet@sstherapyandconsulting.com.

LAWN CARE

By Kevin Johnson

WHAT'S the difference?

As I interact with our customers and potential customers, many will ask me, "Why should I pay more for your services? I can get the same thing from X, Y or Z at a lower price."

The founder of our company would normally state: "The most expensive lawn care is achieved when you pay any amount of money and get no results!" What truly matters should be, "Did you receive the best results for the amount of money spent?"

Most lawn care clients are normally paying \$300-500 per year depending on the size of the lawn. Doesn't it make sense to meet with your provider and have some of your most basic questions answered? Here are a few important questions you should ask:

- Has the company measured your lawn correctly?
- How long has the company been in business?
- Is the company licensed, insured and its applicators certified?
- Will the company utilize products designated by the EPA as reduced risk for the environment?

- Do they offer a guarantee of satisfaction?
- Do they make applications in an environmentally safe manner?

Any provider should be able to answer these basic questions to your satisfaction. Price alone does not guarantee good results. ■

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



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TREE Board beautifies Grimes

Annual plantings provide variety of benefits to community.



The Grimes Tree Board organizes annual tree plantings and helps maintain the city's Tree City USA designation.

With the impending opening of the new Grimes Public Library, the Grimes Tree Board has reason to be excited.

That's because, in April, the group plans to install trees at the new facility with an eye on making it a fun place for library visitors to explore and learn.

Sally Worley, chair of the Tree Board, explains that the aim of the board is to help plant and maintain trees in Grimes' public areas. They also advise the city in matters of tree health and city tree ordinances — work that makes the community safer and healthier.

"Trees are so important to the Earth and to communities," Worley says. "They help reduce greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change, they provide habitat for important wildlife, they clean our air and water, they provide shade and help cool down municipalities, and they improve our mental health."

One of the group's biggest events is participating in the annual Arbor Day festivities. In 2023, this event resulted in participants planting 32 trees along the new bike trail around the detention pond behind Hacienda Vieja. These plantings will eventually provide shade for walkers and fishers. The Tree Board aims each year to source good quality trees and supervise plantings for this event.

"It's really fun to see trees we planted several years ago start to mature and provide a canopy for Grimes residents to enjoy," Worley says. "We did a fall planting a few years back on Beaverbrooke Boulevard N.W. in the snow. It was quite fun to plant amidst a winter wonderland. Plus, the Tree Board is truly a great group of people."

Members of the Grimes Tree Board are volunteers with an interest in improving the green infrastructure of the community and who bring their talents to ensure the board provides good advisement to the City of Grimes. Some are industry professionals, while others contribute related skills.

The Tree Board is especially important to the City of Grimes, as it maintains a Tree City USA designation. Tree Cities have lower utility costs, enhanced property values, cleaner air and water, and cooler community spaces. They may also receive preference for grants or programs to help green infrastructure.

More information about the Tree Board can be found on the City of Grimes website. ■



ALL together now

Grimes Leadership Academy on a mission to help better the community.



The Grimes Leadership Academy has been meeting once per month since August of 2023.

One Wednesday each month from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., a group of Grimes residents and business members convene — school-style — to discuss, learn and plan.

Though the topics may vary with each gathering, the end game is the same: the improvement of Grimes.

Lu Anne Gafford is one of these “class” members who is a part of this, the inaugural Grimes Leadership Academy, which has been meeting since August of 2023.

“It’s a way for people to come to know their community better and help give people a way to not only become better leaders in their businesses, but also in the community — to give back,” Gafford says.

One of the challenges the group has taken on this initial year has been to develop a self-sustaining project. In this instance, it involves a topic near and dear to many hearts: making sure everyone has enough food on their plates each and every day.

Thanks to the community’s food pantry — Grimes Storehouse — it’s close to becoming a reality. As always though, there’s still work to be done.

Gafford and the rest of her classmates at the Grimes Leadership Academy recognized this and have challenged themselves to raise funds for an enclosed trailer that could be used at Fill the Trailer events, to pick up rescue food, or allow churches or businesses to host a food drive, among other things.

Academy members have been hard at work contacting businesses for donations of cash as well as in-kind donations to make this vision a reality, with the goal of completing the fundraiser by January, Gafford says. An event will be held at 2 Harts Boutique in Grimes at the end of January in which 10% of the proceeds from sales will go toward the project.

The project isn’t just a GLA thing, she says, noting that the Grimes Lions Club, the Chamber, and the Grimes Storehouse have been involved as well.

Although the work has just begun, Gafford is confident in the mission and is looking forward to meeting the challenge.

“We’re just trying to help the community and bring awareness to the academy,” Gafford says. “Hopefully people will see it and want to apply and be a member of it, too, next year.”

Those wanting to become involved in the Grimes Leadership Academy, help with fundraising, or simply to make a donation can contact the Grimes Chamber and Economic Development at 515-986-5770. ■

CHOOSING a trustee for your trust



Over the last two months, we have touched on the use of trusts as part of an estate plan. As mentioned previously, the role of a trustee is to manage the assets of a trust. Most people choose to be the initial trustee of their own trust. That means they will manage all the assets owned by their trust as long as they are able to do so. However, all trusts also have a successor trustee. Most often the successor trustee becomes the manager of the trust’s assets when the initial trustee either becomes incapacitated or passes away.

The successor trustee has a vital role in an estate plan because that trustee steps into the shoes of the grantor (creator) of the trust to manage the trust assets. The successor trustee must be able to manage investments, make distributions to beneficiaries, file tax returns, and maintain accountings, among other important duties. Often, these are not easy tasks, and selecting the appropriate trustee to carry them out is very important in the estate planning process.

Grantors sometimes designate a family member to serve as successor trustee. At other times, it may be appropriate to name a corporate trustee, such as a bank trust department, to serve as successor trustee. When deciding who to name as trustee, there are several important issues to consider. For example, a corporate trustee has the advantage of looking at each situation objectively. In contrast, a family member may be more inclined to make important decisions based on emotion.

Another issue to consider is the time involved in serving as trustee and how much experience is necessary. Often a family member may not have served as trustee before and lacks experience in handling trustee duties. A corporate trustee, on the other hand, is in a unique position of having experience and dedicated time to serve as trustee.

It is also important to consider timeframes when selecting a trustee. A family member may well be capable of serving as successor trustee today but years later may not be as well suited for the task. A corporate trustee, however, provides the continuity necessary to ensure effective management of the trust for generations.

Selecting a corporate trustee does come with a cost.

Corporate trustees do charge a fee for their services.

However, many grantors and beneficiaries find the benefits of proper trust and investment management far outweigh the costs. ■

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

MEET Christin Grant

Giving fifth graders confidence in their math skills



Christin Grant with some of her fifth-grade students.

Christin Grant started her teaching career at Dallas Center Grimes Community School District, and this will be her 21st year teaching fifth grade in the district.

Grant currently teaches math and science to two different classes. Three years ago, fifth graders moved from their previous school and joined the middle school. At that time, Grant moved from teaching all subjects to just math and science.

"In math, I love helping students see that they are all great mathematicians. They just need the right mindset and confidence."

Grant says her longevity with DCG shows her joy for teaching in the district. The teachers and staff of DCG put students first, and she says it is a privilege to work with a great group of teachers who do their best to learn best practices in education, thus ensuring that their students can succeed at the highest levels.

Of course, teaching comes with difficulties, too. In recent years, Grant has noticed that a big challenge is helping students with their social emotional learning.

"Students today are facing so many more challenges than I faced as a fifth-grade student. We are not only teaching them academics, we are teaching them how to function in this complex world."

But that brings her to one of the biggest rewards of her job — building relationships with each student.

"I want them to feel loved and cared for. I genuinely care for them, and I want the best for them academically and emotionally. I hear from many of my past students, which I absolutely treasure. There is nothing better than a past student telling you how much they enjoyed having you as a teacher."

Grant has definitely made those connections and remains a fan favorite with many students. Recently, a former student named Jacey McFarland brought her a DCG volleyball T-shirt.

"Their coach gave them a T-shirt to give to a teacher who has made a difference in their life. Their motto for the year was #difference maker. She came into class one day and surprised me with the T-shirt. She wrote me such a sweet note letting me know the difference I made in her life."

Grant is mom to grown children, and these days she and her husband enjoy traveling to new places and revisiting some of their favorite spots. ■

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LESSONS from a poet long gone

Robert Frost is widely considered one of the greatest poets in American history. There are other contenders, of course. He is best known for his famous poem entitled, "The Road Not Taken." The poem, which was first published in 1916, ponders the choices that we all must make in life. Later in life, Frost would go on to win four Pulitzer Prizes and recited another of his poems at John F. Kennedy's Presidential Inauguration in 1961.



However, it is not this famous poem that drew my attention on the eve of the new year. Rather, it was another of Frost's quotes, which I read in a reader response to an article he had read in "The Daily Umbrella," a daily email distributed by Big Green Umbrella Media. They are the same group that publishes CITYVIEW magazine and a plethora of Living Magazines, including the Grimes/Dallas Center Living magazine.

A reader by the name of Rex was responding to a previous article that had run on Dec. 20 titled "Overworked and Underpaid." He responded to that article with a less well-known quote from Robert Frost: "The world is full of willing people, some willing to work, the rest willing to let them." If you've attended events organized by Grimes Chamber & Economic Development, or if you've read previous articles produced by our organization, you have undoubtedly heard us encourage productive involvement in the community of Grimes. Typically, the message is something along the lines of: We are already a fantastic community, but imagine what we could accomplish if more people, more businesses, more organizations were involved in working for a greater good.

There are wonderful people doing important and good work in Grimes every day. That good work presents itself in the form of hard work at businesses, within homes, in local institutions, etc. They are the people who are capable and willing to work to better themselves and those around them, which has positive implications for our community and, sometimes, our world.

As we engage this new year, may you be encouraged to either continue or begin being someone who is willing to work for a greater good in your life and the lives of those around you. The more people we can fit into the first half of Frost's quote, the better we will all be in the long run. This type of effort should be celebrated and, with any luck, will not be the "road less traveled" for those who are fortunate enough to call Grimes home.

On behalf of the many members and staff of Grimes Chamber & Economic Development, I would like to wish you all a happy and prosperous new year. Learn more about our organization by visiting www.GrimesIowa.com. ■

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

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LUNCH and Learn

The Grimes Chamber of Commerce held a Lunch and Learn, hosted by DCG High School, on Dec. 13



Members of the DCG choir performed for the Grimes Chamber of Commerce on Dec. 13.



Courtney Moller and BobbieJo Wolf



Tiffany Hamil, Jason Kerndt and Tim Short



Chris Watkins, Garrett Neal and Jeremy Grossnickle



Nate Buch and Erin Huiatt



Alex Cordes, Alex Cross and Ryleah Cross



Mike Bleskacek and Martin Dyson



Dane Parrish and Lars Warth



Julie Quandt and Dini Anderlik



Scott Blum and Greg Careenza

OUT & ABOUT

BOYS Wrestling

DCG junior varsity and varsity boys wrestling at ADM on Dec. 14



Peyton Philavanh



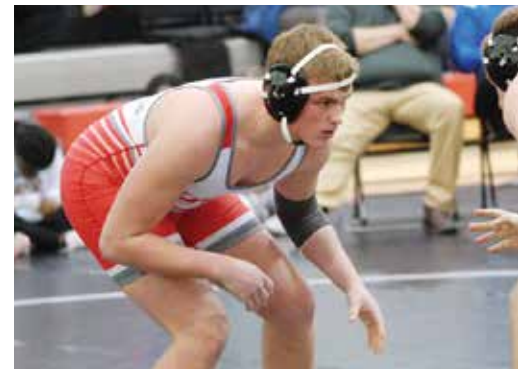
Payton Gafford, Madi Uhl, Lainey Schwartz, and Jewel Perkins



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8 winter skin care rules for young children



- 1. Turn home temperature down and moisture up.** Hot dry air is hard on skin, sinuses and nasal passages. Turn the furnace down a few degrees and use a vaporizer to add moisture to the air. If using a vaporizer, clean often to prevent growth of bacteria or mold.
- 2. Moisture is not good everywhere.** Wet bums and drooly chins can cause irritation. Use barrier cream, such as diaper cream within the diaper but not on the face.
- 3. Seal the skin following a bath.** Pat, not rub, the skin. While still just a bit wet, add lotion to seal in the moisture.
- 4. Hydrate and eat right.** Drink lots of water and eat foods high in fatty acids such as beans, olive oil, walnuts and winter squash, that help their skin to stay naturally moisturized.
- 5. Teach good habits early.** Add moisturizer to their hands after washing with soap or using hand sanitizer. Encourage the use of lip balms. Have these things readily available, including in backpacks at school.
- 6. Keep baths short.** Hot water causes drying so keep the temperature lukewarm. A quick bath 3 times a week for newborns is plenty.
- 7. Get smart about soap.** Children don't need fragrant soaps. Formulations that are fragrance free are best, or try a soap-free cleanser. Body washes should not need to be scrubbed. Wash gently and pat dry.
- 8. Sunscreen is still needed in winter.** The sun can be harmful no matter what the temperature is outside. And, 85 percent of the sun's rays can be reflected by the snow. Protect young skin with a 30 to 50 SPF baby-safe sunscreen 30 minutes before heading outside.



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