

WAUKEE

JANUARY 2024

# Edward Jones *Living* MAGAZINE

## RESIDENTS' CHOICE AWARDS

Dallas County residents  
share their favorites



**Meet Erin Harris**

EDUCATION

**Sedars family of six volunteers**

NEIGHBOR SPOTLIGHT

**BLT wraps with avocado spread**

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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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**WELCOME**

## SOMETHING different each issue

I used to publish an automotive photo magazine, much like the Auto Trader, Deals on Wheels or Wheeler Dealer publications of years gone by. These were quite popular 30 years ago. We sold the magazines in the check-out aisles in local stores, and we had to convince store owners or managers to carry them. Part of our pitch was that the magazine was a new product each issue with hundreds of different vehicles for sale and that consumers would return to see what was in the next issue. It wasn't just a sales pitch, though, as it proved to be true.



That was 30 years ago, but I thought about the auto magazine days when we were tabulating the data from this year's Residents' Choice poll, which we are publishing in this issue as we have done for several years. When we look at the results, we find perennial favorites that seem to win their category each year. We also see changes from year to year with some surprises rising to the top. And we see newcomers in the poll that have made an incredible impact in a short time.

Bottom line, much like the auto magazine, the results of each year's poll are different. That makes sense, as the poll is really the pulse of the community at the time. And, as we all know, that pulse can — and does — change.

If you voted, thank you. Your input makes a difference, as the category winners will tell you. If you didn't vote, please take the time to do so next year. It is an easy process.

I have talked with numerous people who represent the people, places and events that are voted as favorites in this poll, and they tell me about the positive impact it has. The poll results are a great resource for readers who are looking to purchase products and services locally. Many of you have likely used the results for that exact purpose. A plumber to hire. A new restaurant to try. A park to visit. The list, literally, goes on and on with the latest and greatest each year.

Be sure to save this issue, as it will come in handy throughout the year. I also ask that you take the time to congratulate the winners with your comments and, when appropriate, your pocketbook. They will appreciate it, and we do, too.

Thanks for reading. ■

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# RESIDENTS' CHOICE AWARDS

Dallas County residents  
share their favorites

January has rolled around again, which means it is time to recognize the Residents' Choice Award winners for Dallas County.

As we continue to improve our poll and respond to what readers say is important to them, we have added categories. This year look for the favorites you haven't seen before such as Outdoor Lawn Equipment Store, Audiologist/Hearing Center, CBD Store, Mental Health Services, Auto Body Shop and more.

Also new this year, note the repeat winners — 26 in total — designated by an asterisk by their name. See who is merging as our “perennial favorites.” These favorites are doing it right — building loyalty with their customers.

As always, remember that these favorites were chosen by Dallas County residents. You are likely to agree with some choices and disagree with others, but the results were determined by your neighbors. If you voted in this year's poll, thank you for participating. And, if you didn't, be sure to look for notices in this magazine of next year's poll opening and cast your vote. With some categories having only a few votes between the top vote-getter and the third-place vote-getter, it's important to note that all those listed are winners, and we congratulate them all.



Travis Gaule, Edward Jones, has been chosen favorite financial planner in this year's Residents' Choice poll.



## Dallas County Residents' Choice for Favorite...

(Runners up in alphabetical order; \*indicates repeat winner)

### Restaurant

**Mickey's Irish Pub Waukee**

**Runners up:** Dexfield Diner & Pub; Fiesta Mexican Restaurant

### Restaurant for breakfast

**\* Patrick's Restaurant**

**Runners up:** Early Btird Brunch; Waveland Cafe West

### Restaurant for lunch

**Ambro's Roadhouse Bar & Grill**

**Runners up:** Dexfield Diner & Pub; Mickey's Irish Pub Waukee

### Restaurant for dinner

**Fiesta Mexican Restaurant**

**Runners up:** 5th Quarter Bar and Grill; Dexfield Diner & Pub

### Restaurant for dessert

**Billy's Ice Cream Store**

**Runners up:** Home Sweet Cone Ice Cream; Patrick's Restaurant

### Place for ice cream

**Waukee Ice Cream Shoppe**

**Runners up:** Billy's Ice Cream Store; Home Sweet Cone Ice Cream

### Pizza establishment

**Casey's**

**Runners up:** 7 Stone Pizzeria; Patrick's Restaurant

### Bar

**Mickey's Irish Pub Waukee**

**Runners up:** 5th Quarter Bar & Grill; Ambro's Roadhouse Bar & Grill

### Coffee shop

**\* The Morning Grind**

**Runners up:** The Coffeesmith; Scooter's Coffee

### Catering company

**Hy-Vee Catering**

**Runners up:** Kue'd Smokehouse; Snappy's Stick Fire Barbecue

### Server/bartender

**Jackson Roberts, Dexfield Diner & Pub**

**Runners up:** Haley Block, Brickyard Burgers & Brews; Miranda Broeker, Ambro's Roadhouse Bar & Grill

### Auto service

**\* Alley Auto Sales**

**Runners up:** Adel Tire & Service; Willard Garage

### Auto body shop

**Olson's Body & Paint**

**Runners up:** Graham Collision; Modern Motors

### Car dealership

**\* Shottenkirk Chevrolet**

**Runners up:** Million Motors; Stivers Ford Lincoln

### Preschool/Daycare

**University Kids**

**Runners up:** Faith's Flock Preschool; Raccoon River Preschool



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# FEATURE

## Nonprofit

**Waukee Area Christian Services**

**Runners up:** Adel Good Samaritan Food Pantry; AHeinz57 Pet Rescue & Transport

## School

**Meadow View Elementary**

**Runners up:** ADM High School; Northwest High School

## Park

**Triumph Park**

**Runners up:** Centennial Park; Evans Park

## Community festival

**\* Adel Sweet Corn Festival**

**Runners up:** Dallas County Fair; Waukee Independence Day Celebration

## Church

**Lutheran Church of Hope**

**Runners up:** Faith Lutheran Church; New Hope Church

## Pastor

**Mike Householder**

**Runners up:** Matt Krause; Ryan Whitson

## Chamber of commerce

**Waukee Area Chamber of Commerce**

**Runners up:** Adel Partners Chamber of Commerce; West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce

## Library

**\* Adel Public Library**

**Runners up:** Roy R. Estle Memorial Library; Waukee Public Library

## Camping spot

**Timberline Campground**

**Runners up:** Dallas County Fair Campgrounds; Des Moines KOA West Holiday

## Grocery store

**\* Fareway Meat & Grocery**

**Runners up:** Aldi; Hy-Vee Grocery Store

## Boutique

**\* Azalea Lane Boutique**

**Runners up:** Mainstream Boutique; Real Deals

## Retail store

**Real Deals**

**Runners up:** AM Apparel; Azalea Lane Boutique

## Thrift Store

**Goodwill of Central Iowa**

**Runners up:** None

## Home improvement retail store

**\* Baldon Hardware**

**Runners up:** Archer Home Center; Waukee Hardware & Rent-It Center

## Liquor store

**Hy-Vee Wine & Spirits**

**Runners up:** Wall to Wall Wine and Spirits; World Liquor & Tobacco + Vapors

## Nursery or garden center

**\* Harvey's Greenhouse**

**Runners up:** Bentley Ridge Tree Farm & Nursery; Earl May Garden Center

## Place to purchase a gift for a man

**Fleet Farm**

**Runners up:** Baldon Hardware; Old Station Craft Meats

## Place to purchase a gift for a woman

**Real Deals**

**Runners up:** Azalea Lane Boutique; Mainstream Boutique



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## FEATURE

### Bakery

\* Echo's Cookies

**Runners up:** Black Water Bakery; River to River Bakery & Pizza

### Florist

\* Adel Flowers & Gifts

**Runners up:** Hazel Mae Floral Events; Hy-Vee

### Dad/child date spot

\* Adel Family Fun Center

**Runners up:** The Palms Theatre & IMAX; Warrior Lanes

### Mom/child date spot

\* Adel Family Fun Center

**Runners up:** The Morning Grind; The Palms Theatre & IMAX

### Place to take your mom and dad

Adel Family Fun Center

**Runners up:** The Palms Theatre & IMAX; Patrick's Restaurant

### Place to take your kids or grandkids

Adel Family Fun Center

**Runners up:** The Brenton Arboretum; The Palms Theatre & IMAX

### Children's birthday party spot

\* Adel Family Fun Center

**Runners up:** Charlee's Elite School Of Dance; Tigers' Den

### Golf course

Sugar Creek Golf Course

**Runners up:** Hillcrest Country Club; River Valley Golf Course

### Hair salon

\* Texture Salon

**Runners up:** Hairs2You; Studio 10

### Physician's clinic

The Iowa Clinic

**Runners up:** MercyOne; UnityPoint Health

### Dental office

Adel Family Dentistry

**Runners up:** Lush Family Dental; Timberline Family Dental

### Orthodontics office

Johnson Orthodontics

**Runners up:** Bernhardt and Smith Orthodontics; Central Iowa Orthodontics



Dr. Michael Johnson, Johnson Orthodontics, was chosen as favorite orthodontics office.

### Mental health services

Optimae LifeServices

**Runners up:** Adel Mental Health; Uhl Therapy Services

### Chiropractic office

Waukee Wellness & Chiropractic

**Runners up:** Adel Chiropractic; Luellen Chiropractic



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## FEATURE

### Vision care

**Elite Eye Care**

**Runners up:** Adel Vision Clinic; Wolfe Eye Clinic

### Health club or gym

**Waukee Family YMCA**

**Runners up:** Anytime Fitness; Fit & Fierce 515

### Pharmacy

**\* Adel HealthMart**

**Runners up:** Medicap; Sumpter Pharmacy

### Cosmetic services

**Texture Salon**

**Runners up:** Iowa Face + Body Med Spa; Kissed Peach Wax Saloon

### Physical therapy

**Core Physical Therapy**

**Runners up:** Athletico Physical Therapy; Maximum Physical Therapy

### Dance studio

**Premiere Dance Project**

**Runners up:** Charlee's Elite School Of Dance; Let's Dance

### Gymnastics and/or tumbling studio

**Charlee's Elite School of Dance**

**Runners up:** Adel Tumbling & Dance Club; Jacobs Gymnastics

### Audiologist/hearing clinic

**Woodard Hearing Centers**

**Runners up:** Costco Hearing Aid Store; Waukee Hearing Aid Center

### CBD Store

**CBD American Shaman**

**Runners up:** Sumpter Pharmacy; Your CBD Store

### Financial planner

**Travis Gaule, Edward Jones**

**Runners up:** Nathan Clark, Innovative Financial Solutions; Bob Grove, Edward Jones

### Law firm

**Bergkamp, Hemphill & McClure, P.C.**

**Runners up:** Hopkins & Huebner, P.C.; McKinney Law Offices, P.C.

### Accounting firm

**Banwart Tax & Accounting**

**Runners up:** Insight CPA; Meriwether, Wilson & Company, PLLC



Shottenkirk was chosen favorite car dealership in the Residents' Choice poll.

### Veterinarian

**Adel Veterinary Clinic**

**Runners up:** Broderick Animal Clinic; Waukee-Clive Veterinary Clinic

### Dog groomer

**\* Handsome Hounds Boarding and Grooming**

**Runners up:** Stylin' Paws; Waukee Pet Salon

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## FEATURE

### Pet care

**Handsome Hounds Boarding and Grooming**

**Runners up:** Adel Veterinary Clinic; Stylin' Paws

### Lawn care business

**Luke's Lawn & Landscaping**

**Runners up:** Grassy Knoll Lawn Care; Ripke Outdoor

### Landscaping company

**Luke's Lawn & Landscaping**

**Runners up:** Ripke Outdoor; RJ Lawn & Landscape

### Heating and cooling business

**\* Adel & Winterset TV & Appliance**

**Runners up:** Baldon Plumbing Heating & Cooling; Tigges Comfort Services

### Electrical business

**\* Elite Electric & Utility Contractors**

**Runners up:** Ark Electrical Services LLC; Webster Electric Inc.



Waukee Power Equipment was chosen as favorite place to buy outdoor lawn equipment.

### Plumbing company

**\* Baldon Plumbing Heating & Cooling**

**Runners up:** Deez Plumbing Services; Lenhart Plumbing

### Senior living establishment

**Village Cooperative of West Des Moines**

**Runners up:** Adel Acres; Spurgeon Senior Community



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## FEATURE



Stephani Jimmerson, Waukee Ice Cream Shoppe, voted favorite place for ice cream.

### Insurance Agency

\* **LSB Insurance - Eric Schepers**

**Runners up:** Luellen Richardson Insurance Inc.; Bob D. Smith - State Farm

### Realtor

\* **Julianna Cullen, RE/MAX Precision**

**Runners up:** Kevin Howe, RE/MAX Precision; Amy Lucht, RE/MAX

### Bank

**GreenState Credit Union**

**Runners up:** Racoon Valley Bank; Veridian Credit Union

### Photographer

\* **DKay Photography - Danielle Hawkins**

**Runners up:** Kelsey Arganbright Photography; Lindsey Willis Photography

### Place for guests to stay

\* **Big Blue Bed & Breakfast**

**Runners up:** The Church in Town; Hotel Pattee

### Home builder/remodeling contractor

**NexGen Baths**

**Runners up:** Heartland Handcrafted; RCI Builders

### Outdoor lawn equipment store

**Waukee Power Equipment**

**Runners up:** Moss Bros.; Van Wall Equipment

### Pest Control

\* **Paul's AAA Pest Control**

**Runners up:** Central Iowa Pest Control ■



## 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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# TYPES of ownership in property deeds

Our firm often sees errors in property deeds that create problems for owners of real estate. There are two ways of holding title to real estate in Iowa: joint tenancy and tenancy in common.



Joint tenancy is a form of ownership where all of the owners hold title together. Joint tenancy has a survivorship component; when one owner dies, the interest is extinguished, and the other owners assume the ownership. Usually, all that is required is to record an affidavit reciting that one owner died and that title is vested in the remaining owners.

Tenancy in common is a form of ownership where each owner holds an undivided interest in the property. Unlike joint tenancy, the interest of a tenant in common doesn't

terminate upon death. When the owner dies, the interest passes to the decedent's estate. Often, it is necessary to probate the decedent's estate to move an undivided interest to heirs.

The problem arises because, until recently, Iowa law presumed tenancy in common. If a married couple took title as John Doe and Jane Doe, without the phrase "as joint tenants with full rights of survivorship and not as tenants in common," then they each own 50% of the property. If John dies, his estate would have to be probated so that the court could approve the transfer of half of the property to his heirs. This is frustrating if that heir is Jane, his surviving spouse. The failure to create joint tenancy at the time the property was purchased creates a problem that can only be solved through the time-consuming and expensive probate process.

Iowa Code 557.15 was updated to address this issue. For all deeds executed after Jan. 1,

2015, if the grantees are married, it creates a presumption of joint tenancy, not tenancy in common.

The law is designed to prevent the probate of a deceased spouse's estate in order to convey half a house. However, the law is prospective — it applies only to deeds executed on or after Jan. 1, 2015. This does not fix older deeds with incorrect vesting language.

It is vital that you understand the differences in types of ownership so that you can ensure that you hold title to your property correctly. If you have questions about how your home is owned, consult with an attorney who is experienced in both real estate and estate planning matters. ■

Information provided by Charlotte Sucik, Abendroth Russell Barnett Law Firm, 2560 73rd St., Urbandale, 515-278-0623, [www.ARPCLaw.com](http://www.ARPCLaw.com).

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## VOLUNTEERING as a family endeavor

The Sedars family volunteers for Waukee Area Christian Services.

The Sedars family is busy. With four kids in Waukee and Adel schools, church, chores and school activities take up a large portion of their time.

Yet one thing the whole family can make time for is volunteering at Waukee Area Christian Services (WACS).

Brian and Amanda Sedars, along with their kids, began volunteering in 2021 doing whatever was needed at WACS. In 2023, the family spent every other weekend helping in the clothing closet, stocking pantry shelves or weeding the garden. All four kids participate: Eden, 14; Genevieve, 12; Eliza, 10; and Griffin, 9.

Amanda says they sought a community project the whole family could participate in.

"We adopted a family at Christmas and helped with the backpack drive. We wanted to see the impact — in person — of how it helped people."

Among their efforts, the family worked in the garden. The kids' grandma lived on 5 acres with a huge garden, so they were experts.

"They were trying to tell us how to do it, but we already knew weeding from our grandma," Genevieve says.

The family divided into two groups. Amanda heads up the "E" team (Eliza and Eden), while Brian leads the "G" team of Genevieve and Griffin.

Genevieve helps clients shop for clothing.

"You see little kids come in and you ask them what their favorite color is. You help them find the right clothes, and it makes their day," she says.

The family decorated a van for the Waukee holiday parade of lights and collected donations. Brian says it's important to teach their kids good values and helping others.

"We have high expectations. Volunteer service provides a good base," he says.

Amanda says the kids have never resisted spending Saturdays at the food pantry.

"I've never heard them say, I wish I was someplace else," she says.

Brian adds, "I hear more complaining about school."

The volunteering aspect translates into other areas of their lives.

"We all pitch in," Amanda says. Whether it's cooking together as a family, it takes everyone to get the job done."

Their kids have learned important life lessons by volunteering.

"Some people can't afford food or even celebrate Christmas. We can help," Griffin says.

Eliza and Eden both learned patience with people seeking items at the food pantry or clothing closet. Genevieve adds, "If people don't speak English, we've learned how to communicate with them."

Brian feels fortunate, saying, "Not everyone is as lucky as we are. I want my kids to learn to share with others."

"Donations to the WACS frequently dip after the holidays," says Amanda. "The need doesn't stop."

For more information on assistance or volunteering, visit [waukeechristianservices.org/](http://waukeechristianservices.org/). ■



Scott Victor, Edward Jones, presents the Neighbor Spotlight certificate to Brian and Amanda Sedars.

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# City of Waukee Bulletin

## JANUARY 2024

Find more information on City services, programs and events at [Waukee.org](http://Waukee.org)

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Waukee City Hall  
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### 100+ Seasonal Jobs Open with the City of Waukee

If you're looking for a summer job, [Waukee.org/Jobs](http://Waukee.org/Jobs) has a wide range of roles. If you love being outside and seeing the results of your efforts, a laborer, grounds keeper or field crew opening could be a great fit. If you enjoy interacting with people and want to gain customer service experience, a concession, clubhouse or recreation program role could suit you. Roles range from 10 to 40+ hours weekly with wages ranging from \$11-21 per hour, depending on position. College students with internship hours to fill can try out a future career path with one of three internships.

#### Parks & Recreation Department

- Parks Laborer
- Recreation Program Assistant I
- Recreation Program Assistant II
- Recreation Site Supervisor
- Triumph Park
  - Concession Attendant
  - Lead Concession Attendant
  - Triumph Park Site Supervisor
  - Field Crew
  - Field Crew Lead
- Sugar Creek Municipal Golf Course
  - Clubhouse Assistant
  - Golf Course Attendant
  - Golf Course Grounds Keeper
  - Golf Course Maintenance Laborer

#### Public Works Department

- Water/Wastewater Laborer
- Streets Laborer (Truck Driver, Mower, Laborer)
- Gas Laborer

#### Internships

- Water/Wastewater
- Parks & Recreation
- Sugar Creek Municipal Golf Course

## Dates to Know

### WASP Senior Luncheon

Jan. 31 at 9 a.m.  
Waukee Community Center

### Dinner Delights Meal Prep Party

Sun., Feb. 4 from 2-4 p.m.  
Registration required:  
[Waukee.org/Registration](http://Waukee.org/Registration)





## State of the City Address Set for February 29

Join Waukee Mayor Courtney Clarke on February 29 for the State of the City Address. The presentation will begin at noon in the atrium at Hope Lutheran Church – Waukee (305 NE Dartmoor Dr.). The mayor and City staff will share highlights of 2023 and a look forward to City priorities for 2024. It is free to attend. Please register at [Waukee.org/StateOfTheCity](https://Waukee.org/StateOfTheCity).



## Renew or Register for a Pet License for 2024

Licensing your pet improves the chances of having your animal returned to you should they become lost or run away and helps the City of Waukee ensure that pets are vaccinated. Dog and cat licenses are \$15 for altered pets and \$25 for unaltered pets. Go to [PetData.com](https://PetData.com) to register your pet. Direct questions to the customer service line at 1-855-585-8157 (toll-free). If you do not have internet access and need to license a pet, call the City Clerk's office at 515-978-7904. After getting your 2024 license, grab a pass to Trailside Dog Park at <https://waukee.mybarkpass.com/>.



## Save the Date for Citywide Garage Sale and Spring Clean-Up

The 2024 Citywide Garage Sale is set for Saturday, Apr. 27. This is not a City of Waukee-sponsored event. Curbside Spring Clean-Up Week for City/ASI customers will take place April 29-May 3 on residents' regularly scheduled Monday-Friday garbage collection days. See more at [Waukee.org/CleanUp](https://Waukee.org/CleanUp).



## Girls Rec Softball Registration Closes February 29

Save your daughter's spot in the popular Waukee Parks & Recreation softball league for girls in kindergarten through 7th grade. Practice starts after spring break, and play will wrap up by mid-June. Sign up at [Waukee.org/Registration](https://Waukee.org/Registration).



## Ice Removal Tips

- **Shovel first.** Less snow on your sidewalk will lower the amount of salt you need to use. If ice cannot be removed, sprinkle salt, ashes, sawdust or sand to prevent the sidewalk from being dangerous to walk on.
- Before applying a deicer, **check the temperature.** Most aren't effective under 15 degrees.
- **Don't over apply.** One 12 oz coffee cup of salt can be effective for 1,000 square feet (a typical driveway)!
- After the pavement dries, **sweep up and collect any remaining salt** to reuse after the next snow. This could save you a little money and lessens the amount of salt that ends up in rivers and ponds.



## Job Openings for Special Census

The U.S. Census Bureau is hiring for a Special Census of Waukee. Hours are flexible, and training is paid. Learn more and apply at [www.USAJobs.gov/job/752213900](https://www.USAJobs.gov/job/752213900). An updated population count may help Waukee qualify for additional funds for important services.

### Regular City Council Meetings

Feb. 5 and 20 at 5:30 p.m.  
Waukee City Hall and Zoom

### Presidents Day – All City Offices and Library Closed

Mon., Feb. 19  
Normal trash collection

### Waukee State of the City

Feb. 29 at noon  
Hope Lutheran Church - Waukee

## EVENTS IN THE AREA

To submit calendar items for consideration, send to [tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com](mailto:tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com)

Be sure to check for cancellations.

### Waukee Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Banquet

Thursday, Feb. 22, 5-8 p.m.  
Vibrant Musical Hall, 938  
Grand Prairie Parkway,  
Waukee

Join the Waukee Area Chamber of Commerce in celebrating its 25th anniversary. The Chamber will highlight the accomplishments of 2023, announce plans for 2024 and recognize the Members of the Year, Volunteer of the Year, Young Professional of the Year, and Citizen of the Year. Register online at <https://members.waukeechamber.com/events/details/2024-waukee-area-chamber-of-commerce-annual-banquet-344?calendarMonth=2024-02-01>.



### 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.



### CITYVIEW Chocolate Walk

Friday, Feb. 23, 5-9 p.m.  
West Glen Town Center, 5465 Mills  
Civic Parkway, West Des Moines

Like chocolate? Like chocolate drinks? Then you'll love this event. For a ticket price of \$25 (\$35 at the door), attendees will receive 10 drink tickets that can be redeemed for sample cocktails at participating venues. Attendees will also be provided tickets for chocolate dessert samples at participating retail stores. A shuttle bus from Majestic Limousine will be providing transportation to each location, although most are only a short walk away. For a link to purchase tickets, visit [chocolatewalk.dmcityview.com](http://chocolatewalk.dmcityview.com). ■

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CITYVIEW



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## MEET Kawsu Barry

Surgeon from West Africa moves to Waukee

One of Waukee's newest residents says he is excited to both establish a home for his family and help people increase their mobility.

Dr. Kawsu Barry is an orthopaedic surgeon specializing in hip and knee replacements based out of The Iowa Clinic in West Des Moines. On Feb. 26, Waukee's first ambulatory surgery center — The Iowa Clinic's South Waukee Campus at 1025 S.W. Tallgrass Lane — opens and is where Barry will perform surgeries.

Barry, with his wife, Fatima Ba, moved to Waukee with their four children, all under the age of 5. They chose Waukee to live, not only because it is close to the surgery center, but also because it is at the heart of many amenities.

"Waukee is awesome. This was the best job I could find anywhere in the country," he says. "Waukee is an upcoming, safe neighborhood with a great school district."

Barry is a native of Gambia, West Africa. In high school, he thought being a doctor seemed like a "cool idea." As he explored his career path, he read the book, "What Color is Your Parachute?" Soon, his personality confirmed he wanted to pursue a medical profession career.

"I knew I enjoyed working with people. I wanted to do something that benefits people on a large scale."

After completing his second-year residency, a rotation with an orthopaedic surgeon led him to focus on joint replacements as a sub-specialty.

"Patient after patient came in after their surgeries and would rave about how much the surgery changed their lives," he recalls.

He says that performing hip and knee replacement is "fun." "It's like carpentry of the human body. It's rewarding, working with my hands. Patients usually do well with the surgery, and it's predictable," he explains.

This is not the first time he's lived in the Midwest. After moving to the United States, he lived in Kansas and says, "Not many people looked like me. Everyone was so nice and I felt at home," he explains.

Barry lived in Minnesota and Illinois. Most recently he trained at Harvard and Johns Hopkins, living and working in both Boston and Baltimore. He picked Iowa for one reason.

"Number one is the people. They are generally nice and welcoming. Sometimes it takes living in a different part of the country to realize what you want. Iowa is so refreshing. Everyday people go the extra mile. It blows my mind."

His long-term goal is to give back to his home country.

"I plan to go back to Gambia to volunteer once a year and use my skills."

Since living in Iowa, he's visited Iowa landmarks and takes his kids to Triumph Park. He's eager to help people.

"I want to help people get rid of their pain and restore function. I want to be a positive impact for Waukee citizens and the greater Des Moines area," he says. ■



Dr. Kawsu Barry says the decision to come to Iowa was based on the friendliness of the people who live here. He and his family chose Waukee due in part to all the amenities it offers.

# NEW SCHOOL ALERT!

**Guidepost Montessori in Waukee has officially opened their doors!**

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## 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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## MEET Erin Harris

Enjoyment of district keeps Texas native in Iowa.

Born and raised in Austin, Texas, Erin Harris graduated from Texas A&M University in 2009 and started teaching in Texas the following school year. There, she taught for six years before relocating to Iowa in 2015. Now, she is a kindergarten teacher for the Waukee Community School District. While her original plan was to stay in Iowa for only a year before returning home, she is now in her ninth year living in Iowa. Harris says her career with the district, her position at Walnut Hills Elementary School, and the community that surrounds her have been the biggest factors in her decision to remain in Iowa even though her family still resides in Texas.



Erin Harris and the team of educators she works with are striving to incorporate more play-based learning in the kindergarten classroom.

"The relationships I've developed with the staff, students and families have been one of the most rewarding parts of working in the district," Harris says.

Harris likes working with kindergarten students because she says students in this age range are like sponges. She enjoys teaching them how to read and write and watching their development. She adds, it is rewarding to watch her students' light bulbs come on and see them burst with pride when they conquer new skills.

"The biggest reward is being a part of my students' daily lives and playing a major role in laying their foundation for schooling," Harris says.

The last few years, Harris' team has been working to bring play-based learning back into the kindergarten classroom. They added play-based centers with dramatic play, blocks, sensory tables, art and more. These centers provide students more opportunities to interact, use their imaginations, problem solve, be innovative and learn from one another.

Along with play, Harris integrates movement and mindfulness into her students' everyday routines. Before starting the day, her students participate in deep breathing exercises. They also participate in Cosmic Kids Yoga for stretching and getting their bodies moving.

In addition, Harris' students have a 100th day celebration to recognize all of their hard work and success during their first 100 days in school. Harris says this is the time of year when things begin to "click" for her students.

"To see their faces when they master skills and realize they can do hard things is pure joy. Their confidence begins to soar, and they are eager to try new things and acquire more knowledge," she says.

In her free time, Harris can be found riding her bike on trails with friends or lifting weights. She also enjoys trying new restaurants around town, spending time outdoors and traveling with friends. This past summer, she visited Costa Rica, and she has trips planned for both Palm Springs and St. George, Utah, in the coming months. Harris also values spending quality time with her family when they visit. She tries to get back to see them in Texas a couple of times a year. ■

## OPTIONS for caregiver relief

As we age, it's common to require additional support to maintain our independence and quality of life. Thankfully, there are several options available to assist us, including adult daycare, assisted living and home care. Each option provides unique benefits that cater to different needs and preferences. Adult daycare is a popular choice for seniors who desire a supportive environment that allows them to socialize and complete daily tasks. This type of care is especially helpful for caregivers who still work while taking care of their loved ones. By taking their loved ones out of the home, adult daycare provides structure to both the caregiver and the loved one. Additionally, most adult daycares offer transportation services, making it easy for seniors to get to and from the center. Engaging in mental stimulation, fun games, and community activities is a great way to keep seniors active and lively. This is where adult daycare truly shines. With various activities available, including arts and crafts, music and fitness classes, seniors will always find something to do that suits their interests. For those who require eight hours of continuous care for their loved ones, adult daycare is a safe, affordable and convenient option. These centers have nurses on staff who can provide physical, occupational and speech therapy services. Don't wait. Explore these options today and see what a blessing adult daycare can be. ■



Information provided by Brooke Baker, Grace Estates, 801 N.E. Venture Drive, Waukee, 516-518-0977, [www.graceestatesadc.com](http://www.graceestatesadc.com).

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## HEALTH

By Dr. Jason Brown

### GET checked for sleep apnea

Welcome to a new year and a new you. New Year's resolutions typically involve goals for improving physical and mental health. One key element in our overall health is the quality of our sleep. Sleep apnea is a common finding that goes largely undiagnosed.

All ages of individuals can be affected by sleep apnea. Certain factors put people at higher risk for sleep apnea. Individuals with excessive weight, larger neck circumference, larger tongue/tonsils, smaller airways, family history of apnea, smoking and specific medical conditions can have an increased risk of a sleep disorder. Patients can be screened in the dental office and their primary doctor's office for these characteristics. Some offices may have sleep questionnaires that determine someone's level of fatigue. This can lead to the recommendation of having a sleep study.

The severity of apnea can determine what options are available to help treat the condition. If apnea is caused by airway obstruction from the tongue, a dental sleep appliance can often be custom made to move the lower jaw forward to clear the airway.

Reduction in snoring and getting a more restful sleep can help with one's physical and mental health as part of their New Year's resolution to live a healthier life. Ask your dentist if an oral sleep appliance may get you back to feeling fully rested for a healthier new year. ■

Information provided by Dr. Jason Brown DDS, Timberline Family Dental, 515-644-2264, 2153 S.E. LA Grant Parkway, Waukeez. Information gathered from mouthhealthy.org by ADA.



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## HEALTH

By Paul Guerdet

### 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](http://www.sstherapyandconsulting.com),





# CLICK & Collect at the Library

Frigid temperatures continue well through February here in central Iowa, which means the fewer trips outside and out of your car the better. Minimize your time in the cold by taking advantage of the Waukee Public Library's curbside service, Click & Collect.

The Library's mobile app is your one-stop-shop for all things library — mobile checkout, upcoming books, current reading challenges, events and more. Simply search "Waukee Public Library" in your app store to download.

When the weather outside is especially frightful, use the new Click & Collect service within the app. It provides you with a warm and safe option to pick up all your library items. Once your holds are ready, go to the Waukee Public Library app, press "My Account," then "Holds," select "Click & Collect," and then follow the prompts to let them know you're on your way to pick up your items. As you approach the library's southside drop off, press "I'm here!" within the app, and staff will bring your items to your car already checked out and ready to enjoy.

To learn more about the Waukee Public Library and its services, visit [waukeepubliclibrary.org](http://waukeepubliclibrary.org).

## FEBRUARY EVENTS

**Art Gallery Exhibit: "Sunflower Fine Art Studio Children's Art Show," Jan. 15 through Feb. 29.**

## KIDS

**Super Bowl Crafts, Sunday, Feb. 4, 2 p.m.**

Drop in to make a Super Bowl craft during February's Sunday Fun Day program. For kids in grades K-5 and caregivers. Registration not required.

## TEENS

**Snacks & Crafts, Monday, Feb. 12, 6:30 p.m.**

Get snacky and crafty or just hang out with friends. Each month, a variety of coloring and craft supplies will be provided for students in grades 6-12 to be creative. This month's activity is making crafts out of paper — origami, lanterns or airplanes. Registration required.

## ADULTS

**NEW! Introduction to Smartphones, Thursday, Feb. 8, 10 a.m.**

This senior technology class serves as a broad introduction in setting up and getting started on a new smartphone. While this class will use iPhones as the example, all are welcome, as the concepts can be applied to Android devices. Registration recommended.

## MULTI-AGE

**Campfire Stories, Tuesday, Feb. 6, 6 p.m.**

Come join us for a cozy evening of campfire stories with Iowa storyteller Darrin Crow. Enjoy a mix of tall tales, American folk tales, and a few creepy tales thrown in for good measure. There will also be s'mores-themed snacks to further set the scene. Recommended for those 10 and older. Registration required. ■

# MAKE your funeral prearrangements

Don't put it off another year. Let 2024 be the year you take care of those tasks that continue to remain on your "to-do" list.

It might be getting a will in place or updated. It might be cleaning out that closet. Or maybe it is getting your funeral prearrangements in place so that your final arrangements will not be a burden to your family and loved ones at a time that will be very emotional and stressful.

We hear it all the time... "I am so glad to have this taken care of."

Planning your final arrangements begins with a simple conversation and can be a pleasant process. Planning ahead allows you time to give the thoughtful consideration these important decisions deserve.

There are many options to think about when addressing your final arrangements, and there are even prepayment options available to those who wish to have their final financial obligations handled in advance.

An advanced planning consultant can walk you through these choices and options.

Start the year by crossing something off your "to-do" list. Reach out to your funeral home of choice and schedule a meeting to get your prearrangements in place. You will be glad you did. ■



Information provided by Scott Eriksen, Director of Hamilton's Advanced Planning, Hamilton's Funeral Home, 605 Lyon St., Des Moines, 515-697-3670, [www.HamiltonsFuneralHome.com](http://www.HamiltonsFuneralHome.com).

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# GETTING a house up to the times

Mackey family modernizes 1989 home.

Taking on any kind of renovation — let alone an entire home — can be a daunting task. However, after purchasing a foreclosed house in 2015, Samantha and Caleb Mackey knew they needed to renovate everything. After completion, they are enjoying it themselves. However, they like to keep the next step in mind.

“We’ve always had the mindset that we’re going to sell this place,” said Caleb. “So, we’ve kind of built with that in mind.”

When the couple purchased the house, everything was original to 1989. It came with an unfinished basement, which allowed them to create some additional square footage. Then, they moved to the second floor to prepare a baby room for their firstborn. When they were expecting their second child, they figured they should get another room ready as well. Since they were already working on the second floor, they moved on to the bathrooms.

The bathrooms are more of a hassle to renovate, considering the plumbing and wiring, Samantha says.



Samantha and Caleb Mackey knew they would have to give the home they purchased an overhaul, since everything was original to 1989.



Overall, the couple is moving towards more gray and neutral colors. Samantha said they are avoiding the “yellow-y oldness” previously prevalent in the home.

“Enough so someone doesn’t come in and go, ‘I got to repaint every wall because they’re crazy colors,’ ” said Caleb. “We tried to do somewhat modern, not go too crazy, keep it kind of classic.”

The use of gray shiplap around the house adds a subtle touch of modernity. But if the next owners do not like it, they are easy to paint over. Not to mention, they add a bit of structural support as well. Their

“It’s been through the addition of MAPLE that we have been able to get the kids to talk.”

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## WHERE WE LIVE



Among the Mackeys' projects was updating the bathrooms.

east-facing bedroom drywall kept having issues, which were easily solved by the shiplap.

"The nails and stuff just keep coming out," said Samantha. "So, we just put shiplap on there. It's not a problem because it's holding everything in place."

Since starting the renovation process, the couple has done all the work themselves, save for pouring concrete.

"You definitely get it done faster if you pay it out, but you're going to pay a lot of money," says Samantha.

"I've never been disappointed by anything I've done so far," says Caleb. "I'm super picky and meticulous, so I would rather, if there's a mistake, that was on me rather than being upset that someone else didn't do it right when they're a professional."

However, the couple did not hesitate to reach out for help. Samantha's parents knew how to tile and Caleb's dad was a plumber. Any new skill they needed, they were one or two YouTube videos away. Their Realtor, too, was a big help. The couple reached out to him quite a bit to ask about the smartest moves during renovation. One of the pieces of advice: Do not put in a concrete firepit because they are often taken out. Instead, their Realtor suggested using pea gravel.

From one family going through a renovation to another, Caleb offered these words: "Don't take on more than you think you can do. But, at the same time, realize you can do more than you think you can." ■

## WELLNESS

By Kristen Shelton

## IMPROVED health with weight loss injections

Is it possible that weight loss injections can also provide additional benefits for your health as a whole? The answer is yes. As we begin a new year, this is the most popular time when individuals begin New Year's resolutions and other popular fads. However, have you ever found yourself falling off the bandwagon within a week or two after implementing a New Year's resolution?



What if you could eat a balanced diet, exercise daily, and use a weight loss medication that will help produce results you can see and feel? The most popular weight loss injections, Semaglutide and Tirzepatide, are sweeping the nation. Studies are showing that these injections are a safe and effective weight loss treatment. Not only can these medications help an individual lose stubborn, unwanted weight, they have also been found to lower the risk of cardiovascular events such as heart attacks and strokes, improve glucose levels, decrease blood pressure and cholesterol levels, and reduce inflammation, thereby enabling beneficial effects on heart muscle and blood vessels. ■

Information provided by Kristen Shelton, co-owner, Vivid Wellness, Aesthetics, Lifestyle, 1980 N.W. 94th St., Suite E/F Clive, 515-415-1550, [www.livin-vivid.com](http://www.livin-vivid.com).

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**NEIGHBOR** By Darren Tromblay

## THE VOICE of song

McGuinness uses singing as way to break autism barriers.

For the first two years of Molly McGuinness' life, words were things that simply escaped her.

Autism can do that sometimes.

Naturally, communication was difficult at first, but her mother, Michele McGuinness, found a way around that, teaching little Molly American Sign Language.

Eventually Molly gained a voice of her own, much to the delight of her mother, family and friends. Finally, she could speak.

And that wasn't the only surprise Molly had for them. All this time, she had another voice hidden away in that little body of hers — the voice of song.

"Shortly after she started to talk, she started to sing," Michele recalls. "Many people were surprised at her natural ability to use inflection in her voice while singing at such a young age."

At age 11, Molly and her fifth grade teacher, Jason Dean, wrote and recorded the song "The 7 Habits" at a recording studio in Des Moines. The song became a "hit," and was played at school events and rallies.

Now, her mother says, Molly sings everywhere she goes, most recently at the Dallas Center United Methodist Church. Where there's a microphone and a stage, there she is.

Molly, now an adult, has never lost her ability to put smiles on people's faces.

"She's a spunky 20-year-old who has always loved to entertain," her mother says. "She has a funny sense of humor, smooth dance moves and that beautiful singing voice."

The last two years has seen Molly win the "Future Pop Star" award at the annual Best Buddies Talent Show at Northwest High School in Waukee. Molly also recently participated in the 2024 Amplify Event for Iowa Miss Amazing at Urbandale High School. Iowa Miss Amazing is a nonprofit organization that provides opportunities for girls and women with disabilities to step outside of their comfort zones and build networks of support.

"This will be Molly's first time participating, and she is very excited to get on stage and sing," Michelle says.

From there, the sky is the limit. It always has been for Molly, who continues to find ways to entertain and surprise those around her, her mother included. Michelle is proud of her daughter, and rightfully so. She's seen little Molly grow into a young woman who isn't afraid to take on a challenge.

Well, almost all of them. At the top of her "to do" list? Sing the National Anthem at an Iowa Cubs game, Michele says.

"It would be a dream come true." ■



Molly McGuinness, 20, has enjoyed entertaining people since discovering her singing voice when she was a little girl.



# RIBBON Cutting

Waukee Area Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for J&D McDonalds on Jan. 3.



Waukee Area Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for J&D McDonalds on Jan. 3.



Toby Johnson and Ryan Douglas



Jessica Durand



Amber Martin



Tanya Wilson



Tom Weber, Jessica Ross and Nancy Russo



Chris Riley and Kaleb McKinnon



Rocio Santos and Dorian Packard



Jason Alarcon and Matthew Vos



Toby Huffaker and Katelyn White





Brett Braafhart, Megan Watt and Jake Larson at the Waukee Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for FSB bank on Dec. 14.



Waukee Area Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for FSB bank on Dec. 14.



Gina Campos and Don Frazer at the Waukee Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for FSB bank on Dec. 14.



Rob Grove, Travis Gaule and Steve Rogers at the Waukee Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for FSB bank on Dec. 14.



Amber Rhoades and Cindy Adams at the Waukee Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for FSB bank on Dec. 14.



Amber Rhoades, Amy Ganoe and Dakota Brockmann at the Waukee Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for FSB bank on Dec. 14.



Connor Nason, Enrique Knoell and Doris Christian at the Waukee Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for J&D McDonalds on Jan. 3.



Abigail Bautista and Ashley George at the Waukee Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for J&D McDonalds on Jan. 3.



Mike Richmond and Jessica Rath at the Waukee Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for J&D McDonalds on Jan. 3.



Dawn Rath and Mike Richmond at the Waukee Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for J&D McDonalds on Jan. 3.



Kelly Troxel and Jessica Taylor-Fink at the Waukee Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for J&D McDonalds on Jan. 3.



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