

NORWALK

MARCH 2024

Living

MAGAZINE

Trip OF A lifetime

Residents share stories of their
dreams-come-true vacations

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RECIPE

Meet Jenn McLaughlin

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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. ■

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FDIC

Trip OF A lifetime

**Residents share stories of their
dreams-come-true vacations**

By Chantel Boyd

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.

Michael Rozendaal and his son, Derek Rozendaal, took a once-in-a-lifetime trip to Peru to visit Machu Picchu in the Andes Mountains.

FEATURE

A pilgrimage

In the fall of 2022, Julie Kordick saw hundreds of miles of Spain up close on a pilgrimage.

"I walked 420 miles from Lisbon, Portugal, to Santiago, Spain, doing the Camino de Santiago."

Julie made the trek with her sister-in-law, Donna Herring.

In English, "Camino de Santiago" translates to "the way of St. James." It is a network of pilgrimages leading to the shrine of the apostle James in the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Galicia in northwestern Spain, where tradition holds that the apostle's remains are buried.

The walk took Julie and Donna 30 days to complete.

"We did the Portuguese route of the Camino de Santiago," Julie says. "I had read about the Camino, and it was something I felt called to do."

The two received help planning their trip from a local resource.

"The Iowa Chapter of American Pilgrims on the Camino was a great resource for help with the planning and advice. We spent a year planning and training for our adventure," Julie says.

Julie and Donna began their journey at the Cathedral in Lisbon, Portugal, and averaged about 15 miles daily for the 30 days, following the trail that many have taken for hundreds of years.

They tried to pack lightly, knowing they had to carry their



Sisters-in-law Julie Kordick and Donna Herring at the destination of their pilgrimage: the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Galicia in northwestern Spain.



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belongings for hundreds of miles.

"We carried everything we needed in our backpacks and stayed in albergues (hostels) along the way," Julie says. "Occasionally, we would splurge for a private room and bath."

For the excursion, pilgrims are given a passport to record their travels.

"Every pilgrim carries a pilgrim passport," she says. "We would get two stamps daily in the passport to document our journey. Stamps could be received at churches, albergues and some restaurants."

The passports were then presented at the end of their journey.

"When we arrived at the Cathedral in Santiago, we had to show our pilgrim passport," says Julie, adding that the passports were verified before they were issued certificates for completing the trek.

Julie and Donna walked through large, busy cities as well as small villages along the way.

"We journeyed through a wide variety of terrain, including rocky mountain trails, along the shore of the Atlantic Ocean, past large tomato fields, olive groves and vineyards," says Julie.

One of her favorite parts of the trail was walking through a eucalyptus forest. Second to that was arriving at their destination.

"The highlight was arriving at the Cathedral in Santiago and attending Mass. We could see them swing the botafumeiro, a large incenser, at 5 feet and over 100 pounds."

A trip down under

Krista Koster and her husband, Robert, went on their trip of a lifetime to the "land down under."

"My husband, Robert, and I always dreamed of traveling to Australia someday," says Krista.

The couple had discovered a shared love of the mountains as they took a few shorter, closer trips.

"Through some of our other travels, we discovered we also enjoyed the mountains, which made going to New Zealand another top choice."

For Robert's 40th birthday, the two decided to commemorate the occasion by planning their Australian vacation. Then the world shut down.

"Unfortunately, we had to postpone a few years due to COVID," says Krista.

Coincidentally, during that time, Krista's 40th birthday came around.

"We ended up planning the trip for my 40th



Krista and Robert Koster and Jeff and Ashley Dieleman on their dream vacation "down under."

birthday year," she says.

Finally, Krista and Robert were making their "someday" a reality when they planned and took their trip to Australia.

They traveled with friends Jeff and Ashley Dieleman. The couples decided to add a cruise from Australia to New Zealand.

Since the cruise left on Jan. 2, Krista and Robert decided to start a few days earlier and celebrate the New Year.

"We wanted to celebrate with one of the cities that gets to celebrate the New Year first," says Krista, adding they opted to stay in a hotel that overlooked Sydney Harbour. "We chose this location because we could view the fireworks from the comfort of our own space. It was breathtaking."

Since Krista and Robert traveled with their friends, they considered what everyone had on their wish lists.

"We each had a say in our itinerary," says Krista. "For me, seeing the kangaroos and koalas was a top priority."

Krista says she felt like a child again while on her 40th birthday trip.

"I felt so giddy going to the zoo, holding a koala and feeding the kangaroos," she says.

Besides seeing the unique animals of Australia and New Zealand, the group enjoyed the beautiful scenery.

"One of the highlights was cruising through the Fiordland National Park," says Krista, adding that the weather was perfect. "The scenery was gorgeous."

Krista and her companions explored many

local offerings when the cruise ship was docked.

"We toured wineries, went zip lining and drove on the 'wrong' side of the road," she says.

Krista and her tripmates would recommend the same trip to anyone. But they do have some advice.

"We recommend splurging just a little for more comfort on the flights. Sixteen hours is long," says Krista.

A city in the clouds

Michael Rozendaal and his son, Derek Rozendaal, took a trip of a lifetime together to Peru, South America.

"It was a 12-day trip to Machu Picchu in the Andes Mountains," says Michael.

The two planned their excursion around a multi-day hike to Machu Picchu at the beginning of June in the summer of 2023.

"The focus was to do the four-day classic hike to Machu Picchu," says Michael.

The father and son flew into Lima, Peru's largest city and capital.

"Then we took a smaller plane to the historic Inca City of Cusco in the Andes Mountains, which is 11,000 feet in elevation," says Michael.

After a day in Cusco to adjust to the altitude, Michael and Derek began the hike.

Michael planned the trip to specifically go hiking and enjoy all that the beautiful locations have to offer.

"Machu Picchu is considered one of the top five most beautiful hikes and one of the Seven Wonders of the World," he says.

FEATURE

Before and after the main hike, Michael and Derek took some side trips including one to the Huacachina Oasis in the largest desert on the continent.

"There we did sand boarding and Dune buggies," says Michael. Neither had been to South America before the trip.

"It was a chance to do an adventure together since Derek's schedule with work and as a parent leaves him little time to get away," says Michael, who is the family's trip planner. "I did a lot of research online."

Michael and Derek took the four-day hike with a local travel company specializing in Machu Picchu and other local adventures.

"It is a Peru requirement for the hike to have a travel guide," says Michael.

To test their backpacking gear and ability to hike at high altitudes, Derek and Michael did a practice weekend in the Colorado mountains a few months before.

The trip to Macchu Picchu was definitely the highlight of the trip, says Michael.

"We got up the last day of the hike early, 4 a.m., to get in line as they only allow 200 people a day to protect the area," he says.

With their headlamps on, Michael and Derek watched the sun coming up over the Andes on a brisk 40-degree day.

"First, we reached the Sun Gate with the sun's rays coming up over the horizon and shining down onto Machu Picchu," he says. "Everyone was excited, so the pace was fast."

"Our guide said that only about 25% of the time you can see Machu



Krista and Robert Koster in Sydney, Australia.

Picchu, as the mountains are covered with clouds. We had a cloudless morning that made it a spectacular view," he adds.

Four days of hiking, three nights in tents, the high altitude and walking over countless stones was a bit overwhelming, Michael admits, but it was also well worth it.

"Getting to experience it with my son made it the best," he says.

Michael encourages others to expand their horizons.

"Don't be afraid to adventure somewhere new," he says. "This trip has inspired us to find the next hike adventure." ■

NEWS BRIEF

REP. ANDREWS welcomes Marine Corps League members



Rep. Eddie Andrews (R-Johnston) recently welcomed the following members of the Marine Corps League to the Iowa House: Jack M. Studebaker of Colo, Dennis Jones of Des Moines, Mary Nagel of Dougherty, Carl Evans of Johnston, Tim Evans of Blairsburg, Ryan Lincoln of Grimes, P.J. Pins of Norwalk, and Jeff Strause of Burlington. ■

THERE'S STILL time to fund an IRA for 2023

The tax filing deadline is fast approaching, which means time is running out to fund an IRA for 2023. If you had earned income last year, you may be able to contribute up to \$6,500 for 2023 (\$7,500 for those age 50 or older by Dec. 31, 2023) up until your tax return due date, excluding extensions. For most people, that date is Monday, April 15, 2024.

You can contribute to a traditional IRA, a Roth IRA, or both. Total contributions cannot exceed the annual limit or 100% of your taxable compensation, whichever is less. You may also be able to contribute to an IRA for your spouse for 2023, even if your spouse had no earned income.

Traditional IRA contributions may be deductible

If you and your spouse were not covered by a work-based retirement plan in 2023, your traditional IRA contributions are fully tax deductible. If you were covered by a work-based



plan, you can take a full deduction if you're single and had a 2023 modified adjusted gross income (MAGI) of \$73,000 or less, or married filing jointly with a 2023 MAGI of \$116,000 or less.

If you were not covered by a work-based plan but your spouse was, you can take a full deduction if your joint MAGI was \$218,000 or less, a partial deduction if your MAGI fell between \$218,000 and \$228,000, and no deduction if your MAGI was \$228,000 or more.

Consider Roth IRAs as an alternative

If you can't make a deductible traditional IRA contribution, a Roth IRA may be a more appropriate alternative. Although Roth IRA contributions are not tax-deductible, qualified distributions are tax-free. You can make a full Roth IRA contribution for 2023 if you're single and your MAGI was \$138,000 or less or married filing jointly with a 2023 MAGI of \$218,000 or less.

Tip: If you can't make an annual contribution to a Roth IRA because of the income limits, there is a workaround. You

can make a nondeductible contribution to a traditional IRA and then immediately convert that traditional IRA contribution to a Roth IRA. (This is sometimes called a backdoor Roth IRA.) Keep in mind, however, that you'll need to aggregate all traditional IRAs and SEP/SIMPLE IRAs you own — other than IRAs you've inherited — when you calculate the taxable portion of your conversion.

Feel free to contact us to discuss your current situation and see if the above can apply to you and your household for added retirement funding for 2023. ■

For more information, please contact Charlie Ochanpaugh with City State Bank Trust & Investments at 515-981-1400. Not FDIC insured. Not deposits or other obligations of the bank and are not guaranteed by the bank. Are subject to investment risk, including possible loss of principal. City State Bank does not provide tax or legal advice. Each taxpayer should seek independent advice from a tax professional. These materials are based upon publicly available information that may change at any time without notice.

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FORGETFULNESS vs. dementia: 6 differences

As we age, forgetfulness can occur. But not all forgetfulness is part of the normal aging process. It's important to understand the distinction between general forgetfulness and early signs of dementia. Here is a list of red flags that may point to dementia.



1. Consistent memory lapses: General forgetfulness often includes occasional memory lapses, such as misplacing keys or forgetting an appointment. In contrast, dementia involves consistent, progressive memory decline. Those in the early stages of dementia may have trouble recalling recent events or important details in their daily life.

2. Communication challenges: We have all been there and struggled to remember a specific term or name. Difficulty finding the right word occasionally is normal and can happen to anyone. However, dementia can lead to significant communication challenges, where individuals struggle to express themselves or engage in conversations. For example, you may notice your senior loved one calling household items by the wrong name or using nonsensical terms as replacements for the real name.

3. Mood swings vs. emotional changes: Everyone has their ups and downs, but persistent mood swings, irritability, or uncharacteristic emotional changes may signal dementia. For example, if you notice that your senior loved one's behavior can turn volatile when seemingly unprovoked, this could be a major red flag.

4. Time and place confusion: Losing track of the date occasionally is common, but dementia can lead to profound disorientation regarding time and place. This is more than forgetting what day of the week it is. Instead, it can look like confusion about what season or year it is. Someone living with dementia might believe they are 20 years in the past and forget that they are retired or that their children are grown. These lapses can occur in varying degrees and frequencies, depending on the individual.

5. Personal care neglect: General forgetfulness may lead to occasional neglect of personal care, but dementia can result in severe neglect, including forgetting to eat or bathe. When visiting your senior loved one at their home, take note of both their hygiene as well as the state of their environment. Have they brushed their teeth and combed their hair? Are their clothes clean? Is their home disorganized or uncharacteristically messy? Do you notice bills piling up? All of these can be red flags that point toward dementia.

6. Social withdrawal: While some degree of social withdrawal is common as we age, dementia can lead to isolation and withdrawal from social activities altogether. This withdrawal can compound and lead to other concerning health issues such as an increased risk of heart disease, diabetes, depression, anxiety and more.

If you notice your loved one is struggling with the things listed above, it may be time to seek help. First, you should book an appointment with their primary physician. You can also seek out a senior living community for advice. Communities that offer memory care services are experienced at understanding dementia and can provide a free health assessment of your loved one. ■

Information provided by Holly Turner, Executive Director, The Homestead at Holland Farms Senior Living, 2800 Sunset Drive, Norwalk, 515-981-1888, www.HollandFarmsLiving.com.



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MEET Jenn McLaughlin

Incorporating skill into games makes PE fun.

After graduating from the University of Northern Iowa in 1998, Jenn McLaughlin taught kindergarten for two years in the Central Decatur Community School District. She then accepted a position with the Norwalk Community School District in 2001 in order to return to the Des Moines area where she grew up. Now, McLaughlin has entered her fourth year teaching physical education at Oviatt Elementary School. She says she likes working with the Norwalk district because it has wonderful families.



Jenn McLaughlin with husband, Shannon, and children Liam and Eliza.

"I have established such great relationships through the many years here," she says. "I love seeing my former students and families. I have actually taught children of former students I had in kindergarten and first grade. I love keeping in touch and seeing where their lives have taken them."

McLaughlin likes teaching physical education at the elementary school level because her students enjoy coming to class. She also enjoys teaching new skills and incorporating those skills in fun games.

Something new McLaughlin has started this year is called "The Fastest Class Challenge." Twice a school year, McLaughlin sets a timer and records how many laps around the gym each class runs as a team. She then divides the number of laps by the number of students running in order to get an average number of laps per student. The class with the highest average wins and keeps "The Fastest Class" trophy in the classroom until the challenge is completed again. McLaughlin likes this challenge because it not only brings the whole class together as a team but also builds great camaraderie between her students.

"PE is very valuable to all students," she says. "It's important to teach the benefit of living an active lifestyle at an early age. I love teaching the kids that they can get exercise just by going outside and playing. They don't have to follow a certain routine to call it exercise."

This May, McLaughlin is looking forward to Field Day, an event she helps put together for students and teachers. Together, they walk up to the high school stadium where she has several stations set up for games, relay races and team-building activities. She also has music playing through the stadium speakers.

When not teaching, McLaughlin enjoys watching her children participate in sports and activities and cheering on the Warriors. She also enjoys spending time with her family and friends, being outdoors, traveling, exploring new places and meeting new people. ■

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Schedule your service today and use this advice to help avoid dishonest mechanics, excessive repair bills and common scams.

- **Find a reliable mechanic.** Ask friends and family for recommendations and check that your options are certified by an automotive repair organization such as the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE).

- **Seek out a reputable shop.** Look for one that specializes in your make of vehicle. It does not need to be a respective dealership. Federal law protects your warranty should you choose an independent business for routine maintenance work. Read online reviews

and complaints filed with the local BBB or consumer protection agency.

- **Prepare for your visit.** Clean out your car and be ready to provide a detailed explanation of the issue. Also, bring a copy of your warranty, if applicable, and your vehicle's service history. A maintenance record can give the service technician a better picture of the car's health.

Reduce risks

Unscrupulous shops may trick you into higher payments or unnecessary repairs. Tactics include ignoring maintenance schedules, completing repairs without your permission and insisting your car needs more work than you came in for.

- **Know your service schedule.** Have a basic understanding of the manufacturer's suggested timeline. Read your owner's manual and reference general recommended service schedules.

- **Ask questions.** See if your shop offers a warranty on parts and labor and talk to the

mechanic if you're confused about a repair.

- **Get a written estimate.** This should detail the repairs and parts needed, as well as the expected charges. You should have to sign this before work begins on your vehicle, and the shop should need approval to complete repairs not on the estimate. Be sure to get a signed copy.

- **Double-check that estimate.** Before you commit, get a second, or even third, opinion on major repairs. For a quick reference, use a website such as Repair Pal to find expected service costs for your vehicle and location.

- **Never leave without a repair order.** This should list the work done, the parts used, the cost of the services involved and the odometer reading before and after service. Keep this for your service record. ■

Lane Insurance would be happy to help examine your risks and suggest the best coverages for you and your family. Feel free to request a quote online at laneinsurance.com or give us a call at 515-981-4614. Information provided by Mike Lane, Lane Insurance Agency Inc., 1225 Sunset Drive, Norwalk.

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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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TRAVEL for caregivers and seniors

March is upon us, and spring is coming. During the month of March, many individuals travel for spring break. There are some who can take their elderly loved ones with them; however, there are some who are unable to travel with them possibly due to health reasons. In this article, it will be explained the benefits of traveling for seniors and the alternatives for your loved ones if they cannot come along.



Here are the benefits of traveling for caregivers and seniors:

1. Traveling can prolong one's life. Exploring new environments and meeting new people can help individuals stay both physically active and socially engaged, which has been proven to prolong one's life.

2. Ensures peace of mind. Everyone has or will experience stress in their lives; traveling forces us to disconnect from the normal routine, helping us appreciate the people we have around us. Traveling can offer individuals a time to relax and reset their minds.

3. Creates memories with family for a lifetime. When you travel with your family members, you build stronger bonds with each other while making memories. While traveling, you can save these memories by taking photos, videos or writing in journals.

4. Boosts happiness and satisfaction. No matter one's age, traveling is an opportunity to step away from your usual daily tasks and enjoy the time with your loved ones. Seeing new places and meeting new people can help rewire one's brain, while boosting your mood and self-confidence.

Taking care of an elderly loved one can be draining, so going away can seem impossible. There are so many details and worries to think about while planning a trip.

So, here are some ideas to consider when you are making your travel plans:

1. Respite care. Respite care is a program that offers short-term relief for primary caregivers. Depending on the location, it can be arranged for an afternoon or several days or even weeks. This type of care can be provided at one's home, in an assisted living community or at an adult day center.

2. In-home care options. You could ask a relative or sibling to stay with your loved one. This option is very popular because the individual can stay at home in familiar surroundings with someone they know and trust. You could hire a licensed home care aide to come in. Home care options can vary depending on the company, time spent in the home, and the care needed.

Traveling is good for your health, not only for the caregiver, but the elderly loved one, too. So, plan a trip and pack your bags. ■

Information provided by Jjuan Hakeem, Edencrest at the Legacy, 2901 Cedar St., Norwalk, 515- 220-2952, welcomelg@edencrestliving.com.

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*Connecting Norwalk
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WHAT: Easter Egg Scavenger Hunt

WHEN: Saturday, March 23rd, 2024

TIME: 9:00-12:00

WHERE: Starts at the Norwalk United Methodist Church

- It's free!
- Drive around Norwalk
- Find candy/prize filled eggs and other prizes around Norwalk.

Prizes are meant for toddlers-5th grade. (While supplies lasts)

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For More Information!

Please Join Us for Worship!

SUNDAY SERVICES:

9:00 am Church & Youth Faith Classes

10:15 am Adult Faith Classes

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NORWALK

SPRING SCHEDULE 2024

VARSITY BOYS SOCCER

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
Mar 26	7:30PM	Dowling Catholic	Dowling Catholic High School
Mar 29	7:30PM	Bondurant-Farrar	Norwalk High School
Apr 2	7:30PM	Pella	Norwalk High School
Apr 5	6:00PM	Spencer H.S.	Norwalk High School
Apr 6	10:00AM	Denison	Norwalk High School
Apr 9	7:00PM	Pella Christian	Pella Christian High School
Apr 12	5:30PM	Valley Tournament	Valley Stadium
Apr 13	TBD	Valley Tournament	Valley Stadium
Apr 15	7:00PM	Newton	Newton HA Lynn Stadium
Apr 18	7:30PM	Ankeny Centennial	Ankeny Centennial High School
Apr 22	7:30PM	Des Moines Lincoln	James Cownie Soccer Complex
Apr 23	7:30PM	Oskaloosa	Oskaloosa High School
Apr 25	7:30PM	Ames	Norwalk High School
NApr 29	7:30PM	Dallas Center-Grimes HS	Norwalk High School
May 3	7:30PM	Urbandale	Urbandale High School
May 7	7:00PM	Indianola	Indianola High School
May 10	7:30PM	Des Moines Roosevelt	Des Moines Roosevelt

VARSITY GIRLS SOCCER

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
Mar 25	7:00PM	ADM CSD	ADM High School
Mar 29	7:00PM	Bondurant-Farrar	Bondurant-Farrar High School
Apr 2	7:00PM	Pella	Pella High School
Apr 5	7:00PM	North Polk	North Polk High School
Apr 9	7:00PM	Pella Christian	Norwalk High School
Apr 11	7:00PM	Southeast Polk	Southeast Polk High School
Apr 18	7:00PM	Ames	Ames High School
Apr 19	7:00PM	Newton	Norwalk High School
Apr 22	7:00PM	WDM Valley	Valley High School
Apr 23	6:00PM	Oskaloosa	Oskaloosa High School
Apr 26	7:00PM	Multiple Schools	Grimes Sports Complex
Apr 27	9:00AM	Multiple Schools	Dallas Center-Grimes High School
Apr 29	7:00PM	Dallas Center-Grimes HS	Dallas Center-Grimes High School
May 3	7:00PM	Urbandale	Norwalk High School
May 7	5:30PM	Indianola	Norwalk High School
May 10	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Norwalk High School

FOR ALL WARRIORS SCHEDULES

Schedules are subject to change.
Scan for most up-to-date schedules.



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WARRIORS

VARSITY BOYS TRACK

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
Mar 19	TBD	Simpson College	Simpson College
Mar 21	4:00PM	Northwest Boys' Relays	Waukee Northwest High School
Mar 26	4:30PM	Nevada	Nevada High School
Mar 28	4:00PM	Northwest Boys' Early Bird	Waukee Northwest High School
Mar 29	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Winterset High School
Apr 2	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	ADM
Apr 4	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Indianola Stadium
Apr 8	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Norwalk High School
Apr 13	TBD	Jim Duncan Relays	Drake Stadium
Apr 15	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Norwalk High School
Apr 16	4:15PM	Multiple Schools	Johnston High School
Apr 18	TBD	Waukee	Waukee Stadium
Apr 23	4:15PM	Multiple Schools	Carlisle High School
Apr 25-27	TBD	Drake Relays	Drake Stadium
May 6	4:30PM	Pella	Oskaloosa Community Stadium

VARSITY GIRLS TRACK

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
Mar 19	TBD	Simpson College	Simpson College
Mar 28	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Ballard Middle School
Apr 1	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Urbandale High School
Apr 2	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Waukee Stadium
Apr 4	4:30PM	Ankeny	Northview Middle School
Apr 8	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Norwalk High School
Apr 11	4:00PM	Northwest Girls' Relays	Waukee Northwest High School
Apr 13	8:30AM	Jim Duncan Relays	Drake Stadium 7:00AM
Apr 16	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	DCG Stadium
Apr 18	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Indianola Stadium
Apr 22	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Winterset High School
Apr 25-27	TBD	Drake Relays	Drake Stadium
May 2	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Norwalk High School

VARSITY GIRLS GOLF

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
Apr 1	11:00AM	Waukee Northwest	Legacy Golf Course
Apr 2	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Perry Golf & Country Club
Apr 4	3:30PM	Multiple Schools	Westwood Golf Course-Newton
Apr 9	1:00PM	Multiple Schools	Willow Creek Golf Course
Apr 18	1:00PM	Multiple Schools	Edmundson Golf Course
Apr 22	10:00AM	Ames	Veenker Memorial Golf Course 7:30AM
Apr 23	TBD	Pella	Pella Golf & Country Club 6:30AM
Apr 29	9:00AM	Johnston	Jester Golf Course 6:45AM
May 2	9:00AM	Multiple Schools	Copper Creek Golf Course 7:15AM
May 13	12:00PM	Multiple Schools	Ballard Golf & Country Club

GO WARRIORS!



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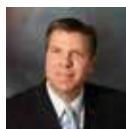
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IT TRULY starts with a simple conversation

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 Westown Parkway, 3601 Westown Parkway, West Des Moines, IA 50266, 515-697-3681



IMAGINE

When I first heard that dream vacations were the feature of this issue, the first thing that came to my mind was the ultimate dream vacation of all — heaven. I mean, any dream vacation here on this earth, in this lifetime, no matter how exotic, is temporary at best, and then it's back to the daily grind. Even those who find themselves in retirement sitting on a beach every day sipping on a cold drink eventually get bored out of their gourd. While I certainly would never discourage anyone from taking a dream vacation, why not do a little dreaming about the best place of all to spend the adventure of a lifetime, or should I say, a thousand lifetimes.

The Bible says a lot about heaven, and it's worth dreaming about. Scripture says heaven is a happy place, a holy place, a permanent place, a place of perfect provision, perfect sinlessness, perfect communion with God, perfect personal satisfaction, and a place of perfect leisurely comfort. Maybe most exciting is what's not in heaven, and it's quite a lengthy list: no death, sorrow, tears, pain, darkness, night, hunger, thirst, excessive heat or cold, wild animals, dangerous weather, disease, crime, criminals, and, most of all, the devil himself will not be there. Heaven will be the place of God and His Son Jesus, heavenly beings like angels, and the home of the righteous — that is, everyone who has set aside their own attempts at being righteous and placed their faith in Jesus for salvation, receiving His perfect righteousness as their own. Finally, heaven will be a place of rest (Hebrews 4:9-10). Doesn't that sound inviting?

More than 20 years ago now, Bart Millard of the Christian music group Mercy Me wrote a song that captured the hearts of millions of people. The song became, and still is, the bestselling Christian song of all time. Some of the words, say, "I can only imagine, what it will be like, when I walk by your side. I can only imagine what my eyes would see when your face is before me. Surrounded by your glory, what will my heart feel? Will I dance for you Jesus, or in awe of you be still? Will I stand in your presence, or to my knees will I fall? Will I sing hallelujah? Will I be able to speak at all? I can only imagine."

Why not do a little imagining of your own of the ultimate and eternal dream vacation? The Bible provides us with a thorough travel pamphlet of what it will be like... but, it's not for everyone. Only those prepared to go by putting their faith in Jesus Christ are eligible. I hope that includes you. ■



Pastor Rob Jones is the senior pastor of Fellowship Community Church in Norwalk. The church was founded under his leadership in 1995.

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LOYAL Whiskers volunteer

Rhodes is helping the kitty population.

Nicole Rhodes has a passion for animal wellbeing. Once she became involved with Whiskers TNR of Warren County, that interest intensified.

"I saw the true passion they had and that they are a grassroots organization who really need people committed to do work to continue to thrive," Rhodes says.

Whiskers TNR of Warren County aims to improve the quality of life for cats in the area by helping coordinate spay/neuters and vaccinations. They also facilitate foster placements for cats.

"While our mission is to enable caretakers to be able to trap and schedule appointments for Trap Neuter Return (TNR) appointments on their own, sometimes we need to step in and help with the process," Rhodes shares.

This past spring, she helped a property owner trap with a large colony. One of the older kittens was born with just three legs but was elusive about being trapped.

"I spent a good week and half and was ecstatic when we finally caught her because we knew outdoor life for a three-legged cat would be next to impossible," Rhodes says. "I wasn't involved in her socialization process, but seeing regular updates now on Eileen is wonderful."

Rhodes originally connected with Whiskers TNR of Warren County in October 2019 when she had a stray pregnant cat wandering her backyard.

"I reached out to Whiskers, and, at the time, they had capacity to help, but also asked if I could foster at least temporarily," Rhodes says. "I got my first litter within a week and haven't stopped since."

Today, while she still fosters, she's also the organization's volunteer and event coordinator.

"Once I started volunteering and was able to see immediate impact to the animals and humans that we serve, I was hooked," Rhodes says. "It is very rewarding to give back to the community that you live in, even if they don't necessarily know that it is happening. I enjoy that 90% of my volunteer work can actually be done from my home, but that 10 percent getting out into the community is also wonderful."

One of Rhodes' favorite things about Whiskers TNR of Warren County is its partnership with the Norwalk Easter Public Library.

"It all started with an in-service day where we brought kittens for the staff to snuggle," she explains. "Then Jean Strable, the director, asked if we wanted to try doing something similar for the public. Saturday was born from that idea."

Now, every second Saturday of the month, Rhodes rallies volunteers and kittens to be at the library for two hours in the morning.

"It has been so wonderful to watch kids and adults come in and interact with these animals," she says. "There is a grandpa who brings his granddaughter almost every time because mom is allergic to cats, and



Jason Siemens of Edward Jones presents Nicole Rhodes with the Good Neighbor certificate.

cats are this kid's favorite thing. There are some elderly who can't have a pet anymore who just want to snuggle a kitten for a few moments. We, of course, also have applications for cats, volunteering and fostering, which is amazing as well." ■

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Do you know a Good Neighbor who deserves recognition?

Nominate him or her at tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com.

LISTEN TO THE CITY OF NORWALK'S NEW PODCAST SERIES

called 'Know Your City' with Norwalk City Manager, Luke Nelson!

Episode Fourteen: Snow removal and the unnamed heroes.

On this week's podcast series, "Know your City" with Norwalk City Manager Luke Nelson,

Is joined by Joe Ballard, Assistant Public Works Director, and then Wayne Schwartz, the City of Norwalk, Iowa's Public Works Director.

The three talk about the annual cost of snow removal, procedures for snow removal, and the hard work and dedication that goes into keeping the streets of Norwalk clean and free of snow and ice.

If you like this podcast, please subscribe to hear future casts from the City of Norwalk.

When you get a minute, please take the short survey through the link below and let us know what subjects you'd like to hear about most, and which people or departments you'd like to hear from more often.



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EASTER PUBLIC LIBRARY

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Caddy Stacks - Mini-Golf in the Library

Friday, April 26 - 6:30 p.m. - Caddy Stacks for Adults (\$20/person)
Saturday, April 27 - 10 a.m.-4 p.m. - Caddy Stacks for Families (free)

Join the Norwalk Easter Public Library Foundation as they kick off their 1st Annual Mini-Golf Fundraiser, Caddy Stacks! With the help of local sponsors, the library stacks will be transformed into an 18-hole mini-golf course. Festivities will tee off with a fundraiser event for adults on Friday evening. Admission is \$20 per person for access to the mini-golf course and tournament play for prizes. Beer and wine will be available for purchase, and there will be appetizers and other beverages at no additional cost. Join in the fun at our silent auction and come dressed in your wackiest golf attire for a special prize.

Stop by the library or email nepfoundation@gmail.com for information on sponsoring a mini-golf hole in the course or to purchase your advance tickets to the fundraiser. Families are invited to play through on Saturday, compliments of the Library Foundation.

Fun Music for Kids with Macaroni Soup!

Thursday, March 21st, 10:30 am

We're so excited to share a special free concert for kids and their grownups! Miss Carole will sing and play fun, active music that gets EVERYONE wiggling and giggling, hopping and stomping, and singing along!

Spring Break Activities March 11 - 15

March 11: 1:30-3pm - Drop-in+ Building Challenges

March 12: 1:30-2:30pm - Slime Lab* (k+)

March 13: 1:30-2:30pm - CultureALL Kenyan Beading* (3rd-5th)

March 14: 1:30-3pm - Drop-in+ Button Making

March 15: 1:30-3pm - Drop-in+ Art Studio

Over spring break, the library will host a variety of family-friendly activities and crafts. Some events may require registration*. Registered events will have age restrictions. See <https://norwalklibrary.libcal.com/> for further details.

+Spring Break drop-in programs are recommended for kids ages 5 and up, all are welcome!

Round Up for Reading at the Register

Norwalk shoppers can support the Norwalk Easter Public Library Foundation and library activities like Summer Reading 2024 during "Round Up for Reading" at the Norwalk Fareway Store. Shoppers can add to their Fareway register receipt total at checkout with funds raised to support programs and activities during **National Library Week, April 7-13.**

Taylor Swift Drop-In Party

Saturday, April 20th, 1-2:30pm

Taylor Swift fans unite! Celebrate one of pop-cultures most beloved poets during National Poetry Month at the library. Enjoy crafts, activities, and tunes, and, most importantly, connect with other T. Swift fans!



Flashlight Age Group Easter Egg Hunt

March 30 • 8-9 pm



Youth Softball & Baseball Registration

Scan for details!



Mommy & Me Dance

The Park and Recreation Department will host Mothers and their child(ren) for an evening filled with dancing, fun, light snacks, dessert and photo opportunities. If mom is not available, an aunt, sister, grandmother or mother figure is always welcome. All ages are welcome!



Registration times: February 5 - April 20, at 6:45 pm

Program days/times: Saturday, April 20, 2024 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Cost: \$15.00 resident per person/ \$17.25 non-resident per person

Location: St. John the Apostle Catholic Church, Norwalk

New 2024 Norwalk Playbooks

View our New 2024 Norwalk Aquatic Center Playbook!

Our NEW Aquatic Center Playbook is Now available! Swim lessons, pool rentals, membership passes, events and more...view it today!



View our New 2024 Norwalk Parks and Recreation Spring Playbook!

Our NEW Spring Playbook is Now available! Adult, Senior and Youth Programming, Family Events, Facility Rentals and more...view it today!



Employee Spotlight

Dusty Meek, Public Works



Dusty hails from the small town of Dows located in northern Iowa. Prior to moving to Norwalk, Dusty worked for Wright County as a road maintainer operator. In addition, he served as a volunteer firefighter for 21 years.

Dusty started with the City of Norwalk Public Works in November 2019. He enjoys running a plow truck during snow events.

Outside of work Dusty loves spending time with his wife Shelby and daughters Reagan and Briah. He is also active in the community, helping with youth sports.



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Check for cancellations



Lenten Fish Fries

March 15 and 22, 5:30-7 p.m.
St. Thomas Aquinas Parish Hall,
Indianola

Lenten Fish Fries are being offered at a cost of \$13 for adults and take-outs and \$6 for children.

Powerful Tools for Caregivers

Do you help take care of an adult with chronic conditions? If so, you are not alone. Over 43.5 million family caregivers in America provide a vast array of emotional, financial, nursing, social, homemaking and other services on a daily or an intermittent basis.

Powerful Tools for Caregivers is an educational series designed to provide tools you need to take care of yourself. If you take good care of yourself, you will be better prepared to take good care of your loved one. As a participant, you will learn how to: reduce stress, improve self-confidence, better communicate your feelings, balance your life, increase ability to make tough decisions and locate helpful resources.

Iowa State University Extension is sponsoring Powerful Tools for Caregivers in Indianola this March/April. Classes consist of six, 90-minute sessions held once a week every Friday beginning on March 22. Classes will be held at the Indianola Wellness Campus from 10-11:30 a.m. There is a \$40 fee for the program. To register, contact the Warren County Extension office at 515-961-6237 or Karie Foster at 641-660-2725. You can also register online at <https://go.iastate.edu/QH3TVO>

McCann to speak about her book at library

March 22 at 1 p.m.
Norwalk Easter Public Library,

Iowa native Linda Betsinger McCann will be speaking about her newest book, "Rosie the Riveters of Iowa" at Norwalk Easter Public Library. Everyone is invited and there is no admission charge. Rosie the Riveter was the nickname given to the women who worked during World War II. The women were needed in factories and other companies to take the place of the men gone to the war. Iowa had 70 companies with military contracts during the war, so women were very much needed to assist in meeting the needs of the military. Linda was able to speak with 35 women who had worked as Rosies, and she shares their memories. Linda will have copies of her books for sale. The books are \$20 each, and she can only take cash or checks. She will also be speaking March 23 at 10 a.m. at the Iowa Gold Star Military Museum about her book about prisoners of war in Iowa.

Easter Egg Scavenger Hunt

Saturday, March 23, 9 a.m. to noon
Starts at the Norwalk United Methodist Church

Enjoy an Easter Egg Scavenger Hunt. Drive around Norwalk and find candy/prize-filled eggs and other prizes meant for toddlers through fifth grade, while supplies last.



A TLC Library Escape Room (teens and tweens)

Saturday, April 13, various sessions
Norwalk Easter Public Library meeting room

The Teen Leadership Council (TLC) is designing an Escape Room for library patrons. Work together to solve puzzles and see if you can escape the room in time. More details will be released closer to the event. Play sessions will have participant limitations and will require registration. Puzzles will be geared towards ages 10 and older, though younger children can participate with caregiver assistance. Each session can have up to eight participants. If you are registering as an individual or as a group with fewer than eight people, please know that you may be working with registrants unknown to you prior to the event.



Staley's Fried Chicken Dinner

Sunday, March 17 from
10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
St. John the Apostle parish hall
in Norwalk

It's time for the St. John The Apostle Church's annual fried chicken feast. The menu includes Iowa's own Staley's Fried Chicken, mashed potatoes and gravy, a vegetable, salad, dessert and a beverage. A silent auction will be held in conjunction with the dinner, and a strolling magician will provide fun for the entire family. Cost is \$12 for adults, \$6 for children ages 6 to 12. Kids 5 and younger eat free. Tickets can be purchased at the door on the day of the event. For more information, contact Gary and Mary Haselton at 515-321-3873 or the parish office at 515-981-4855.

In the Garden with the Central Iowa Houseplant Club

Saturday, April 6, 10 a.m. to noon
Norwalk Easter Public Library meeting room

The library is teaming up with the Central Iowa Houseplant Club for a morning garden talk and live demonstration. No registration required.

Teen Takeover Special: Taxidermied Stuffies

Thursday, April 4
Norwalk Easter Public Library

Decapitate a stuffie and personalize its mounting plate. What more could you ask for? All supplies provided. Grades 7-12. Registration preferred as supplies are limited.

Check for cancellations

Events at The Brenton Arboretum

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

For more information or to register, visit www.thebrentonarboratum.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.



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.
Casper 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 Casper Terrace several years ago with vocalist Jay Clayton. For more information and tickets, visit <https://jazzatcaspe.weebly.com/tickets.html>. ■

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LEGAL

By Ken Winjum

COMPARATIVE fault

Under common law, a claimant might be precluded from recovery if it was found that he or she was contributorily negligent to any degree. This changed in 1982 when the Iowa Supreme Court adopted what was known as "pure comparative fault."



Later, in 1985, the Iowa legislature passed the Comparative Fault Act which is found at Iowa Code Chapter 668 and is now the current law. Pursuant to the act, "fault" means one or more acts or omissions that are in any measure negligent or reckless toward the person or property of the actor or others, or that subject a person to strict tort liability. The act also applies to breach of warranty as well as fault on the part of the claimant such as assumption of risk, misuse of a product, unreasonable failure to avoid injury or mitigate damages.

Section 668.3 provides that contributory fault shall not bar recovery in an action by a claimant to recover damages for fault resulting in death or in injury to person or property unless the claimant bears a greater percentage of fault than the combined percentage of fault attributed to the defendants. The act further provides that any damages allowed shall be reduced or diminished in proportion to the amount of fault attributable to the claimant.

In other words, if the plaintiff or claimant is found to be more than 50% at fault, there is no recovery. If the claimant is found, for example, to be 30% at fault, the claimant may only recover 70% of his or her damages.

One of the key roles of the jury in a case tried to it, is to determine the percentage of fault attributable to each party. Chapter 668 provides that, in the trial of a claim involving the possible fault of more than one party, the court is required to instruct the jury to answer special interrogatories toward that end.

In practice, a typical verdict form may contain numbered questions which seek a determination of whether a party was at fault, whether the fault was a cause of damages, the specific percentage of fault for each party and the determination of damages, if any.

The act also provides rules concerning joint and several liability as well as contribution among defendants.

Interestingly, the legislature included language in 668.9 that it shall be an unfair trade practice, if an insurer assigns a percentage of fault to a claimant, for the purpose of reducing a settlement, when there exists no reasonable evidence upon which the assigned percentage of fault could be based.

Comparative fault is now a foundational part of our civil justice system and meshes well with our traditional jury-based determination of facts. ■

Information provided by Ken Winjum, The Winjum Law Firm, P.L.C., 1220 Sunset Drive., Suite 103, Norwalk, 515-981-5220, www.winjumlaw.com.



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REMODELING or building an addition?

Don't forget about your HVAC

If your home no longer works for you — for whatever reason — you generally have two choices: sell or renovate. Interest rates have a lot of homeowners staying put and updating versus buying a new home. With increased property values in recent years, many individuals are taking advantage of their home equity and upgrading their current homes. If you're considering this possibility, be sure to take your home's HVAC options into strong consideration to avoid costly and uncomfortable mistakes.

Adding a new space to your house can be an exciting project. Besides budgeting, setting a timeline for your project, and deciding on décor options for the new space, you need to consider which HVAC setup will suit the new addition. Deciding on heating and cooling options is necessary because expanding your house increases your home's heating and cooling needs.



Different HVAC options suit different types of additions. Therefore, before you settle on a heating and cooling system for a home addition, you must consider what purpose the new space will serve. HVAC technicians can advise you on the best way to heat and cool an addition based on its purpose. Let's explore the best ways to heat and cool a home addition.

System extension

If your current HVAC system has enough capacity, extending it may be a solution. You and your HVAC contractor can assess your equipment to determine its suitability. The two most important considerations are the energy efficiency of the new addition, its size, and its distance from the existing ductwork.

System replacement

When your existing HVAC system is old, requires frequent repairs or is inefficient, consider replacing it with a new system that's capable of conditioning your existing home and the new addition. Newer equipment offers greater energy

efficiency, which helps offset the costs associated with the upgrade.

Separate system

One of the safest and most energy efficient HVAC solutions for a new addition is to install a ductless mini split heat pump. These devices both heat and cool and operate independently from a central system. The mini split uses an outdoor condenser that can support multiple indoor air handlers as needed.

A mini split is cost effective and incredibly energy efficient because it doesn't use ducts to deliver the conditioned air. You can turn the system off when you're not using the space. They run quietly and safely since they do not require a combustion fuel to supply heat and won't require any venting for exhaust gases. ■

If you have questions, or just simply want to speak to the experts about this or other comfort concerns, give us a call. An HVAC expert answers/returns every call, and our expert advice is always free. 515-868-2779 Ext 1 or Dale@TripleAHomeServices.com

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BEYOND vacation: exploring the surge in second home ownership

Reflecting on my youth in Iowa, the image of quaint fishing cabins by the lake comes to mind. Once havens for weekend fishing trips, these cabins have evolved into more than just summer retreats. Formerly known as simple “vacation homes,” they have transformed into larger, modern residences, adapting to the changing needs of their owners.



Over the years, these cabins expanded their utility beyond summer vacations, becoming winter retreats and, in some cases, primary residences during retirement. However, the landscape of second home ownership has witnessed a significant surge, driven by factors such as remote work flexibility and historically low interest rates, especially during the COVID era. According to the National Association of Home Builders, the total count of second homes is more than 7 million, constituting about 5% of

the total housing stock in the United States.

The allure of second homes is diverse, ranging from seeking solace in mountainous landscapes or dense forests to embracing the vibrant urban condo lifestyle. Proximity to family has emerged as a key motivator, with many envisioning these second homes as potential primary residences during retirement. The concept of a second home is no longer confined to leisure and vacation but extends to the possibility of a more permanent lifestyle change.

Despite the appeal, the decision to purchase a second home comes with its own set of challenges. Affording the initial purchase is just the beginning; prospective buyers need to carefully consider ongoing expenses like maintenance, repairs, taxes and insurance. While renting out the property on platforms like VRBO or Airbnb might seem like a viable option, it's crucial to be aware of community regulations that could restrict or even prohibit such practices. Additionally, understanding the

risks associated with natural disasters specific to the chosen location is essential for informed decision-making.

As the trend of second home ownership continues to grow, it reflects a broader shift in lifestyle choices. People are increasingly viewing second homes not merely as vacation spots but as potential long-term residences. Whether nestled in nature or integrated into urban life, these second homes represent a significant evolution in the way individuals perceive and utilize property. The decision to invest in a second home requires careful consideration, weighing the benefits against the associated challenges. By staying informed and seeking guidance, potential buyers can embark on the journey of second home ownership with confidence and a clear understanding of the responsibilities it entails. ■

Information provided by Jon Niemeyer, owner, EXIT Realty North Star, 1039 Sunset Drive, Norwalk, 515-981-5131, Jon.Niemeyer@exitrealtynorthstar.com.

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COMMUNITY greeter shares pride

Reynolds has longtime love for Norwalk.

When new people move to Norwalk, Pam Reynolds might be one of the first friendly faces they see.

As the representative for Norwalk Community Greetings, she helps train the greeters who visit 25 to 50 new Norwalk neighbors each month, sharing information about local businesses and presenting them with a packet of goodies and coupons.

As a member of the Norwalk Area Chamber of Commerce, Reynolds attends ribbon cuttings for new businesses and introduces Norwalk Community Greetings to them as well.

“All businesses are welcome to contact me to find out how they can join our gift packets and benefit from our advertising that we do the old-fashioned way — by word of mouth and a friendly Norwalk face,” she says.

Reynolds is well-equipped for her role because she and her husband, Dave, know the community intimately. They’ve lived in Norwalk since 1993, and both their children, Sydnie and Evan, attended Norwalk schools from kindergarten through graduation.

Since moving to Norwalk, the Reynolds family has enjoyed living in Lakewood. Their current home is their second in the neighborhood and features a large backyard and a remodeled patio that they use as an outdoor living space in warmer months.

“It provides a place to entertain in the summer, as our house itself is not real big,” Reynolds says. “Our dogs enjoy the shade of the trees, chasing squirrels, and the small area we had fenced in for them.”

Overall, Reynolds appreciates everything about Norwalk: the parks, schools, churches, recreational programs and more.

“We are a community that is growing and constantly adding more businesses, new families



Pam and Dave Reynolds and their grandchildren

and neighborhoods,” she says. “Norwalk has a diverse population, and we can learn so much from one another. We live close to many types of restaurants, music festivals, civic activities and places to visit.”

Now retired from full-time work, Reynolds enjoys the time she’s afforded to do what she wants, which includes serving the Norwalk community.

“Having several part-time positions allows me extra flexibility to work with area businesses, attend Norwalk Area Chamber of Commerce events, substitute teach at the school I retired from, thrift and re-sell, and work when I want,” she says. “I have loved meeting new residents, telling them what my family has loved about our now growing community, and working with area businesses to promote their services to our growing community.” ■



Pam Reynolds delivers a welcome kit to new Norwalk residents.

WOMEN of Norwalk makes an impact

Group gives back to community.

Women of Norwalk (WON) is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization established in 2008. The group is made up of members from Norwalk and surrounding communities who share a common passion for giving back to the community.

Their motto is simple: "Give where we live."

WON has several upcoming events, including Big Hats and Bow Ties. This derby-themed soiree will be held on Saturday, May 4, at Echo Valley Country Club. Along with watching the Kentucky Derby together, attendees will enjoy food, drinks and games.

One of WON's longstanding events is a Bunco night in early December. It's usually a packed house, and participants are asked to bring a specific donation item, typically hygiene products or snacks, that then get delivered to local schools.

WON also organizes community events such as clothing, prom dress and sports gear swaps.

"These swaps provide high-quality, gently used items to those in need, ensuring that individuals and families have access to the essentials they require," says Libby Moench, current president of WON. "They also play a significant role in promoting sustainability within our community. By extending the life cycle of these goods, we reduce waste and foster a more sustainable environment."

Funds raised by WON are used to benefit numerous initiatives, including by purchasing gift cards.

"From the funds we raise, we impact food insecurity by partnering with local school counselors and our local Fareway to provide food-specific gift cards to families in need," Moench says. "The goal is to provide additional help for families over the weekends when school meals are not available."

WON also dedicates funds to high school student scholarships and a leadership grant program for high school and middle school students.

"As our group has grown, we have also found many opportunities to connect with and support other local community programs," Moench says. "It's amazing how much good we can do together."

Moench shares that WON is a great group to check out for women interested in meeting other women and getting involved in the community.

"We meet monthly, and there are a lot of opportunities to get involved, but we also understand how busy everyone is, so there is no pressure to volunteer," she says.

In fact, WON leadership asks that all new members wait one year before joining a committee and prefers members to have spent time on a committee before moving into a position on the officers board.

For Moench, who joined WON in 2017 shortly after moving to Norwalk, the group has been a great way to meet new friends.

"It is really an amazing group of women who are welcoming, fun and truly brilliant when it comes to finding new ways to support our community," she says.

Updates about WON's events can be found on the Women of Norwalk Facebook page. ■



Representatives of 100 Men of Norwalk presented a \$9,000 check to Women of Norwalk to support their efforts.

CALL for volunteers

One of the treasures of Warren County is the museum in Indianola. We exist to preserve the history of all of Warren County, not just Indianola. Plans are beginning for the 2024 Log Cabin Festival sponsored by the Warren County Historical Society on Sept. 28. The theme this year is Warren County Railroads, and we are featuring the Warren County Model Railroaders who have an exhibit on the lower level of the museum. Log Cabin Festival is our major fundraising event of the year, so the event is essential to preserving the history of our county and to honor the ways pioneers learned to live off the grid. This is also a good opportunity for high school students who need silver cord hours.

We are looking for people who have skills in some of the lost arts practiced by pioneers and who would be willing to demonstrate and/or teach those skills. Examples might be candle-making, butter-making, weaving or spinning, corn shelling, rope-making, blacksmithing, carpenter/woodworking, foraging for food, beekeeping, collecting and making maple syrup, making soap, making herbal medicine, etc.

We also need people to help monitor and supervise other activities. Scarecrow making is always a popular activity. We have several children's games that the kids (and adults) love to test. Twisting twine into rope is fascinating. Help in the kitchen with our chicken noodle dinner is always welcome.

Each building needs a volunteer. You don't need to know anything about the building, just sit and listen to the exclamations of amazement as visitors tour the building or the museum. Listen for the sentences that begin with "I remember..." or "My grandfather used to..." Heritage village includes a General Store and Post Office, newly restored Log Cabin, Country Church, Mt. Hope School, Quaker Meeting House, George Washington Carver Museum, and two levels of museum exhibits in the main building.

Opportunities for photographs abound throughout the day. There will be a rack of period clothing and hats that will need a volunteer to assist.

Helping set up for the day and take down at the end of the day is an experience you won't regret. You begin the day with the joyous anticipation of all the fun visitors will have, and you end the day with a sigh of relief that it's finally over.

Another volunteer opportunity comes in May when the fifth-grade students from Indianola spend a day enjoying pioneer activities for Pioneer School Days Activities include making a quilt square, dipping candles, making butter, watching a blacksmith, shelling corn, cutting a log using a two-person saw and touring the museum.

Your help will be greatly appreciated, whether it's for an hour or two or for the entire day. If you are available to assist in any way, we can be contacted at 515-961-8085, contact@warrencountyhistory.org or through our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/wchs.iowa>. Better yet, come visit the museum at 1300 W. Second Ave., Indianola, on the east side of the county fairgrounds (Thursdays 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. or Saturdays 9 a.m. to noon). ■

HOW UNTREATED hearing loss affects overall health

The average hearing loss patient waits seven years before seeking help, which can take a toll on their quality of life.¹ Hearing loss is linked to several common health conditions and, the longer someone puts off getting treatment, the more likely they are to face negative consequences.



dementia³

- Are at a greater risk of experiencing depression and social anxiety⁴
- Can struggle to communicate and become socially isolated

Financial health can also be affected; research shows that untreated hearing loss can decrease one's annual income by up to \$30,000.⁵

How to cope: Get an annual hearing test

Hearing loss usually develops gradually, making it difficult to notice for many. That's why scheduling an annual hearing test with an audiologist is crucial. Early support from a professional is vital.

Annual testing will help detect any hearing loss as soon as possible, and early detection allows an audiologist to treat your hearing loss more efficiently and effectively.

The role of hearing aids and communication strategies

If your audiologist determines you have

hearing loss, hearing aids can help you communicate, connect and even improve your health. Evidence shows that wearing hearing aids can enhance balance,⁶ slow cognitive decline⁷ and reduce depression in patients.⁸

Using communication strategies is another way to make living with hearing loss easier. Turning on your TVs closed captions, ensuring you can see a person's face when they are talking and moving to a quieter location to speak together are all examples of communication-enhancing techniques.

Now's the time to take control of your hearing — and your health. Call your local audiologist to schedule your hearing evaluation. ■

Information provided by Dr. Kelly Cook, audiologist, Iowa Hearing Center, 1228 Sunset Drive, Suite B, Norwalk, (515) 416-5990, www.IowaHearingCenter.com. References available at IowaHearing.com.

People with hearing loss:

- Have three times the risk of falling²
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HEALTH

By Dr. Jonathan P. Anderson, OD

WHAT DOES 'legally blind' mean?

The term legally blind is often misused. Some people use the term to describe their vision if they feel they are visually disabled without glasses or contact lenses (unable to drive a car, for example). Others may think it means total blindness (complete lack of form and light perception).

Most government agencies and healthcare institutions agree that legal blindness is defined as one of the following:

- Reduced central vision of 20/200 or less in your better eye with the best glasses or contact lens correction possible.
- A field of vision limited to 20 degrees or less.

As long as your vision can be corrected to better than 20/200 with glasses or contacts, you are not considered legally blind. Also, if your best corrected vision in one eye is worse than 20/200, but you can see better than 20/200 with corrective lenses with your other eye, you are not considered legally blind.

The four main causes of legal blindness in the United States are macular degeneration, cataracts, diabetic retinopathy and glaucoma. The visual impact from these diseases can be greatly lessened or even treated fully if caught soon enough. Visiting your local eyecare provider regularly is your best defense. ■

Information provided by Dr. Jonathan P. Anderson, OD, Optometric Associates-Norwalk, 1228 Sunset Drive, Suite A, Norwalk, 515-981-5388.



HEALTH

By Dr. Elizabeth Fleck

SWEET tooth, sour teeth

As a dentist, I often witness the impact of excessive sugar consumption on teeth, especially in today's youth. The prevalence of sugar in our modern diet has skyrocketed, posing a significant threat to oral health, and has become the leading cause of cavities. When we indulge in sugary treats, the bacteria in our mouths feed on the sugars, producing acid as a byproduct. Every time sugar interacts with oral bacteria, the pH in the mouth drops for the following 20 minutes. Sipping on sweet drinks all day can be extremely damaging.

Unfortunately, no amount of brushing can counteract the damage done by a high-sugar diet. Every day, we see the effects the habitual consumption of energy drinks, soda, sweet tea, Gatorade, basically anything besides flat water, has on enamel. These beverages contain enough sugar or acid to essentially dissolve teeth over time. When this happens, it is possible to treat with fillings or crowns, but, if the habit continues, there are limits to what dentists can do to continually repair teeth. Reducing sugar intake is crucial for maintaining a healthy smile. Opt for water over sugary drinks, choose fresh fruits instead of candies, and be mindful of hidden sugars in processed foods.

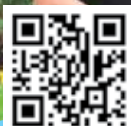
As a dentist, I urge a dual approach: Not only should we prioritize consistent dental care, but we must also be vigilant about reducing sugar intake. ■

Information provided by Dr. Elizabeth Fleck, Norwalk Family Dentistry, 1101 Chatham Ave., Suite A, Norwalk, 515-256-9000, www.norwalkfamilydentistry.com.



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WEIGHT loss injections and muscle loss

Weight loss injections have become a hot topic in the mainstream media, social media friends sharing experiences, medical spas, and the medical community. They can be life changing, prevent chronic illness, and help people find freedom from food. Unfortunately, another thing that can happen is loss of muscle. How can we combat this? Lifestyle changes such as increased protein intake and resistance training can combat the loss of muscle, but there are also tools that can help build muscle mass, help increase your metabolic rate, and even decrease dangerous visceral fat. Visceral fat reduction can help decrease the risk of heart attack, stroke, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, certain cancers, and Alzheimer's disease. Emsculpt NEO is a machine that can help with targeted muscle gain in just four 30-minute sessions. Clients see a 25% muscle mass increase and 30% fat reduction in targeted areas. Common areas include abs, glutes, inner thighs, biceps, triceps, calves and quadriceps. It is the equivalent of doing 14-16 weeks of high intensity interval training in a fourth of the time, fitting your busy lifestyle. Some people see tangible results in only one session, and results continue to be shown several weeks after the treatment, with the client's metabolic rate being increased for 6-12 months due to the increase in muscle mass. Talk to experts to see if this machine is a right fit for you. ■



Information provided by Jen Penisten, MSN, RN, NP-C, CEO/owner, Vivid Life Spa, 1016 Main St., Norwalk. Call 515-850-7848 to book your first session today or scan QR code in ad right to schedule online. <https://livin-vivid.com/life-spa>.

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DO WEATHER changes cause my back pain?

People with joint problems are often extremely accurate in predicting when storms are approaching. The weather change itself is not the cause of the pain. An underlying condition must first exist. Here is how the weather changes and pain cycle probably work.

- Joint or ligament inflammation is present as a result of some type of injury. The extra fluid from inflammation stretches sensitive tissue and membranes in and around the joint.
- Storm fronts follow a decrease in barometric pressure which can cause tissues and membranes to expand and stretch even more.
- When an already swollen tissue of a previously injured area expands, pain nerve fibers are irritated, and you become acutely aware of a storm coming.

Tissue inside the body must already be sensitive for weather changes to cause pain; otherwise, everyone would have pain when storms are brewing. Chiropractic care can help relieve this pain by decreasing inflammation and correcting biomechanical function. ■



Information provided by Dr. Jesse Stumbaugh, Norwalk Chiropractic, 1300 Sunset Drive, 515-981-9208, www.norwalk-chiropractic.com. Norwalk Chiropractic is a provider with most major insurance companies.

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FITNESS

By Dani McManus

Q: Is it important to hit cardio after weights?

A: The short answer is yes and for a couple of reasons. Since it is getting warmer than usual outside, there are probably some of you who are going to start throwing some cardio into your routine. This warmth makes us want to be outside and has us thinking about our summer bod. So, if you are looking to lose weight or shed those last couple of pounds, doing cardio after your lift is going to set you up for success. When you are lifting weights, your body burns through its glycogen storage. Once you start doing your cardio, your body then begins burning into your fat storage. Your fat storage is always the last fuel source for your body, so being able to hit it with cardio after is ideal. The other side of it is that, if you were to do your cardio prior to your lift, it will fatigue you. Going into your lift already fatigued is not good because you won't be able to perform your lift as well, and you are setting yourself up for a greater chance of injury. You can definitely warm up on cardio to get the body moving but try not to spend more than 10 minutes warming up. So, my challenge for you is, next time you are in the gym strength training, end with 30 minutes of cardio for the next week and see how you feel. ■



Information provided by Dani McManus, certified personal trainer/head coach at Anytime Fitness in Norwalk. To submit a question for future articles, contact her at norwalk@anytimefitness.com.

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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.

INVEST in professional development

When it comes to investing in your professional development, finding opportunities can be challenging yet essential to career growth and success. The chamber is a great resource for those looking to gain leadership experience, engage with their community, serve on committees, network with others (including community and business leaders), and learn about a range of business-focused topics. In addition to joining your local chamber, here are some of my favorite ways to invest in yourself professionally.



• **Join a group or committee:** Being part of professional groups or committees is an excellent way to expand your network and gain valuable experiences. Young professionals groups, alumni associations, non-profit organizations and local breakfast clubs often provide platforms to connect with like-minded individuals and potential mentors.

• **Attend events and workshops:** Getting out of the office to attend industry shows, workshops and seminars can expose you to the latest trends and best practices in your field. I recommend the annual Leadership Institute through Warren County Economic Development. This eight-session series covers topics like project management, fundraising and DEI and is taught by local leaders who are familiar with the unique strengths and challenges of our community.

• **Invest time in webinars and podcasts:** Consider exploring webinars and podcasts related to your industry or areas of interest. These resources often feature experts sharing valuable insights, tips and strategies.

• **Establish a mentorship:** Having a mentor can be invaluable for your professional growth. They can offer guidance, insights and career advice based on their own experiences. Finding a mentor among your colleagues, bosses, coaches or admired professionals can provide you with personalized support on your career journey.

• **Read:** Seek out books, articles and online recommendations related to your industry or areas of interest.

• **Attend networking events:** Build connections with other professionals through networking events and conferences. This can lead to new opportunities, provide valuable insights and help you build a referral base.

• **Set goals:** Regularly take time to reflect on your career goals and progress. Set specific and measurable objectives for your professional development and track your achievements. Seek out constructive criticism to help you identify areas for improvement.

Investing in your professional development is an ongoing journey. Embrace a growth mindset and actively seek ways to expand your knowledge and skill set. If you're interested in learning how the chamber can help you reach your goals, email me at info@norwalkchamber.org. ■

Information provided by Lauren Ebensteiner, executive director, Norwalk Area Chamber of Commerce.

promote. connect. grow.

View the business directory
www.norwalkchamber.org

Connecting Community to Business



Community Events

- Ribbon Cuttings
- Fall Warren County Women's Mentoring Event
- RUNorwalk 5K & 10K
- Speed Networking Event

Welcome Center

- Business Directory & Calendar
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Membership Information

norwalk
Area Chamber of Commerce



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Chamber today

OUT & ABOUT

RIBBON Cutting

Norwalk Chamber hosted a ribbon cutting for Fareway on Feb. 6.



Norwalk Chamber hosted a ribbon cutting for Fareway on Feb. 6.



Mya Krapfl, McKenna Kirchhoff and Madison Olson



Tanya Michael, Josh Althoff and Nolan Williams



Dakota Schnur and Jacob Mohlis



Jamie Richards and Zack Miller



Bill and Rita Mulcahy and Jake Moran



Joe Duffy, Cody Short and Todd Hynes



Julia Frost, Wyatt Black and Jordan Stoneburner



Conner Emswiler, Jackson Zeigler and Chloe Stoneburner



Todd Hanson and Mike Barbour

OUT & ABOUT



Dan Obley and Lorie Williamson



Oliver and Travis Stanley



Bryan Greiner and Newton Standridge



Reynolds Cramer and Lorie Williamson



Heather Soyer and Cal Kocinski



Brent Addison and Brendan and Christian Comito



Amanda Reid-Raper, Kyle Doyle and Lauren Ebensteiner



Karen and Jim Beckwith and Ryan Nicholson



Jason Smith and Olivia Hickcox



Taylor Olson, Dustin Wearmouth, Michael Huff, Jon Swenson, Grace Forster and Tania Bowman



Andrea Chase and Madison Rahn



Joe Standefer and Jeff Cook

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