

WEST DES MOINES
JORDAN CREEK

MARCH 2024

Living

MAGAZINE

Trip OF A lifetime

Residents share stories of their
dreams-come-true vacations

Easter roast
RECIPE

Astronaut Kilrain to speak at ciWeek
COMMUNITY

Booster club supports Valley drama programs
EDUCATION



FITNESS AND HIKING TIPS

DO'S

- NO: Please don't bring more water than you can drink. You'll need to drink before, during, and after your hike.
- DO: Bring water with you. The only water source on the trail is the Manitou Incline. If you don't have water, you can buy it at the summit.
- NO: Don't bring a small trash bag with you to pack out your waste and refuse. Please pack out your trash and leave the trail clean.
- DO: Bring a small trash bag with you to pack out your waste and refuse. Please pack out your trash and leave the trail clean.
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- DO: Bring a small trash bag with you to pack out your waste and refuse. Please pack out your trash and leave the trail clean.

DON'TS

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WELCOME

104 vacation days

Dream vacation. You have heard the term. You may have even experienced one or two. But, more than likely, your dream vacation may still be something in your mind.

When I was a young man working at The Des Moines Register, I was planning a short vacation and told Denny, a customer of mine, that I would be off work. He looked at me with a stern face and said, "Vacation? You don't work Sundays, do you? That's 52 days of vacation a year." He continued, "Wait, you don't work Saturdays either, do you? That's another 52 days. That's 104 days of vacation per year. How much vacation do you need?"

I was without words. Denny was having fun with me, but there was some truth to what he was saying.

As a teenager, I worked at a local gas station that was open 24/7. Even in the 1980s, staffing was a challenge, especially on Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day. My family didn't take many vacations, so when the opportunity came to earn time-and-a-half for holiday pay, I was the first to sign up. I enjoyed working those days, as the store traffic was lighter, the customers were cheery, and I liked the paycheck.

When I worked at the Register, we were told that we would not be allowed to take vacation between Thanksgiving and Christmas. Those were the newspaper's busiest times with advertising, and we were to be there to make sure of it. We are not as strict today in our company, but a holiday does mean we have to complete five days of work in four days. The presses keep running.

Author Rob Hill said, "My goal is to build a life I don't need a vacation from." Now that makes sense to me. But, like most things in life, I have learned that there truly are different strokes for different folks. Some people love to travel and spend time on a beach; I get sunburned and have two days of diarrhea. Others want to take a week off and ride a bicycle 468 miles across the state in 90-degree weather; that's not my idea of a vacation. And a select few enjoy time at home working on a list of projects and relaxing with friends and family; that's more my style.

Meanwhile, my wife and kids not only enjoy vacations, they have come to expect them. I am slowly but surely learning to appreciate the time off as well. And, although our ideas of what a dream vacation may be differ, I am happy to be along for the ride.

Thanks for reading. ■



SHANE GOODMAN
President and Publisher
Big Green Umbrella Media
shane@dmcityview.com
515-953-4822, ext. 305



Tammy Pearson
Editor
515-953-4822 ext. 302
tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com

Martha Munro
Advertising Account Executive
515-953-4822 ext. 314
martha@iowalivingmagazines.com



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Trip OF A lifetime

Residents share stories of their
dreams-come-true vacations

By Jackie Wilson

For some people, vacationing is a part of their routine. They plan, take and enjoy numerous trips to see the sights and “get away” from the usual hustle and bustle of life. They enjoy good times and make fond memories. They share photos and stories, but it isn’t long before they are looking forward to their next excursion. For some others, a vacation turns out to be much more than that — it is a dream come true, and, no matter how many vacations may follow, none will ever compare. It is a trip of a lifetime.



Gina David searched for a new adventure and found it by hiking the Manitou Incline in Manitou Springs, Colorado.

Exploring new territory

To walk a mile, a brisk pace might take about 15 minutes. When Gina David of West Des Moines recently completed a one-mile walk, it took triple the amount of time.

However, this one-miler was no stroll around the block. This climb was an elevation gain of more than 2,000 feet, from 6,530 to 8,550 feet. The average grade (steepness) was 41%, and the highest grade 68%.

The walk — the Manitou Incline — is located in Manitou Springs, Colorado. It was an adventure Gina David yearned for.

Gina previously visited different parts of Colorado and searched for Colorado hikes. As an active and physically fit woman, she'd recently rode her bike 200 miles to Okoboji as part of a human trafficking awareness ride.

When she came across the Manitou Incline, she was intrigued.

"I've always wanted to do a new adventure. After I researched it, I realized it wasn't for the faint of heart," she recalls. "I was up for that challenge."

Gina booked a plane ticket and planned the trip quickly. The health coach didn't train specifically for the hike. She hoped to hike in advance. Yet, when she arrived on a Thursday, the only time she could take the hike was on a Friday morning. Reservations were required, and Saturday was closed for the annual Coffin Races.

Once she arrived, she began the 2,000-step journey. She walked about 10-25 steps at a time, then stopped.



By the time Gina David reached the top of the Manitou Incline, she says she was literally crawling on all fours.

"There were a few lookout points to stop and bring your heart rate back down," she explains.

As she climbed, her heartrate increased. Adding to the difficulty was the fact that the steps were not uniform. Some were sand or boards, while others were narrow. She had to concentrate on the trail.

"I was trying to be mindful to take in the sunrise. It was October and not very colorful. I looked out in the distance and saw a bright yellow tree. It was really cool to see that," Gina says.

She witnessed some people running up and

down the trail. Toward the end of the hike, she was "literally crawling on all fours."

It was recommended not to take the incline back down but to descend the backside of the trail. At the end, she felt a sense of accomplishment.

"I took in the beauty. I felt joyful and accomplished. It was a workout. It's not for the faint of heart. I felt genuinely happy," she reflects.

Gina said she probably wouldn't hike it again, not because of the difficulty, but because of a desire to explore new territory.

"I can add it to my list of accomplishments.



Garret Munch says the views as he hiked Mt. Kilimanjaro were unforgettable.



Garret Munch, left, made it to the top of Mt. Kilimanjaro.

It wasn't a race against the clock or people. It was all about taking in something new," Gina says.

Her future bucket list items include visiting all 50 states and biking the Triple Bypass ride in Colorado.

"It boils down to exploring something new. I want to keep exploring and say 'yes' to things and 'yes' to joy in my life," Gina says. "It was amazing. I still smile whenever I think about it."

An incredible view

Garret Munch's bucket list included going on an African safari. He was accompanied by his cousin, Dustin Munch, and his wife, who planned the trip. Dustin instructed Garret on what to pack for the trip and mentioned they were going on a hike before the safari.

Dustin didn't initially reveal that the hike included scaling the largest free-standing mountain peak in Africa, Mt. Kilimanjaro, until a few days before they left.

He researched the site and, once in Tanzania, he gathered with a group of hikers. The guides mapped out the route they'd take.

"They didn't tell details because they don't want to scare you," Garret recalls.

He admits he didn't train and didn't consider himself to be athletic.

"I'm not super athletic," Garret admits. "I went into it naïve."

The climb consisted of a seven-day hike. The slow, gradual ascent meant hikers could acclimate to the elevation change. As he hiked to day four, the Barranco Wall was his biggest challenge. The steep and narrow path is attained by free climbing and scaling a tall, straight-up wall.

"It was the biggest scare," he recalls. "I'm not a huge heights person. I conquered a lot of things I never wanted to do."

To reach the top of the summit, they went to bed at 8 p.m. and arose at 11 p.m., climbing for nine hours to hit the summit of 19,341 feet. Once up there, Garret was in awe.

"Getting to the top was the most amazing moment in my life. We were above the clouds. It was really cool," he reflects.

They climbed down quickly and completed the hike the following day. When finished, the group celebrated with beer and pizza, relaying their own experiences with the climb.

"It was a lot harder than anyone expected," Garret says. "I lost 25 pounds. My clothes felt different when I got back down."



After climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro, Garret Munch, right, went on an African safari.

After the climb, the trio went on their safari, viewing nature and wild animals.

"It was nice to stay in a hotel versus a tent," says Garret. "It was a cool way to celebrate the week after the hike."

When he returned from the hike, he felt like he gained a new approach to life.

"Any time you go through a challenge, it gives you new perspective and determination. I felt like I could do more things," he says.

People were skeptical when he told them he hiked Mt. Kilimanjaro without training.

"Nobody believes I did it," he says.

The trip cemented his bond with his cousin, and he checked off Africa from his bucket list.

"It brought me immense joy and gratification," Garret says. "It was one of the weirdest and most gratifying things I've ever experienced in my life."

Bike ride with his hero

When Brian Farrell of West Des Moines was attending Iowa State University, his hobby — aside from academics — was bicycling. Brian and his brother, Jeff, also raced bikes on local teams, competing around the Midwest.

Brian worked at Michael's Cyclery in Ames, and, through their bike races, they followed a local bicyclist, Andy Hampsten, who was a competitive cyclist in the Midwest and sponsored by Michael's Cyclery.

Andy went on to become a professional racer, and the Farrell brothers admired him. As they followed Andy's career, he became a celebrity in the bike racing world, winning the 1988 Giro d'Italia bicycle race in Italy.



Brothers Jeff and Brian Farrell both dreamed of riding bikes with their biking hero, Andy Hampsten.

Twenty years ago, both Brian and Jeff thought it would be cool to see Andy again. They discovered Andy was doing bicycle tours called Cinghiale in Italy, and they longed to go.

"But we knew it would be selfish for us to do a bike ride without our wives (who were not bikers)," he recalls.

Yet, it was Jeff's wife, Gayle, who, along with Brian, presented a surprise trip to Italy

FEATURE

on Jeff's 60th birthday. His birthday was in November, and they arranged the trip for the following September. Brian was ecstatic to be biking with his hero.

"Andy was a celebrity to me. He was the top of the pile after winning the tour of Italy," Brian explains. "To go and hang with your hero 40 years later was on my bucket list."

The trip was ideal. Brian's wife, Lisa, and Jeff's wife, Gayle, took Italian cooking classes while the two brothers biked.

About 20 bicyclists rode the rolling hills, including seasoned athletes and pro bikers. The hills were tough.

"In September, it was supposed to be cool, but it was hot. The climbing was difficult. Many pro teams go to that region to train the rolling hills," Brian explains.

Brian and Jeff spent the week bonding and riding with their hero.

"You don't get that opportunity," says Brian. "I had a whole week to ride and talk with him. I was in awe. Here I am talking to a big guy. He was personable. He was our idol. It meant a lot to us."

The rest of the trip was spent learning



Gayle Farrell and Lisa Farrell learned to cook Italian meals while their husbands were busy on bicycle trips.

about Italian culture, sharing amazing food and visiting small towns. On the last evening of the trip, the couples gathered at dinner. Jeff thanked Brian for creating lifelong memories.

"We said, who would have thought 40 years ago, we'd be in Italy, riding with each other and our hero. It was such a euphoric high and a



Jeff, Gayle, Brian and Lisa Farrell took a trip to Tuscany, Italy.

special trip. We were fortunate to pull it off and have the means to do it."

As Brian ponders his next trip, he says he and Jeff want to return to Italy again before their cycling buddy, Andy, retires.

"That's on my bucket list now — to go back and ride with him one last time." ■

PROUD TO BE VOTED



FAVORITE

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BENEFITS of a special needs trust

Social benefit programs designed to help people with disabilities typically have restrictions on how much money the beneficiary can have. Caps on monthly income and total assets owned are a major restriction on parents trying to complete an estate plan.



Leaving money directly to a child with disabilities will jeopardize the ability to receive any help from means-tested government programs like Social Security's Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Medicaid (Title XIX). A special needs trust can be the answer for parents.

A special needs trust (SNT) can hold money given to or inherited by a disabled individual. Because the SNT owns the assets, the assets are excluded from asset limit tests for

SSI or Medicaid. The trust can fund quality-of-life improvements for the beneficiary not covered by Medicaid. The SNT is also a way to ensure that other family members — like the siblings of the individual with a disability — aren't left with the responsibility and cost of lifelong care.

The SNT must be drafted so that a beneficiary cannot direct distributions from the trust; the distributions must be purely discretionary. There are restrictions on how the money in the trust can be used. There are also reporting requirements to the State. The existence of a trust of any kind must be disclosed for eligibility purposes, but a properly drafted SNT will keep assets excluded from resource calculations.

Most importantly, the SNT must be drafted so that it avoids any Medicaid payback through Estate Recovery when the beneficiary dies. Standard language that is found in other

trusts (like a typical minor child trust or a revocable living trust) risks making the entire balance of the SNT subject to repayment for Medicaid costs.

Choosing a trustee who can not only manage funds but also predict the needs and challenges of the beneficiary can be tricky. The trustee needs to understand the specific guidelines under which the SNT can operate.

Because every state has its own system for administering disability benefits, the SNT must be tailored to match those state-specific rules. The SNT is a highly specialized legal document that requires knowledge of local Medicaid rules and Federal Social Security law. If you have questions, contact an attorney who specializes in estate planning and planning for clients with special needs. ■

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

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BANK IOWA honors Gagne on his retirement

Bank Iowa Chief Lending Officer Bob Gagne retired from Bank Iowa on Feb. 2. He led the \$2 billion community bank's lending team from the West Des Moines headquarters for more than six years.

"Bob joined the bank in 2017 with a wealth of experience to help Bank Iowa, and specifically our lending teams," said Bank Iowa President/CEO Jim Plagge.

"He was instrumental in the rollout of our business development culture, which has empowered our lenders to bring about historic loan growth. Credit quality has also improved under Bob's leadership. Bob is leaving the bank in an excellent position to continue on our path to growth, helping more Iowans achieve their financial goals."

"I will miss the interactions with our customers and the business development meetings with prospects," said Gagne. "I have great admiration and respect for Iowa entrepreneurs and have always enjoyed watching them strategize and grow to achieve success."



ROCK VALLEY, WDM Physical Therapy join forces

Two clinics under the West Des Moines Physical Therapy umbrella have joined the Rock Valley Physical Therapy family. West Des Moines Physical Therapy, 3701 E.P. True Parkway, Suite 300, and Pleasant Hill Physical Therapy, 1280 Copper Creek Drive, united under the Rock Valley banner March 4.

"West Des Moines Physical Therapy has been on an amazing journey over the last 12 years," said company founder Erich Ottervanger, PT, DPT. "I have enjoyed the patient care, growing the clinic, and developing strong therapists. West Des Moines Physical Therapy means so much to me, so it was extremely important to find a trusted partner in our community who has the same values and ethics when it comes to patient care."

"West Des Moines Physical Therapy and Pleasant Hill Physical Therapy share the same vision for taking care of our communities," said Rock Valley Physical Therapy's Stephanie Kelsick, PT, OCS, CSCS, regional manager. "We look forward to continued commitment to our values of excellence and dedication to our patients, providers and communities, while expanding our geographic reach and sharing enhanced expertise."

West Des Moines Physical Therapy and Pleasant Hill Physical Therapy's work in chronic pain, Ehlers-Danlos syndrome, hypermobility syndromes, pediatrics, sports injuries and warm water aquatics, will continue to be service-related staples. The two clinics take great pride in being a strong resource for patients with more difficult and complex clinical presentations. ■



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LIBRARY

By Maggie Martin,
Library Information Coordinator

BLOOD PRESSURE monitors now available for checkout



The WDM Public Library is proud to partner with the American Heart Association on their "Libraries with Heart" initiative. Through this program, patrons can now check out one of three blood pressure monitor kits to track their heart health.

Each kit includes a blood pressure monitor and cuff, an instruction manual, a quick start guide and an American Stroke Association pamphlet.

These kits can be checked out at the second floor adult services desk for three weeks with your WDM library card. Additionally, there will be a model on display to try out at the desk.

Upcoming event highlights

Reminder: The library will be closed on Sunday, March 31, for the Easter holiday.

• **Iowa Files: Lewis and Clark in Iowa**, Sunday, March 17, 2:30-3:30 p.m. (adults). "Lewis and Clark in Iowa" begins with the story before the expedition: the sale of the Louisiana Purchase to the United States. Additionally, the audience will be exposed to the many "firsts" that occurred in Iowa, the true peril of this journey and the return of Lewis and Clark to civilization at the journey's end. No registration required.

• **Family Night at the Library: BINGO!** Monday, March 18, 6:30-7:30 p.m. (all ages). Join us this month to play bingo as a family. During Library BINGO, everyone leaves a winner. Register each person attending (children and adults).

• **Mary Seifert: A Personal Path to Publishing**, Monday, March 25, 6:30-7:30 p.m. (adults). Join us for a presentation by author Mary Seifert. She has written the "Katie and Maverick Cozy Mysteries" series, which are set in outstate Minnesota. You may recognize her name, as she taught computer science at Valley High School. No registration required. ■

BOOSTER club supports Valley drama programs

Supports plays, musicals, mimes and speech events

The Valley Drama Booster Club (VDBC) consists of parents supporting students in drama at Valley High School.

The club is comprised of parents and school directors supporting four aspects of student drama, including plays, musicals, mimes and Iowa High School Speech Association events.

Their support is key to helping raise funds for costumes, purchase rights to scripts, props and more. Sally Rindfuss and her husband, Steve, are co-presidents and joined the club when their daughter was in ninth grade.

"It helps me to know how a program can be successful for my child," she says.

Sally adds, the club helps to offset costs associated with putting on productions so they do not have to rely on school funding to put on a "spectacular" show.

"Drama events don't bring in as much revenue as sports does," she explains. "We want to help out with events for kids to be successful in their productions or events."

Members meet monthly to discuss ways to support students in drama. They also bring in student officers to provide a student voice to the meetings.

Each play or musical includes about 300 kids, IHSSA events draw 150 students and mime has about 15 participants, although some numbers overlap with kids in multiple events.

The booster club sends out emails and signups for volunteer needs and donations.

"We ask parents to reach out to companies to see if they can do a matching donation as well," Sally says.

Fundraising is all in-house.

"We don't do outside fundraising, such as butter braids. We rely on community and parent support to fund these programs," Sally says.

Each student involved in a play pays a small costume or prop fee. If students are unable to

pay, the VDBC covers those costs.

In previous years, the school has rented costumes. However, since the director is a seamstress, the students have learned how to sew costumes on donated sewing machines.

"It's a great teaching opportunity for kids. Sewing our own saves money on costumes," Sally explains.

VDBC also hosts state competitions, IHSSA events and concession stands. This allows them to keep funds from previous years to offset costs and pad funds.

Sally encourages parents, grandparents and the community to help support the arts.

"Contact a booster to see where to help out or donate. By attending the shows, it brings money into the drama program," she says.

Sally invites the public to this year's musical production, Rogers and Hammerstein's "Cinderella" on April 26, 27 and 28.

For Cinderella tickets, visit <https://tickets.midwestix.com/events/20461>. For more information on Valley Drama, visit www.valleydrama.com. ■

Check for cancellations

Iowa Files: Lewis & Clark in Iowa

Sunday, March 17, 2:30-3:30 p.m.
West Des Moines Public Library,
4000 Mills Civic Parkway

"Lewis and Clark in Iowa" begins with the story before the expedition: the sale of the Louisiana Purchase to the United States. Tracing the 1803 course from Elizabeth, Pennsylvania, to St. Charles, Missouri, Donald Shurr discusses the background of the many "players" of the expedition including York, the engagés and Seaman. Moving up the Missouri River, focus shifts to events occurring in Iowa such as the death of Sgt. Floyd. The audience will be exposed to the many "firsts" that occurred in Iowa, the true peril of this journey and the return of Lewis and Clark to civilization at the journey's end. Programs are in person and can be watched live on the West Des Moines Historical Society YouTube Channel or Facebook Page.



Youth Justice Initiative Trivia Night fundraiser

April 16, 5:30-9 p.m.
The Hall, 111 S. 11th St., West Des Moines

This fundraiser is held in partnership with the West Des Moines Leadership Academy class of 2024. Trivia, silent auction, food and drink are featured. Trivia starts promptly at 6 p.m. For tickets and to donate, visit <https://givebutter.com/friendsofyji>.

Exclusive Meet Your Legislators Roundtable

Friday, March 22, 2-3 p.m.
West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce, 650 S. Prairie View Drive, No. 110

Join the West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce and its new government affairs committee called Civic Connect. This is a nonpartisan group of leaders and connectors who help to provide access, information and proactive engagement that enhances the economic environment of West Des Moines businesses and community. The group's first event features State Rep. David Young on March 22 from 2-3 p.m. at the WDM Chamber of Commerce Offices. Register at <https://members.wdmchamber.org/events/details/exclusive-meet-your-legislators-roundtable-3643?lookahead=365>.

Chamber Annual Dinner

Thursday, May 16, 5-9 p.m.
Reservation deadline Friday, May 10, 5 p.m.
Val Air Ballroom, 301 Ashworth Road, West Des Moines

Save the date for the West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce's 2024 Annual Dinner, commemorating 100 years of the chamber. This year's theme is "Roaring '20s: The West is Yet to Come," a community celebration featuring a live band, casino entertainment and other surprises. To register, visit <https://wdmchamber.org/events/annual-dinner/>.

Memorial Day Remembrance Ceremony

Monday, May 27, 11 a.m.
Resthaven Cemetery, 801 19th St., West Des Moines

This event is held outside so bringing a lawn chair is recommended. Music will be provided by Greater Des Moines Community Band.

2024 Solid Waste Events for WDM residents

- **April 1, Yard waste pickup begins** on normal trash collection day. Ends Nov. 30.
- **April 12, Scrap tire drop off**, 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., West Des Moines Public Services East, 560 S. 16th St.
- **May 23: National Public Works Week Celebration**, 4-7 p.m. Valley Junction Farmer's Market.
- **June 3-7: Spring cleanup on regular trash day**. Watch for details. No appliances accepted (see June 8 event).
- **June 8: Scrap appliance, metal drop off**, 8 a.m. to noon, West Des Moines Public Services East, 560 S. 16th St.



Gary's Ride

Saturday, May 18, 10 a.m.
Waukee Raccoon River Valley Trailhead

Gary's Ride is a fundraiser for MercyOne Richard Deming Cancer Center for terminal brain cancer patients. Riders and non riders are invited to the celebration at the end of the ride at the Handlebar Restaurant in Dallas Center. It will feature great food, vendors and entertainment for the whole family. For more information and to register, visit garysrideiowa.org.

Applications accepted for Leadership Academy

Deadline to apply is May 31

The West Des Moines Leadership Academy, a program of the West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce, announced the opening of applications for the 2024-25 program. The West Des Moines Leadership program is designed to help aspiring leaders develop their leadership skills and capabilities to make a positive impact on the community.

The Leadership Academy is an intensive nine-month program that provides participants with practical training, hands-on experience, and access to industry experts. The program includes modules on leadership styles, team building, communication, decision-making, and more. Participants will also influence the future of West Des Moines through strategic leadership development and workforce retention. For more information, visit <https://wdmchamber.org/programs/wdm-leadership-academy/>.

Check for cancellations

Events at The Brenton Arboretum

The Brenton Arboretum, 25141 260th St., Dallas Center

For more information or to register, visit www.thebrentonarboretum.org/events.

- Wednesdays, March 20, 27, 10-11 a.m., Nature's Healing.
- March 21 and April 4 and 18, Nature Club, varying times. Register by age group.
- April 21, noon to 3 p.m., Earth Day Celebrations; 1-3 p.m., Exploratory Beekeeping.
- April 27, 7 a.m., Birds & Bagels.



St. Patrick's Day Parade

March 16, noon
Grand Avenue, downtown Des Moines
www.friendlysonsiowa.com

The Friendly Sons of St. Patrick brings Des Moines its St. Patrick's Day parade, this year with a new route. The parade will proceed south on Robert D. Ray Drive to Grand Avenue and then west to Eighth Street with the parade officially ending at Eighth and Grand Avenue.



Des Moines St. Paddy's Marathon

March 16
E. Locust Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, Des Moines
iowaruns.com/desmoinesstpaddys5k

A marathon, half-marathon and 5K will be offered. All finishers will receive a 2024 pint glass, a finisher medal for all half-marathon and marathon runners, and the chance to celebrate eight years of the Des Moines St. Paddy's Race.



Des Moines Comic and Toy Show

March 23-24
Merle Hay Mall, 3800 Merle Hay Road, Des Moines
quadcitycon.com

This free event will be inside Merle Hay Mall. Quadcon is planning on having 100 vendor and artist spots, so get ready to get your steps in to see the available cards, comics, posters, toys, games and art.

The Grimes Business Expo

Tuesday, March 26, 4:30-6:30 p.m.
Meadows Gymnasium, 2555 W. First St., Grimes

The public is invited to the 14th year of the Business Expo. Check out some local businesses and what they have to offer. Look for plenty of free goodies from Grimes Chamber member businesses, a face painter, and a balloon artist. Free admission and kids are welcome.



All Iowa Auto Show

March 15-17
730 Third St., Des Moines
usatventures.com/expos/auto/iowa/#

The All Iowa Auto Show features dozens of manufacturers and auto dealers displaying brand new makes and models under one roof.



Judy Niemack jazz concert

Sunday, March 17, 2 p.m.
Caspe Terrace, 33158 Ute Ave., Waukee

Jazz critic Dan Morgenstern said it best — "If you want to know what real jazz singing can be (but rarely is), listen to Judy Niemack." Niemack has perfected her beautiful voice, fearless improvisational skills, impressive musicianship and exceptional versatility for more than 40 years and on many critically-acclaimed recordings. She also enjoys a worldwide reputation as a jazz vocal teacher and author of several "must-have" vocal jazz improvisation books. Niemack will be accompanied by pianist John DiMartino, who appeared at Caspe Terrace several years ago with vocalist Jay Clayton. For more information and tickets, visit <https://jazzatcaspe.weebly.com/tickets.html>. ■

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RECIPE

EASY Easter eats

(Family Features) Even if Easter hosting duties fell on your plate this year and added one more thing to your holiday to-do list, that doesn't mean it has to be difficult. After all, Easter is a time meant for fun and fellowship with the food just one part of the celebration.

Building the menu around simple, one-pan dishes can keep the focus where it needs to be: spending time and creating memories with family and friends. These dishes call for short lists of ingredients, many of which you may already have in your pantry, and simple preparation to create a full spread perfect for sharing with loved ones. Plus, using only one pan makes cleanup a breeze, so you can get back to the festivities quickly.

A dish like this Easter roast lets you check both the main course and side dishes off your list, relying on the oven to do most of the work for you after some quick prep work.

For more Easter recipe inspiration, visit Culinary.net. ■

Easter roast

Yield: 1 roast

- Salt
- pepper
- garlic powder
- 1 roast (3 pounds)
- 1 bag (1 pound) baby carrots
- 1 bag (1 1/2 pounds) trio potatoes or potato of choice
- 3 cups beef broth
- 1 can (10 ounces) cream of mushroom soup
- 1 tablespoon garlic pepper
- 3 tablespoons brown sugar
- 1 onion, roughly chopped
- 1 bundle asparagus

Directions

- Preheat oven to 350 F.
- Sprinkle salt, pepper and garlic powder over roast and rub into front, back and sides. Place seasoned roast in middle of large roasting pan.



- Place carrots on one side of roasting pan and potatoes on other side.
- In large bowl, mix beef broth and cream of mushroom soup with garlic pepper. Pour mixture over roast, potatoes and carrots. Sprinkle brown sugar over carrots and add chopped onion. Cover and cook 2 1/2 hours then remove from oven, add asparagus and cook uncovered 30 minutes.
- Serve from pan or place on platter for more formal presentation.

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RECIPE

BLUEBERRY crumble

(Family Features) Finish off your feast with an adaptable dessert like this blueberry crumble. Made using just five ingredients and ready in about an hour, you can swap the blueberry pie filling and yellow cake mix for any combination that suits your guests' tastes like apple pie filling with spice cake or cherry pie filling with chocolate cake; the sky's the limit when it comes to satisfying that sweet tooth. ■

Yield: 1 cake

- 1 can blueberry pie filling
- 1 box yellow cake mix
- 1 bag (4 ounces) chopped pecans
- 1 stick butter, melted
- 1/4 cup oil
- whipped cream, for serving (optional)
- vanilla ice cream, for serving (optional)

Directions

- Preheat oven to 350 F.
- Spread pie filling on bottom of 9-by-11-inch pan. Sprinkle cake mix and pecans on top. Do not mix.
- Drizzle melted butter and oil on top of cake mix and pecans.
- Do not mix. Lift pan and tilt from side to side until cake mix is completely covered in butter.
- Bake 1 hour until golden brown and bubbly.
- Serve with whipped cream or vanilla ice cream, if desired. ■



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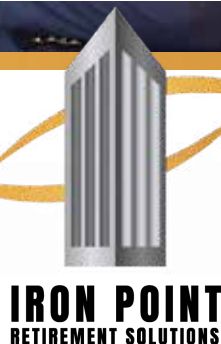
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POSSIBLE changes to breast cancer screening coverage

In today's society, women's preventive health and access to quality healthcare have become increasingly important. With the right combination of preventive measures and adequate health insurance coverage, women can take control of their health and ensure timely detection, treatment and survival.

While preventive health measures play a vital role in breast cancer management, access to adequate health insurance is equally crucial. Without insurance coverage, many women may forego or delay necessary screenings and treatments, putting their health at risk. Fortunately, the Affordable Care Act (ACA) has made significant strides in ensuring that preventive services, including mammograms and other screenings, are fully covered by most health insurance plans.

The American Cancer Society states:

- Women who have dense breast tissue have a higher risk of breast cancer.
- Dense breast tissue also makes it harder for radiologists to see cancer on mammograms. Dense (fibrous and glandular) breast tissue looks white on a mammogram. Breast masses and cancers can also look white, so the dense tissue can make it harder to see them. In contrast,



fatty tissue looks almost black on a mammogram, so it's easier to see a tumor that looks white if most of the breast is fat tissue.

Women with dense breast tissue may be asked to return for a second mammogram or an ultrasound. These additional tests usually have a cost because they are considered diagnostic not preventative.

The Iowa Army of Pink has requested Iowa SF 2358. This bill, if passed, would require coverage for supplemental evaluation and diagnostic examinations to be the same as screening mammograms. This would eliminate any cost share for the patient after a proposed effective date of Jan. 1, 2025. In February 2024, the bill passed the Iowa House with 97-0 votes and is intended to go to the Iowa Senate in early March 2024.

The Iowa Army of Pink worked on the Iowa's Breast Density Inform Law, which was signed by Governor Branstad and put into effect Nov. 15, 2017. Information regarding breast density is now included in the mammogram result letter mailed to the patient. Source: www.iowabreastdensity.com

Other bills introduced in Iowa are Senate File 2363 regarding prevention of ovarian cancer and Senate File 2159 regarding biomarker testing. ■

Information provided by Laura Patton, FHIAS, Patton Insurance Benefits, 1112 Maple St., West Des Moines, 515-270-8178.

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'An Education in Malice'

Is it weird that I wish I had been sent away to boarding school? I've read so many books about people having strange and fantastic adventures when sent to some gothic revival mansion in the deep woods, I feel like I missed something important at my run-of-the-mill school. At least I have the wildly popular dark academia genre to help me cope with my dull youth.

Laura Sheridan leaves her stifling childhood behind to attend a prestigious and secretive writing program at a mysterious east coast college. The normally introverted and awkward Laura soon finds herself drawn to Carmilla, a darkly beautiful and brilliant classmate she despises, at first. Both young women are soon caught under the spell of an enigmatic poetry professor who revels in their rivalry and encourages their adoration. The enemies quickly become something more intense as political and supernatural mysteries twist and turn their youthful naivete into something darker.

Lush, haunting and perfectly paced, this is a beautiful and unsettling story that wasn't nearly long enough. I recommend this to anyone who needs a little passion and intrigue in their life, or if your memories of school are as boring as mine. ■ — *Review by Julie Goodrich*



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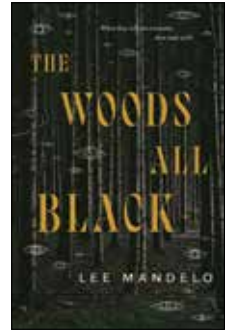
'The Woods All Black'

Appalachian horror is having a moment, and I am loving every second. There are threads of Shirley Jackson, William Faulkner and even Stephen King woven into this tale of a community gone bad. This twisted, dark novella is full of monsters — most, but not all, of them human.

It's the 1920s, and the frontier nursing service sends Leslie, a war-weary nurse, to Spar Creek to provide the backwater with the standard medical care they desperately need. Upon arrival, he finds a town on the verge of horrific violence in the name of religion. Acting quickly and with no regard for the horrors that await him, he tries to save a child with the unfortunate affliction of being different.

This is an unrelenting, high-speed thriller with a cast of complex characters who are still living in my brain. For a story set more than 100 years ago, it feels startlingly modern and serves not just as a cautionary tale but a grisly reminder of both the cost and value of being yourself, social pressure be damned. ■

— *Review by Julie Goodrich*



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ASTRONAUT Kilrain to speak at ciWeek

Shares her story of daring to dream



Astronaut, Navy test pilot and aerospace engineer Susan Kilrain will speak at DMACC's ciLive on April 4.



"Dare to dream."

"Do something out of the ordinary."

These phrases permeated Susan Kilrain's career as a Navy pilot and astronaut.

By daring to dream, she became the youngest woman and only one of three women to pilot the Space Shuttle Columbia.

By doing something out of the ordinary, she was one of the first few women in the Navy to fly an F-14 Tomcat and logged more than 3,000 flight hours.

An extraordinary astronaut, Navy test pilot and aerospace engineer, Kilrain overcame obstacles in her varied and decorated career.

The public is invited to listen to her speak at DMACC's ciLive (Celebrate Innovation Live) on April 4. Kilrain is one of eight speakers at the annual event with the theme, "No Limits." She will share her story of encouraging people — especially young girls — to follow their dreams.

When she was young, Kilrain wanted to be a hairdresser. As a teenager, a pilot. However, her path started out as an engineer.

"There were no other women in my college

classes. I was the only woman engineer in the whole building," she recalls.

She joined the Navy and learned how to fly. Once again, she was the only woman.

"It was challenging to bust through stereotypes of women. Some people obviously thought I didn't belong. I always had someone in my corner. I thought of giving up. But my goal was still obtainable," she recalls.

Kilrain credits her mindset to attaining her dream.

"My mindset was that I could do as well as anyone else," she says. "Women tend to doubt themselves if they aren't the absolute best. There's room for mediocrity for men, but not for women. It shouldn't be that way. Most people are middle of the road," she explains.

She's encouraging young girls to pursue STEM careers and wrote a children's book, "Unlikely Astronaut."

"The message applies to anybody. If a young skinny girl can grow up to be an astronaut, you can, too," Kilrain says. "Nothing was handed to me."

She overcame many obstacles and received

numerous accolades, yet says her greatest accomplishment was raising four children.

"Motherhood was harder than anything, including flying the space shuttle," she says.

Kilrain is writing a second book, offering tools for women in male-dominated fields. She suggested anyone first get an education, learn the art of public speaking and find mentors of any gender.

She says she is seeing a huge transformation with more women in the Navy.

"The airplane doesn't know the gender of the person sitting in the seat," she says. "Dare to dream applies to every age, group and background. It's got to start with a dream."

For more information on DMACC ciLive, visit <https://internal.dmacc.edu/ciweek/Pages/welcome.aspx>. ■



BONDING with your four-legged friend

(Family Features) Your dog may be one of your best friends, but that bond doesn't happen overnight. Investing in quality one-on-one time can have a big impact on the bond you build with your four-legged companion.

One of the best ways to show dogs love is by keeping them healthy and spending quality time with them. Dedication time every day to your dog's wellbeing can help establish a connection, give you opportunities to express affection and foster shared bonding moments.

Training

Teaching your dog obedience isn't just about eliminating undesirable behaviors. Training allows you to clearly communicate your expectations to your dog. It also builds your dog's confidence through positive feedback received after mastering a command or new trick. Most dogs thrive on meeting their owners' expectations, so consistent commands they can recognize and follow help deepen your connection.

Another way to build trust through behavior training is establishing regular routines. Giving your dog a clear set of expectations helps build mutual trust. You can create routines around the key milestones of each day, such as mealtimes, walks and bedtime.

Grooming

Some pets love bathtime; others avoid it at all costs. Either way, you can make the experience more rewarding for you and your pet if you use it as an opportunity to spend some quality time together and shower your pet with extra affection.

Many pets are especially sensitive to grooming near their eyes, but keeping the eyes clean and free of dirt and buildup may help reduce the risk of infection, reduce tear stains and support your dog's eye health. Consider options like Project Watson eye wash for dogs, which comes in an easy-to-use bottle with a tip that allows for a steady stream of solution to use alone or by soaking a clean washcloth. Made with naturally inspired, high-quality ingredients, the eye wash is designed to match the pH of a dog's eye and help remove dried mucous, foreign materials, pollen and other irritants.

Between grooming sessions, you can also clean your dog's eyes with eyelid wipes. The wipes, which are part of the Project Watson line of dog



Photo courtesy of Shutterstock

care products developed by the experts at Bausch + Lomb and evaluated by veterinarians, are formulated with micellar technology that cleanses and hydrates around the eyes while helping remove excess buildup associated with irritated, dry eyes. The gentle formula is paraben free, pH-balanced and fragrance free, made to mimic the ingredients found in natural tears and provide a soothing, gentle cleaning.

Exercise

Your dog needs daily exercise, just like you. Make your workouts do double duty by taking your dog along for a walk or jog. Just be sure to match your workout level to your pet's abilities; just like humans, dogs need to build up endurance before tackling an extended route. Also be mindful of the terrain and ensure your pet's paws are safe from potential risks like sharp or abrasive surfaces and extreme heat or cold.

Down time

While dogs need plenty of practical attention and structure, some of the best bonding comes from letting loose and simply enjoying interacting with your pooch. That might mean wrestling with a favorite toy, throwing a ball or just snuggling on the couch with plenty of petting and scratches.

For more suggestions to keep your four-legged friend happy and healthy, speak with your veterinarian or visit tryprojectwatson.com. ■

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HEALTH By Ashley Powell

THERAPEUTIC synergy of CBD and THC



As March unfolds, explore the therapeutic synergy of CBD and THC from the hemp plant. CBD is renowned for anxiety relief, while THC offers unique benefits. Research suggests the entourage effect, enhancing outcomes when both compounds are used together. This synergy may provide a broader range of therapeutic benefits compared to isolating each cannabinoid. CBD, known for its non-psychoactive nature, is popular for managing anxiety, promoting relaxation, and supporting overall wellbeing. THC, with psychoactive properties, shows promise for addressing chronic pain, nausea and appetite loss. Balancing CBD and THC allows for tailored cannabinoid intake to meet specific needs. For those seeking pain or inflammation relief, a balanced CBD-THC product may be particularly beneficial. As spring brings renewal, now is an ideal time to delve into the harmonious relationship between CBD and THC. March offers an opportune moment to embrace the holistic potential of these plant compounds for a well-rounded approach to wellness. Visit a local CBD store and consult with a certified hemp consultant to gain insights into the dynamic benefits of CBD and THC tailored to your individual wellness needs. Whether you are a seasoned enthusiast or a newcomer to cannabinoids, this exploration can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of their therapeutic potential. ■

Information provided by Ashley Powell, CBD American Shaman, 800 S. 50th St., No. 106, West Des Moines, 515-380-5251, and 3418 Eighth St. S.W., No. 3, Altoona, 515-967-4036. Russo, E. B. (2011). Taming THC: Potential Cannabis Synergy and Phytocannabinoid-Terpenoid. Entourage Effects. British Journal of Pharmacology.

HEALTH By Elijah Evans

EMOTIONAL granularity



The way we describe our emotions has a strong influence on how much relief we get from talking about them. For instance, simply acknowledging "I was mad" isn't likely to change our feelings much, whereas something more specific has a much higher likelihood of creating insight and consolation, such as: "I felt disrespected because I had previously explained why I didn't want a surprise birthday party, so when my friends threw me one anyway, it seemed like they were disregarding my wishes, on my birthday of all days. It also made me worried I couldn't trust them to respect my feelings going forward." Lisa Feldman Barrett explains this phenomenon in her book "How Emotions Are Made," and she terms it emotional granularity. She also explains research she has carried out showing that, when people use more specificity (higher emotional granularity), this has the effect of heightening positive emotions and down-regulating the intensity of negative ones. Therefore, a simple (but not always easy) principle for enhancing our emotional wellness is pushing ourselves to be more detailed in how we label and explain our feelings. If this is something you are struggling to do on your own, a licensed mental health professional can help expand your emotional vocabulary and understand the source of troubling feelings. ■

Information provided by Elijah Evans, LMHC, SS Therapy and Consulting, Ltd, 4725 Merle Hay Road, Suite 205, Des Moines, IA 50322, 515-528-8135, evans@sstherapyandconsulting.com, www.sstherapyandconsulting.com.

WELLNESS

By Kristen Shelton and Amanda Kramme

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Information provided by Vivid Wellness Lounge, 1980 N.W. 94th St., Suite E/F Clive. Call or book your HBOT treatment today, Livin-Vivid.com, 515-415-1550.

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PLAN AHEAD

By Kathy Dunbar

IT TRULY starts with a simple conversation

Addressing one's own final arrangements can seem like an overwhelming task. There are many important decisions that need to be considered. It sometimes just seems to be easier to think about it another day. However, by doing this, it remains on your "to-do" list.

What people do not always realize is that the advanced planning process starts with a simple conversation.

An advanced planning counselor will guide you through all of the options available and help you with planning the final arrangements that are right for you.

We find that most of the people we meet with find the process to be surprisingly pleasant and are relieved to have it done.

As one client wrote after meeting with one of our staff members, "It was a joyful experience. I can honestly say that it was fun to think about how I would like to be remembered. I want my loved ones to have a chance to say good-bye and then live on with happy memories of our times together."

It doesn't cost anything to start the conversation, and you may find yourself happy that you did. ■



Information provided by Kathy Dunbar, Advanced Planning Counselor, Hamilton's on Westtown Parkway, 3601 Westtown Parkway, West Des Moines, IA 50266, 515-697-3681

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GIRLS. Bees. Poor Things. And A Missing Apostle.

So, how were your holidays? See any good movies? Me neither! I am somewhat joking on that one, but I was not blown away by much that I saw. We tend to expect high-impact movies during the holiday season. This one came up short.

Meanwhile, we trudge forward into 2024, eagerly awaiting "Dune Part 2" on March 1. If you didn't see the original, you only have a short time to catch up. Watch it on the biggest television in your house, and you will be blown away.

Alright, let's catch up.



"MEAN GIRLS" (in theaters)

I loved the original movie and was looking forward to what I thought was an update. I was wrong. It is a film version of the award-winning Broadway play. So you know the story, but every once in a while they stop to break into song and dance. It is still a lot of fun, just not quite as much as I was hoping for. **Grade: B**



"THE BEEKEEPER" (in theaters)

I like Jason Statham, but the man makes some stupid action movies. That being said, he does make a good one every once in a while. Based on the box office draw, I'm not alone in saying that "The Beekeeper" is one of his better, maybe his best? He is retired military and minding his own business in the back of a rented barn. His business is honey and keeping a few beehives. When a scam caller takes all of

the money from the old woman he rents from, Statham is on the trail immediately and, let me tell you, he is unhappy. No one is going to stop him from catching these idiots. From there we get lots of punches, kicks, gunshots and a kitchen sink. It is non-stop action with a flimsy story but enough to keep you entertained. The action is great, the bad guys are really slimy, and you will relish the butt-kicking you get to watch. The box office has been brisk, so this will likely not be the last time we see this beekeeper. **Grade: B-**



"I.S.S."

The International Space Station is the setting for this movie that tells the story of an American crew that joins the Russians at the Space Station for a joint venture. When huge trouble on Earth strikes, both teams are told to take over the station. An action film in a tight situation in space always proves to be fun. It is not a great film, but it has enough moments for me to mildly recommend it. **Grade: C+**



"POOR THINGS"

This film is by director Yorgos Lanthimos, who gave us "The Lobster" and "The Killing of a Sacred Deer," two movies I reluctantly suffered through. His new film, "Poor Things," has received the same type of praise as those earlier films, and I will respectfully disagree. The cast includes Willem Dafoe, Mark Ruffalo and a brilliant (and Oscar-nominated) Emma Stone in a film that defies description — and that's not

a good thing. It is dark and disturbing but also tries to be funny. Let's just agree to disagree.

Grade: D-



"SOCIETY OF THE SNOW"

You can find this one on Netflix. It's a remake of the true and harrowing story of a plane full of rugby players who crash in the Andes mountains. There was a movie titled "Alive" years ago that tackled this same story but not nearly as well. Both movies are good, but this one ramps it up yet tempers itself in certain areas that are controversial. This is well made and enthralling, to say the least. **Grade: A-**



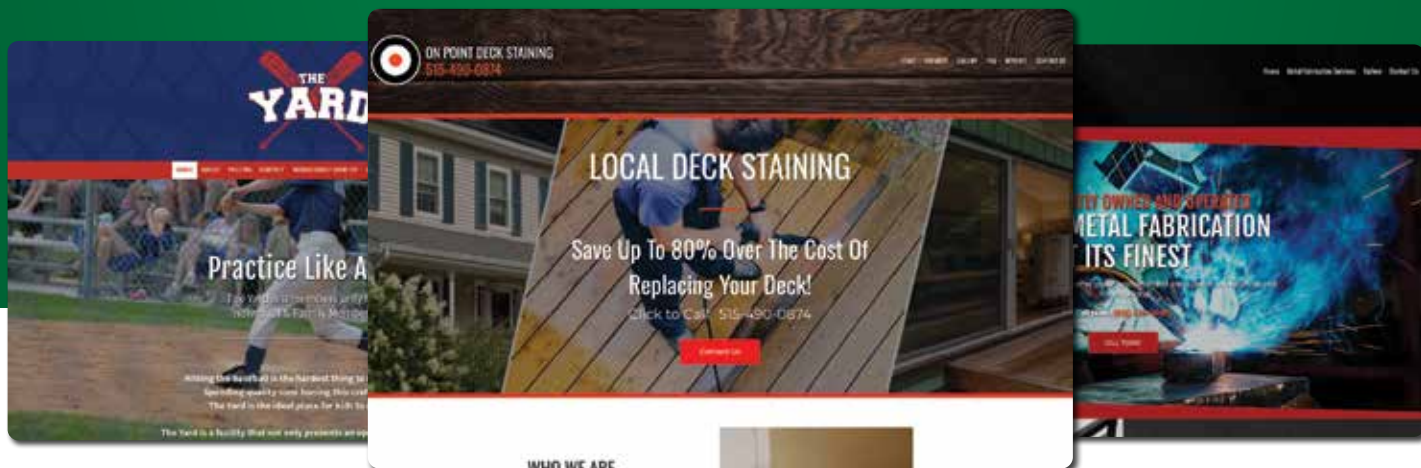
"THE BOOK OF CLARENCE"

My Catholic education failed to clue me in on this missing Apostle who has quite a bit to do and quite a bit to say. It is a thought-provoking and well-produced film that will challenge you and might even start some very interesting conversations. **Grade: B+ ■**

Michael C. Woody has been reviewing movies on radio and television since 1986 and can be heard talking movies every Wednesday afternoon at 2:30 p.m. on KXn0 106.3 with Keith Murphy and Andy Fales. You can also follow him on Twitter @MrMovieDSM.

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RIBBON Cutting

West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Nakata Dojo on Feb. 7.



West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Nakata Dojo on Feb. 7.



Tiffany Menke and Jay Mathes



Urbandale Mayor Bob Andeweg and Kenji Nakata



Seiken Nakata and Eiko



Kamsa Thephavong, Jane Pathways and Aaron Colyer



Stephenie Wright, Joseph Tschirren and Rhiannon Thompson



Frank Hanson and Charity Baird



Rob Reinard and Connie Blodgett



MJ Johnson and Courtney Guein

OUT & ABOUT

RIBBON

Cutting

West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Val Air Ballroom on Feb. 25.



West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Val Air Ballroom on Feb. 25.



Dillon Malone and Amy Luong



Kathy and Lee Hecker



Betty, Sarah and Phil Borzo



Becki Plunkett and Dave Zuck



Diane Bjorholm, LJ Early and Suzy Schoofs



Luis Castaneda and Giselle Cruz



Steve Berry and Cindy and Al Andrew



Chris and Jenifer Owenson



Trey and Blaise Wittern

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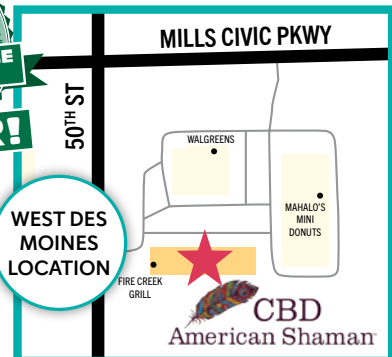

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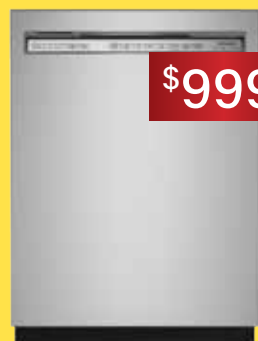
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