

ANKENY

MARCH 2024

# Living

MAGAZINE

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of their dreams-come-  
true vacations

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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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# Trips OF A *lifetime*

Residents share stories of their  
dreams-come-true vacations

By Ashley Rullestad

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.

Leah and Toby Sangel not only traveled to Switzerland with their kids, Jonah, Everly and Hollyn, but also with Leah’s parents, Sandy and Dave Gilbertson, and sister, Carlie Gilbertson.



## Swiss bliss

Leah Sangel's husband, Toby, travels a lot for work. When he needed to travel to Switzerland, the opportunity arose for Leah and their kids, Jonah, 8, Everly, 7, and Hollyn, 3, to come along, as well as Leah's parents, Sandy and Dave Gilbertson, and sister, Carlie Gilbertson.

"This trip was truly magical," Leah says. "Toby didn't end up working at all, and our trip was pure leisure, and it was amazing."

Leah's parents did a lot of the planning, and it took the group nearly a year to work out all the details. They joined social media groups and bought books about Switzerland for their research. Ultimately, they chose what parts of the country they would visit but didn't plan their days until they arrived and decided what they wanted to do. They booked all the travel and accommodations themselves.

"We had to limit our locations and choose some places over others, and we didn't plan everything out," says Leah. "I'm glad we went this route since, once we were there, we wanted to go slow and take in every mountain peak and all the beauty. Ten days, and there wasn't a



The Sangels found the views in Switzerland to be breathtaking.

single thing that I wouldn't recommend."

Leah's favorite part of the trip was paragliding with her mom, who was celebrating her 60th birthday.

"It was a cloudy day when we jumped off

the cliff, but, as we broke through the clouds into the Alps, we heard the church bells ringing below," she says. "Magical. Our children enjoyed all the mountaintop parks, we ate too much chocolate, and we haven't stopped talking

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## FEATURE

about it since September.”

Their favorite town was Zermatt, a carless village. They had to take a gondola up to the chalet.

“Goat bells would wake you up in the morning,” she says. “The people were unbelievably kind. My daughter sobbed when we went back to the train to leave. It can be a challenge to travel with small kids, but I’m so glad we did. It was a wonderful experience for us all.”

### Around the world

After the stress of the pandemic, Mike Fuller left his job in the health care sector. His wife, Krista, and their girls, Jeanna, Madeline and Abigail, felt the effects as well. One night, while watching “House Hunters International,” Krista wondered what it would take for the family to just leave it all behind for a while and travel to places unknown. The result was a five-month trip spanning three continents and 20 countries.

“Our oldest, Jeanna, was graduating from high school that year and just the craziness we all felt after COVID, the idea just hit me,”



While in India, the Fullers visited the Taj Mahal.



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## FEATURE

Krista says. “We told the girls on beggars’ night of 2021. The girls all missed a semester of school to do the trip.”

They played it all a bit by ear. They didn’t start planning destinations until a month before they left. They started by opening Google Flights and picking the cheapest European destination there was for that July — Amsterdam. Once they had their first spot picked, they started to plan the next destinations a few weeks in advance.

“Mike was the major planner once the trip got going, and I made the arrangements,” says Krista. “He used a lot of Tik Tok advice, and we were almost never led astray. Besides our first stay in Amsterdam and our time in India and Egypt, we used Airbnb for all of our accommodations. We even Airbnb’d a sailboat and captain in Greece for four nights as we sailed around the islands — one of my favorites for sure.”

They traveled by plane, car, train and bus. They found, while in Europe, plane tickets bought two weeks out were generally the cheapest way to travel. Mike and Madeline ran the family Instagram account, which highlighted some of Mike’s crazy endeavors including snake charming in India and SCUBA diving with sharks in Dubai.

Krista says there were many experiences they shared that were amazing. They lived for a month in Barcelona. They saw the Taj Mahal and the Great Sphinx, which is strangely now located near a Pizza Hut and KFC. They rode a mountain coaster in Andorra.

“They let you just drive around Cairo, population 22 million, zero stop signs or traffic signals,” says Krista. “We took old, almost broken down four-wheelers to get to the desert, and then we went flying over sand dunes. It was insane and one of our favorite things. As it was getting



Kelsey Nicol and her kids, Liam and Stella, interact with elephants on their trip to South Africa and Zambia.

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dark — and none of the lights worked — and we drove by a dead, decaying camel, I thought, ‘This is where I have to call my dad and tell him he was right, and this was a terrible idea and please come get us.’”

Late in their trip, Japan opened up to travelers after COVID. They were able visit there last minute and felt like the only tourists in Japan. It was a top three destination for all five of them.

Some people might have wondered if they were crazy to take the girls out of school, but Krista says most people were supportive, especially Abigail’s teachers. (She was in seventh grade at the time.)

“I realized the girls would learn so much traveling. I would definitely say traveling with three teenage daughters isn’t for the faint of heart, but I would absolutely do it all over again. It was the trip of a lifetime.”

## Around Africa

Kelsey Nicol worked for ITA Group in West Des Moines for 15 years, and she would plan corporate incentive trips all over the world for Fortune 500 companies. She was fortunate to

visit South Africa three times with clients, and she says she fell in love with it.

“After listening to motivational speaker and author Ben Nemitin at a conference in 2018, who spoke about writing down your bucket list and making it happen, my family created a plan,” says Kelsey. “Last August, we went to South Africa (Cape Town and Kruger National Park) and Zambia. South Africa is my favorite place on Earth. Having been there for work many times, I couldn’t ever leave Earth without sharing it with my family.”

They selected Zambia to see Victoria Falls and have a river safari experience. It was important to Kelsey and her husband, Chris, for their kids, Liam, 12, and Stella, 10, to visit a local school while in Africa to see how other children in different cultures live. Dragonfly, the company they booked the travel with, works with a school in Zambia, so they recommended that the family visit there.

“We had a life-changing experience and were also able to teach at a classroom in Zambia where children walk four miles each way to go to school, motivated by the one meal in a day they will have there.”



The Nicol family enjoyed a trip to South Africa and Zambia.

Now, the Nicols get updates from the school via Facebook and email. They hope to return someday and will continue to donate. The school welcomes any support and has a place for volunteers to stay on the property. They run off 100% donations.

“It was the most emotional, moving experience of the whole trip,” says Kelsey. “It was such an experience for our family. I believe in not just speaking about a bucket list but making it happen.” ■

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## HISTORIC area big draw for Davis

Uptown resident finds neighborhood fits her lifestyle.

Teresa Davis can do it all in Ankeny: live, work, shop, participate and much more.

She moved to town three years ago in order to be closer to her Uptown Ankeny business, West Forty Market, a local meat and grocery store.

Davis currently rents a place in town and enjoys much of what Ankeny has to offer.

"I live in the Uptown neighborhood and love the small-town feel," she says. "I grew up in a small town of about 1,000 people in northeast Iowa, so Uptown feels like home to me. It has so many neat shops and restaurants, not to mention the accessibility to the amazing bike path."

Even beyond the Uptown area, there's so much to do in Ankeny, Davis says.

"I also really love the small-town feel when it comes to people," she says. "Myself and my business have been welcomed and really supported since day one. I've met some incredible people here in Ankeny."

Because she's a proud business owner — her store offers meat raised by Iowa farmers and other products sourced from fellow Iowa businesses — Davis is active in Ankeny's business community. She's a member of the Ankeny Chamber of Commerce and serves as vice president of the Uptown Association.

"I am heavily involved in Uptown in many ways," she says. "Being a part of the revitalization of the Uptown neighborhood has been such a treat. I've learned so much about the history of Ankeny, and to see a quiet, empty part of town come back to life is such a neat experience." ■



Teresa Davis enjoys living and working in Uptown Ankeny.

### NEWS BRIEF

## ON WITH LIFE to acquire New Horizons

A letter of intent has been signed by On With Life to acquire New Horizons, an adult day center in Ankeny. The acquisition will ensure the continuation and growth of much needed home and community-based rehabilitation services to Ankeny and surrounding communities, while adding to On With Life's continuum of care.

"We're thrilled about this partnership as there is a critical need for more home and community-based services in our area," said Dr. Jean Shelton, On With Life CEO. "On With Life already provides a range of post-acute services to individuals living with a neurological injury or condition, but the partnership and acquisition of New Horizons

will help us deepen our reach and capabilities to serve even more people. New Horizons and On With Life were both founded by individuals with a strong passion to support the rehabilitation needs of the community and both have an unwavering people-first philosophy, making it a great culture fit."

New Horizons opened in 2000 and offers day programming and recreational therapy that includes exercise, arts and crafts, pet and music therapy, interactive and cognitive games, dance and movement and various community outings. Recreation therapy coordinators treat and help maintain the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of persons served by helping to reduce depression,

stress and anxiety; recover or maintain basic motor functioning and reasoning abilities; build confidence; and socialize effectively.

"We know that, through socialization and maintaining a certain level of independence, those we serve can enjoy a higher quality of life, and that's what we're all about," stated Lisa Noble, New Horizons executive director. "On With Life's track record in neuro rehabilitation is nationally recognized, so this partnership will provide an even higher level of services to those who need it."

On With Life plans to utilize and expand the current New Horizons services in Ankeny, and the official partnership and acquisition is scheduled to be finalized by July 1. ■



## 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



## SUPPORT needed for after prom events

Funds are being raised for the after prom events for Ankeny High School and Ankeny Centennial High School. The goal is to provide a night of safe, entertaining activities that reflect the community spirit of caring and encourages students to make responsible choices.

Ankeny parents have had a long-standing tradition of providing a safe and substance-free party for students on prom night. Again this year, the 2024 Ankeny Hawk and Centennial Prom Dances and After Prom events will continue as four amazing events. The After Prom committee will be channeling all the fundraising into one account, allowing all resources to be divided equally between both high schools. The Ankeny Centennial After Prom will be held on April 6, and the Ankeny High School After Prom will be held on April 20. After Prom will follow the prom dances at each of the high schools.

Committee members are asking the public to support the events. The After Prom committee will be providing entertainment, games, activities, food and prizes to encourage students to attend and make positive choices. Your monetary contribution, gift cards/certificates, food or gift items would be greatly appreciated.

Each donation will receive a social media shout-out. Those making donations of \$250 - \$499 will be listed on the back of the After Prom T-shirt. Those making a donation of \$500 or more will have their logo on the back of the After Prom T-shirt.

Donations can be mailed to Ankeny After Prom, P.O. Box 1181, Ankeny, IA 50021; made through Venmo:@ankenyafterprom; or picked up by a committee member by emailing AnkenyHighAfterProm@gmail.com or afterprom4achs@gmail.com. ■

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# SPARKLE RUN continues to honor Moomey

This year's run benefits Above & Beyond Cancer's Young Adult program.

The Sparkle Run returns to honor the memory of Erin Moomey and raise money for programs that benefit people with cancer. A fifth-grader at Crocker Elementary, Erin died of complications from her battle with leukemia in October 2013. Soon after, two of Erin's elementary school teachers who were avid runners contacted the Moomey family and asked if they could put together a 5K walk/run in Erin's memory.

"We love to have this event every year to continue to remember Erin Moomey and the light she brought into the world," says organizer Becky Jordan. "Every single year, our community shows up to support us and remember the amazing girl she was."

Erin loved the color pink and called herself a "sparkle diva," so organizers wanted the run's name to reflect her sunny personality, and thus the Sparkle Run was born. The first run was held in 2014, and this year's 11th annual run will again be held in Ankeny at the DMACC campus on May 5.

Over the past nine years, run organizers have donated \$282,694 to several organizations including Blank Children's Hospital, Kids Living Brave, Make-A-Wish Iowa, Children's Cancer Connection, Pinky Swear, Tori's Angels, the Ronald McDonald House, My Happy Place and MercyOne Children's Hospital. Last year, \$41,000 was raised for Blank Children's Hospital, where Erin received treatment during her illness.

This year, the proceeds are going to Above & Beyond Cancer's Young Adult program.

"Because Erin would have now been 21 years old, we wanted to give the money to an organization we felt she would have been involved in if she was still with us," Jordan says.

Above & Beyond Cancer does amazing work in the Central Iowa cancer community, and organizers are excited to be able to help them grow their Young Adult program. They also hope to help pay for a young adult to join Above & Beyond's Transformational Journey this year, which will consist of hiking and camping the Appalachian trail for six nights this fall.

Packet pick-up and family activities will be held on race day May 5 at 2 p.m., with the 5K



Over the years, the Sparkle Run had raised more than \$282,600 for cancer-related charities.



walk/run and one-mile fun run for kids. The cost is \$30 per person for ages 19 and older and \$20 per person for those 18 and younger. Cost includes a T-shirt, which can be picked up the

day of the event.

To register or make a donation, visit [sparklerun.org](http://sparklerun.org) or visit The Sparkle Run on Facebook. ■





Ankeny First United Methodist Church

# EASTER

*reminds us*

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**FAITH**

By Pastor John Wagner

## JESUS is alive

Rather than type hundreds of words of my own this month, I invite each of you to read the scripture below and “wonder” — in your own way — about what is happening or what could happen next...

From Luke’s Gospel, chapter 24, verses 1-12 (NET)

“1 Now on the first day of the week, at early dawn, the women went to the tomb, taking the aromatic spices they had prepared. 2 They found that the stone had been rolled away from the tomb, 3 but when they went in, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. 4 While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men stood beside them in dazzling attire. 5 The women were terribly frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, “Why do you look for the living among the dead? 6 He is not here, but has been raised! Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, 7 that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again.” 8 Then the women remembered his words, 9 and when they returned from the tomb, they told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. 10 Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles. 11 But these words seemed like pure nonsense to them, and they did not believe them. 12 But Peter got up and ran to the tomb. He bent down and saw only the strips of linen cloth; then he went home, wondering what had happened.”

In the Christian church, Easter is a celebration of Jesus rising from the grave — conquering sin and death! The scripture above tells us that, after Jesus’ death, women who were close to him came to his tomb to honor him. Upon arrival, they discover Jesus’ body is missing. They are reminded that Jesus has risen — just as he said. One of Jesus’ disciples, Peter, also arrives and observes the empty tomb. The scripture says he “wonders” what had happened.

As I read and reread this scripture, I started praying for you. I’m praying that you will read the scripture, wonder, and ask God questions like these... “Are you real? Is this true? What is happening? What does an empty tomb mean for me? Can you show me? How can I get to know you better?” I pray that new knowledge of God’s love for you overwhelms you and causes such gratitude within you that you pause to “wonder” every single day about the goodness and love of God!

Jesus is alive. God’s love is real. Today is a great day to “wonder” and remember that God loves you!

Happy Easter, Ankeny. ■

Information provided by John Wagner, campus pastor,  
Christian Life Center, Ankeny First United Methodist Church,  
[john.wagner@ankenfirst.org](mailto:john.wagner@ankenfirst.org).





## 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.

3/10 - 4/30

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# SUPPORT your Ankeny Library

The 2024 Ankeny Summer Library Program will be here before you know it. Librarians are deep into planning for a summer of fun and new experiences, with registration beginning on Tuesday, May 28. Don't forget about our kickoff concert on Thursday, June 6, at 6 p.m. at the Ankeny Bandshell, featuring YouTube sensation Patty Shukla. Learn more about other great events by picking up a paper calendar at the library or by visiting <https://ankenylibrarycalendar.com/>.

Thanks to the generosity of sponsors like our Friends of the Ankeny Library, this year, the Summer Library Program will feature more opportunities to win prizes than ever. Each week there will be a prize drawing for children, teens and adults. The program is more than just reading; it's an experience designed to ignite the spark of curiosity in readers of all ages. Whether you're a young explorer, a teenager seeking new horizons, or an adult looking to escape into a good book, our program has something for everyone. Stay tuned for more information.

If you're interested in supporting the

Summer Library Program, here are a few ways you can help:

- Cash donations are accepted year-round at the library or online at <https://friendsoftheankenylibrary.org/>.
- Volunteer with the Friends. Contact them through their website to learn more about volunteer opportunities.
- Donate your new or gently used books. Donations are accepted at the circulation desk on the first floor of the library and are used for Summer Library Program prizes or are sold at the Novel Findings bookstore.
- Purchase books from the Novel Findings bookstore, located on the first floor of the library. Most materials are \$2 or less.
- Buy a gift certificate. For just \$2, you can purchase a certificate good for two items from Novel Findings. These certificates make great basket stuffers or birthday gifts. Available at the circulation desk.
- Another way to support the Summer Library Program is to purchase shirts or a tote bag from our online store. In partnership



Shirts and totes can be purchased with funds going to support the Ankeny Kirkendall Public Library.

with Wee's Tees, shirts and totes are available for \$15. Purchases can be shipped to you or picked up from either Wee's Tees or the library. View the online store and order at <https://summerlibraryprogram2024.itemorder.com/>.

Are you interested in hearing more about library resources and events like the Summer Library Program? Sign up for our monthly eNewsletter by visiting <https://bit.ly/ankenylibrarynewsletter>. ■

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# 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 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.

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## 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 [projectwatson.com](http://projectwatson.com). ■




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EASTER VIGIL	MAR 30	8:00 PM
EASTER DAY	MAR 31	8:30 & 10:30 AM



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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-winning) 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.*



# The \$12 million disappointment

Live comfortably, protect your nest egg, AND grow your investments. Is that too much to expect in retirement? It's what retirees want, but how do you get there? If you're like most folks, navigating the retirement planning maze can feel daunting. Here's the good news. You're not alone. The key isn't necessarily a complex strategy; it's about having a clear understanding of the numbers and what they mean.



We recently met with a couple, age 55; their financial advisor told them that the \$1 million they saved for retirement would grow to \$12 million by age 100. You might think the couple would celebrate, sit back, and get ready to enjoy retirement, but they didn't. They came to us and said something just didn't look right.

So, we took that \$1 million retirement savings and put together two comprehensive retirement plans. One showed them with \$1.7 million at age 100 (using a 6% rate of return), and the other showed them running out of money at age 88 (using a 4% rate of return).

So why are the projections so different? We need a clearer understanding

of the numbers. The \$12 million projection did not include spending, taxes, or inflation. The advisor focused on one thing: investments. Plus, the projected rate of return was 8%.

We start our planning process by asking the couple about their lifestyle, what they want to do in retirement, and figuring out how much money it will take to pay for those things. Then, we work on an investment plan that doesn't solely rely on the stock market; we call this building a recession-resistant portfolio. We also like to use conservative stock market rates of return assumptions, like 4-6%, then, if the market is great, you are ahead, but if the market is down, the plan still works.

Though our comprehensive plan showed them with more than \$10 million less at age 100 (even running out of money in one scenario), they felt better about the numbers. Why? We laid out a clear plan that includes how they are going to fund their retirement lifestyle, invest for growth, take steps to reduce their retirement tax bill, pay for health care, and leave a legacy with whatever is left when they are gone.

Now, they are heading into retirement with a clear understanding of how they could live comfortably, protect their nest egg, AND grow their investments.

Information provided by Loren Merkle CFP®, RICP®, Certified Financial Fiduciary®, Merkle Retirement Planning, 1860 S.E. Princeton Drive, Grimes, 515-278-1006.

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## EVENTS IN THE AREA

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

Check for cancellations

### Neighbor to Neighbor free meal

March 24, 5 p.m. Doors open at 4 p.m.

St. Anne's Episcopal Church,  
2110 W. First St. Ankeny

This month, the meal will feature chicken and rice with side dishes and dessert. No one is required or expected to be a member of St. Anne's to attend. The meals are free and are followed by seven hands of free bingo. There are small prizes for six hands and a \$15 gift card for the last hand. Freewill donations are accepted but not required or expected.

### Student art exhibits and receptions

Receptions March 28 and April 4

The Ankeny Art Center, 1520 S.W. Ordinance Road

The Ankeny Art Center's annual K-12 art exhibits have been part of an extended outreach program for more than two decades. The center's goal is to introduce students to the gallery setting, increase community involvement, and promote culture and diversity.

Reception dates are: Ankeny CSD South Feeder Schools, March 28, 5-7 p.m., and Ankeny CSD North Feeder Schools, April 4, 5-7 p.m. Receptions will include drinks and cookies and are always free and open to the public. Works will be on display and available for viewing during the Ankeny Art Center's open hours.



### Write on Thursdays organizational meeting

April 4, 6 p.m.

Ankeny Kirkendall Public  
Library, 1250 S.W. District  
Drive, Ankeny

The public is invited to the organizational meeting for forming the group, Write on Thursdays. Welcome to a fun, creative experience on the first and third Thursday of each month. Open to all skill levels, all ages and all genres.



### Free introductory session

Friday, April 5, at 6:30 p.m.

Passion Studios, 2201 W. First St., Ankeny

The public is invited to a free introductory session at Passion Studios. Experience a session, learn more about the Simply Music learning method, and get answers for any questions you may have. You'll also learn about Passion Studios, meet an instructor and hear their personal story.

An advertisement for Rise & Shine Bath Systems. It features a photograph of a person's arm wearing a blue shirt with the company logo. The logo is a blue and yellow sun-like shape with the text 'Rise & Shine BATH SYSTEMS'. Below the photo is a blue banner with white text listing services and contact information.

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## EVENTS IN THE AREA

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Check for cancellations



### Spring Pancake Breakfast

Saturday, April 13, 7-11 a.m.  
First United Methodist Church,  
206 S.W. Walnut St., Ankeny

Ankeny Lions Club will hold its Spring Pancake Breakfast for a freewill donation. Come one and come all and support your Ankeny Lions.

### Annual Art Supply Garage Sale

May 2, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

The Ankeny Art Center, 1520 S.W. Ordinance Road

Find new and gently used art supplies while supporting the Ankeny Art Center in this annual fundraiser. The sale begins at 11 a.m. and select large items will go on sale at 5 p.m.



### Ankeny Art Festival

May 11, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Uptown Ankeny, Third Street and Walnut Street

The Ankeny Arts Council is bringing back the Ankeny Art Festival on a much larger scale. The festival will transform several streets of Ankeny's Historic Uptown into a vibrant celebration of creativity and artistic expression and feature fine art vendors working in mediums such as fine painting, ceramics, woodworking, jewelry, mixed media, metal works, glass, digital, and so many others. Along with 50 or more vendors displaying their talents, the public can enjoy live music and artistic demonstrations, food trucks, and entertainment for the children.

### ACHS Spring Musical: Disney's 'The Little Mermaid'

April 19 and 20 at 7 p.m. and April 21 at 2 p.m.

ACHS Auditorium, 2220 N.W. State St.

This spring, the Ankeny Centennial High School drama and music departments are producing Disney's "The Little Mermaid." Based on one of Hans Christian Andersen's most beloved stories and the classic animated film, Ariel wishes to pursue the human Prince Eric in the world above, bargaining with the evil sea witch, Ursula, to trade her tail for legs. But the bargain is not what it seems, and Ariel needs the help of her colorful friends, Flounder the fish, Scuttle the seagull, and Sebastian the crab, to restore order under the sea. This fishy fable will capture your heart with its irresistible and familiar songs. Adult tickets are \$15 and child/student tickets are \$10. They can be purchased at the door with cash/check or online in advance at [achsdrama.ludus.com](http://achsdrama.ludus.com).

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Check for cancellations

## City meetings

- City Council meeting, April 1, 5:30 p.m., council chambers
- Zoning Board of Adjustment, April 2, 5 p.m., council chambers
- Plan and Zoning Commission, April 2, 6:30 p.m., council chambers
- Board of Examiners and Appeals, April 9, 5:45 p.m., public services building
- City Council meeting, April 15, 5:30 p.m., council chambers
- Zoning Board of Adjustment, April 16, 5 p.m., council chambers
- Plan and Zoning Commission, April 16, 6:30 p.m., council chambers

## Des Moines Comic and Toy Show

March 23-24

Merle Hay Mall, 3800 Merle Hay Road,  
Des Moines  
[quadcitcon.com](http://quadcitcon.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.



## Hoyt Sherman Place performances

1501 Woodland Ave., Des Moines  
[hoytsherman.org](http://hoytsherman.org)

- March 24 at 8 p.m. Pink Floyd Laser Spectacular
- March 26 at 7:30 p.m. Brian Culbertson - The Trilogy Tour



## 2024 Iowa Horse Fair

March 22-24

Iowa State Fairgrounds Varied Industries Building, 3000 E. Grand Ave., Des Moines  
[iahorsefair.com](http://iahorsefair.com)

Trial challenges, performance demonstrations, mini-rodeo, competitions and more will be featured.

## 53rd Annual Juried Student Exhibition

March 24-April 14

Anderson Gallery, 1310 25th St., Des Moines  
[andersongallery.wp.drake.edu](http://andersongallery.wp.drake.edu)

A showcase of the students of the Drake Art & Design program, this competitive juried exhibition highlights student work in a variety of mediums.

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## EVENTS IN THE AREA

Check for cancellations

### 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

### Elks Spring Style Show Fundraiser

Saturday, April 6 from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

West Des Moines Elks Lodge, 2060 N.W. 94th St., Clive

Go shopping and enjoy lunch at the Elks Spring Style Show Fundraiser. Many fabulous vendors and terrific door prizes are included. Cost is \$15 for admission and funds benefit the Elks' veterans projects. Fashion show starts at 11 a.m. with shopping and lunch to follow. A 50/50 raffle will also be held. Must be present to win prizes.

### You Can Grow Orchids events

Saturday, April 13, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Canoyer Garden Center, 3355 S.E. Gateway Drive, Grimes

The Central Iowa Orchid Society is hosting an orchid event, with an orchid display, culture information, orchid sale and orchid clinic in which experts will answer questions about your troubled orchid and even help to repot it. Follow them on: Central Iowa Orchid Society Facebook page.



### Michael Jefry Stevens and Christian Howes

Sunday, May 5, 2 p.m.

Caspe Terrace, 33158 Ute Ave., Waukee

Over the past 40 years, pianist/composer Michael Jefry Stevens has been associated with some of the most important figures in modern jazz. Ranked among the top violinists in jazz, Christian Howes has demonstrated his virtuosity and creativity on numerous recordings since the early 2000s. As evidenced by their 2023 release, "Precipice," when you combine these two improvisers, you end up with pure beauty and joy in every note. Tickets for Jazz at Caspe Terrace concerts are \$30 each and can be ordered by calling 515-279-6452 or emailing abegold1951@gmail.com. You can also purchase tickets at jazzatcaspe.weebly.com. Seating is limited to 130 so reservations are encouraged. Caspe Terrace is owned and operated by the Jewish Federation of Greater Des Moines. ■



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# BEWARE of phone call scams

Have you received a phone call urging you to act immediately because you owe money to the IRS, something is wrong with your bank account or debit/credit card, or there's a warrant out for your arrest? These are common messages scammers may use to scare you into providing your personal information or sending them money. These attempts have become more sophisticated with messaging and technology that makes their call appear to come from a known phone number.

## What are phone call scams?

Most phone call scams involve a fraudster impersonating the IRS or other government organization, a bank, law enforcement, Microsoft



Mindy Selix



Yvonne Silvers

or a similar organization. They commonly claim you owe money, your family member is in danger, your credit card has been compromised, there's a problem with your bank account or computer, or there's a warrant out for your arrest.

Once the scammer gets you on the phone, they instill a sense of urgency, requesting you act quickly to either obtain your personal information, receive access to your personal computer, or complete a money transfer. If the fraudster gets ahold of the desired information, they go on to commit identity theft, steal additional funds and more. It's important to note that these attacks are random, and victims are not usually targeted.

## How to protect yourself from phone call scams

If you answer a call and notice any of the red flags mentioned above, hang up immediately. Never give out your information to someone you don't know or for a request you didn't expect. Keep in mind, even when a phone number appears to be local and looks like the organization's legitimate number, it could be fake. Scammers have evolved over time and can now even "spoof" phone numbers.

## What to do if you're a victim of a phone call scam

If you've received a phone call scam and have already given out your information or made a payment or you believe your identity may be compromised, here are immediate steps to take:

1. Contact the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to file a complaint online or by calling 877-FTC-HELP (877-382-4357).
2. File an identity theft claim online at [identitytheft.gov](http://identitytheft.gov).
3. Notify the financial institution(s) you work with.
4. Notify the three major credit agencies, Equifax, Experian and TransUnion, to place a freeze on your credit.
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6. Change all your internet banking passwords. ■

Information provided by Mindy Selix, 515-222-2017, [mselix@bankerstrust.com](mailto:mselix@bankerstrust.com), NMLS ID#: 571223 and Yvonne Silvers, 515-222-2005, [ysilvers@bankerstrust.com](mailto:ysilvers@bankerstrust.com), NMLS ID#: 571224, 1925 N. Ankeny Blvd. Ankeny.

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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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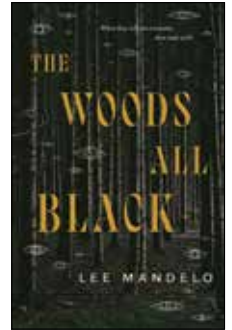
## 'The Woods All Black'

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*



By Lee Mandelo  
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## INVESTMENT

By Mark Ellison

## TIME for financial spring cleaning?

Spring is almost here, which means it's time for some spring cleaning. This year, in addition to tidying your home and surroundings, you might want to consider sprucing up your financial environment, as well. Here are some suggestions for doing just that:



• **Improve your vision.** Once the days are warmer and longer, you may want to get outside and clean all the winter grime and smudges from your windows, allowing you to see the world more clearly. And you may want to bring more focus to your financial vision by asking some key questions: Is my investment strategy still appropriate for my needs, goals and family situation? If not, what changes should I make? And am I prepared for changes in my life, such as health challenges or a need to retire earlier than planned? The answers to these and other questions can help you clarify where you are, in terms of your financial picture, and where you want to go.

• **De-clutter.** As you look around your home, you may find things such as expired health care products, old prescriptions, ancient cleaning solutions, and so on, in addition to duplicate household items (how many blenders do you really need?) and non-working equipment — printers, laptops, etc. Most people find that eliminating this clutter gives them a good feeling — and more livable space. As an investor, you can also find clutter in the form of redundant investments. For example, you might own several nearly identical mutual funds. You might be better off selling some of these funds and using the proceeds to find new investments that can help you further diversify your portfolio. As you may know, diversification is a key to investment success, but keep in mind that it can't prevent all losses.

• **Plant seeds of opportunity.** Whether they're planting camellias and crocuses or carrots and cilantro, gardeners are busy in the spring, hoping their efforts result in lovely flowers and tasty foods. And when you invest, you, too, need to plant seeds of opportunity in the form of investments you hope will grow enough to enable you to make progress toward your goals.

So, you may want to review your portfolio to ensure it's providing this growth potential, given your individual risk tolerance.

• **Reduce dangers.** You may not think about it that much, but your home and surroundings can contain potential hazards. You might have ill-fitting caps on cleaning products with toxic chemicals, sharp cutting instruments protruding from shelves in your garage, or heavy, cracked tree branches hovering close to your roof. Spending some time on a spring-cleaning sweep can get rid of these dangers — and devoting time to consider the possible threats to your financial security, and those of your family, can pay off, too. For starters, review your life insurance to determine if you've got enough. Your employer may offer some coverage as an employee benefit, but it might not be sufficient, so you may need private coverage. And the same is true for disability insurance, because if something were to happen to you, and you couldn't work for a while, you'd still want to protect your family's lifestyle. Spring is a great time for brightening your physical space — and your financial one, too. ■

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Edward Jones, Member SIPC. Edward Jones, its employees and financial advisors cannot provide tax or legal advice. You should consult your attorney or qualified tax advisor regarding your situation. Information provided by Mark Ellison, AAMS™, 2505 S.W. White Birch Drive, Suite I, Ankeny, IA 50023, 515-965-2473.



# WHAT IS Social Security Disability?

Social Security Disability is a program managed by the federal government. This program provides income to those who are unable to work due to physical or mental conditions that will last more than a

year or result in the individual's death, and the conditions prevent the individual from performing any type of work activity. The two main programs of Social Security Disability are Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income.

Social Security Disability Insurance, which is also referred to as SSDI, is a program that provides benefits based on the individual's work history and the amount that he or she has paid into Social Security. Applicants under this program must be younger than 65 and have



enough "work credits" earned.

Supplemental Security Income, which is also referred to as SSI, is a program intended for those who have not worked long enough to qualify for Social Security Disability Insurance. In addition, an individual who has never worked may be eligible for Supplemental Security Income. Individuals applying for this program must have limited income and resources. These guidelines generally match the eligibility criteria for Medicaid (Title XIX).

The application and appeal processes are similar for the two programs. The first step is the initial application, where the applicant submits an application and all medical evidence to the Social Security Administration. If the initial claim is denied, then the applicant has 60 days to file an appeal, which is referred to as a request for reconsideration.

Next, if the request for reconsideration is denied, then a request for a hearing may be

filed. This hearing will allow the applicant to appear before an administrative law judge. After the hearing, the administrative law judge will issue a decision regarding the individual's disability status. If the administrative law judge issues an unfavorable decision, an appeal to the Appeals Council may be submitted. The final appeal step is to request the Federal District Court to review the decision. An applicant may be represented by an attorney at all levels.

In certain cases, an individual may be eligible for both programs. Applying for disability can be a long and complicated process. An expert attorney is able to analyze an individual's eligibility and assist with the application and appeal processes. ■

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

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## HEALTH

By Dr. Todd Pietig

## NEW treatment for dry eyes

Having dry eyes sounds like such a trivial problem, but those who suffer from it know it can be a serious burden. Approximately 16 million Americans suffer from dry eye disease, and it's a growing problem due to increased screen time. The symptoms include stinging, burning, a gritty sensation, red eyes, fluctuating vision and, in some cases, watery eyes. I still remember going to the eye doctor when I was in college to seek some help for my dry eyes, and all I got was a sample of some lubricating drops which did little to ease my suffering. Thankfully, dry eye management is now one of the most rapidly growing areas of eye care. There are a variety of new treatment options such as prescription medications, oral supplements, eyelid cleaners, improved artificial tears, and light therapy. Intense pulsed light, also known as IPL, is a machine that delivers controlled pulses of red and infrared light to the face and eyelids. IPL has been used for more than two decades in dermatology, but recently it has become popular in eye care due to the realization that it helps people with dry eyes. Treatment with IPL has been shown to improve oil gland function, decrease ocular inflammation, destroy vessels associated with rosacea, reduce the population of bacteria on the eyelids, and increase tone of eyelid skin, which may improve blinking. All of those benefits can ease the discomfort and pain from dry eyes. Patients have had great success with IPL, and we are committed to helping patients get relief from their dry eye symptoms. ■



Information provided by Dr. Todd Pietig, Ankeny Family Vision Center, 311 N. Ankeny Blvd., Ankeny, 515-964-1671.

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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](mailto:evans@sstherapyandconsulting.com), [www.sstherapyandconsulting.com](http://www.sstherapyandconsulting.com).



# WHAT IS spinal stenosis?

Canal narrowing causes pain.

Spinal stenosis occurs when the channels through which your spinal cord and nerve roots travel become narrowed, thus squeezing the spinal cord and nerve roots. Spinal stenosis can lead to pain in your lower back, legs, neck, arms or hands, depending on where in your spine your spinal cord and/or nerves are getting squeezed. Spinal stenosis can happen anywhere in your spine, but it's most likely to happen in your low back (lumbar spine) or in your neck (cervical spine).

## Symptoms of spinal stenosis

To get the best treatment for your spinal stenosis, it's important to recognize and understand the symptoms. Since spinal stenosis can gradually develop as you age, the symptoms can also gradually develop — and gradually worsen. Also, symptoms can vary a great deal. You may have no symptoms at all, since narrowing of the spinal canal or other channels does not always compress the spinal cord or nerves.

Spinal stenosis in your lumbar spine can cause pain or cramping in your legs when you stand for long periods of time or when you walk. The discomfort usually eases if you bend forward or sit down but comes back when you stand upright. Pain that eases when you bend forward is typical of lumbar spinal stenosis. Other symptoms of lumbar spinal stenosis may include numbness, weakness or tingling in the leg or foot.

Spinal stenosis in your cervical spine can cause pain in the neck and shoulders. It may radiate down your arm or hand. Cervical spinal stenosis can also cause headaches, numbness or muscle weakness. It can also affect the nerves that control your balance, which can lead to clumsiness or a tendency to fall. The pain from cervical spinal stenosis may be occasional or chronic, and it can range from mild to severe.

## Treatment for spinal stenosis

From my experience, many cases of spinal stenosis respond more favorably when a multidisciplinary approach is taken. A qualified chiropractor can significantly improve the function of the spinal joints, while, at the same time, a medical doctor can address the biochemical inflammatory components. When chiropractic physicians and medical physicians work together, the patient benefits.

If you or someone you know is suffering from spinal stenosis and have not found the relief for which you are looking, please consider chiropractic. They may be able to help. ■

Information provided by Christopher M. Renze, D.C., D.I.B.C.N., of Renze Chiropractic Clinic, P.C. For more information, visit [www.renzechiro.com](http://www.renzechiro.com) or call the office at 965-3844.



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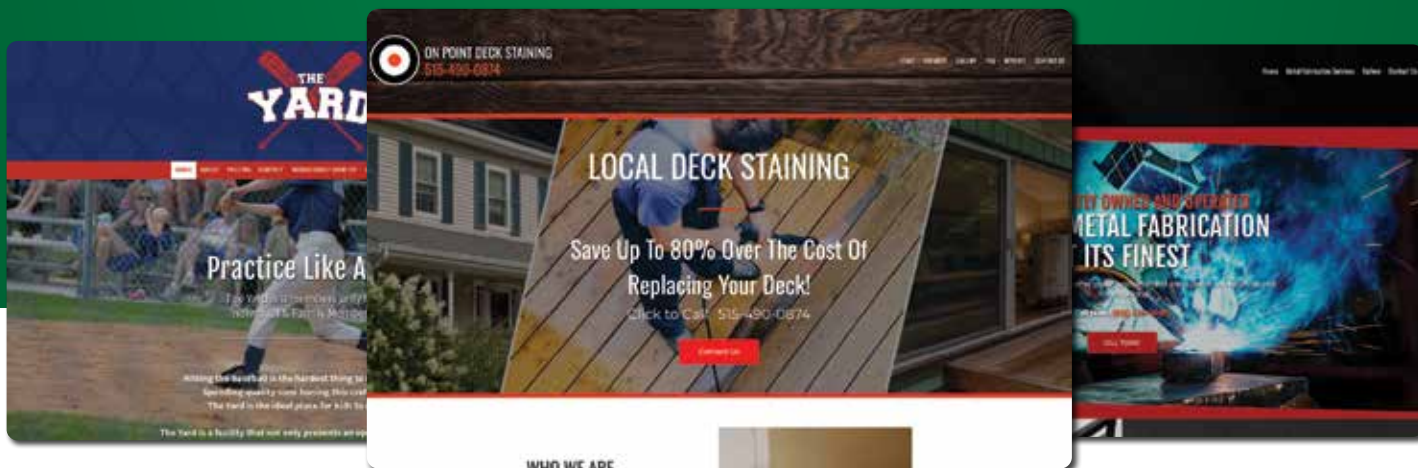
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# ANNUAL honors presented at dinner

YeeHaw! Wow, what an evening we had on Thursday, Feb. 15. The Ankeny Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner, presented by Murphy Enterprizes, was a huge success where we celebrated 2023 and gave out our annual awards. A huge thank you to all our sponsors.

Our Ankeny Young Professional (AYP) and Ambassador of the Year was Joe Bethel. Joe is a husband, a father, an avid golfer, a lifelong Ankeny resident and, in his spare time, sometimes dresses up as Mr. Clean.

The Employee of the Year award was given to Tony Mills, formerly of Karl Chevrolet and now owner of Apex Sway. Tony is everywhere supporting the Ankeny community. You can see his passion in everything he does, and he is here to make Ankeny a better place to live, work and play.

The next award recipient was Joel Cox from Porch Light Coffeehouse as the Small Businessperson of the Year. Joel is a staple to the Uptown Ankeny community. He provides a space where relationships can be built and developed into lifelong friendships.

Our Outstanding Citizen of the Year is Carole Eckles-Harding from Finishing Touchez. Carole is a true servant and leader strongly committed to making Ankeny a better place for each of us to live, work and play. She is active in many community groups, including the Ankeny Community Network and the Ankeny Chamber Multicultural Task Force. One of the nomination letters said, "Despite how often she is asked to serve, assist or show up, she always does so willingly and prepared. As a beacon of light to everyone who crosses her path, we are all privileged to experience the powerhouse that she is."

The final award for the evening was the Lifetime Impact award. When the committee created this award, we were thinking outside of the box, and we asked the chamber for something special. We were honored to present Doug Beech of Casey's this prestigious award. He has lived in Ankeny for more than 30 years and has a long list of accomplishments. He has been involved in church, Rotary, Ankeny Economic Development Corporation, Greater Des Moines Partnership, Economic Development Board, Iowa Business Council, and Iowa Association of Business & Industry. He even served on the city council, was co-chair of the Ankeny Market Pavilion, and was chair of our own Ankeny Chamber. Most importantly, when he lost a city council race in 2003, he didn't complain or move. Instead, he found other ways to serve the community and help the next person in line.

We are honored to have all award recipients as members of the Ankeny Area Chamber family. If you know of someone who would be a good candidate for any of our awards, please reach out to me at [mcox@ankeny.org](mailto:mcox@ankeny.org). ■

Information provided by Melisa Cox, president/CEO,  
Ankeny Area Chamber of Commerce.



## Congratulations!

### 2023 Award Winners

 <b>Joseph Bethel</b> Ambassador of the Year & Young Professional of the Year New York Life	 <b>Joel Cox</b> Small Businessperson of the Year Porch Light Coffeehouse	 <b>Carole Eckles-Harding</b> Outstanding Citizen of the Year The Finishing Touches, Inc.	 <b>Tony Mills</b> Employee of the Year Karl Chevrolet / Apex Sway	 <b>Doug Beech</b> Lifetime Impact Casey's General Stores
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# ANNUAL Dinner

The Ankeny Chamber Annual Dinner was held Feb. 15 at the FFA Enrichment Center.



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Brandon Converse, Juli Accola and Michelle Bowden



Joel and Joanna Cox



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Melisa and Erick Cox





A ribbon cutting was held for Caravel Autism Health, 2325 S.W. State St., Suite D, Ankeny, on Feb. 1.



Elsa Dickson and Amanda Herring at the ribbon cutting held for Caravel Autism Health on Feb. 1.



Mike Miller, Callie Price, Jamison Rigley, Brittnaey Freeman, Tim Hanna and Gordon Montgomery at the ribbon cutting held for Caravel Autism Health on Feb. 1.



Jamison Rigley, Jessica Grant, Elizabeth Madden and Cailee Price at the ribbon cutting held for Caravel Autism Health on Feb. 1.



Racheal Felton and Dr. Dallas Koppes at the open house Feb. 8 at Bountiful Life.



Dr. Michael and Abigail LaBounty at the open house Feb. 8 at Bountiful Life.



Front row: Adrian Noteboom, Racheal Felton, Nick LeWarne; back row: Katie Grove, Dallas Koppes, Emily Curtis, Michael LaBounty, Abigail LaBounty, Leann Subbert, McKenzie Bushaw, Cammie San and Anna Edwards at the open house Feb. 8 at Bountiful Life, 1310 S.W. State St., Unit B, Ankeny.

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