

POLK CITY Living Weekly

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 A BIG GREEN UMBRELLA MEDIA PUBLICATION

WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED.

GOOD FOR THE SOUL LOCAL MAN USING HORSES TO HELP VETERANS.

BY DARREN TROMBLAY

Given the opportunity, horses, according to Eric Moorman, the veteran equine specialist at Jester Park Equestrian Center, can connect with your soul and heart.

“They are proven to lower anxiety and depression levels by just being with them,” says Moorman, 59, a United States Marine Corps combat veteran who served in U.S. Marine Military Police from 1986-1992.

“Today, there are 22 suicides a day by combat veterans of Vietnam, Gulf War, Iraq and Afghanistan,” he says. “We have more combat veterans today than we’ve had in many years. The Veterans Administration is overwhelmed.”

Moorman, with his lifelong experience with horses and service to his country, thinks he can help. And has.

In 2016, Horses Helping Heroes began when the VA asked the Jester Park Equestrian Center to create a horse program in an attempt to help veterans suffering from PTSD, anxiety, depression or substance abuse.

A few short years later, in 2022, Moorman became a volunteer. In 2024, he became the director.

To date, Horses Helping Heroes has served 300 veterans.

Moorman now spends his weeks coordinating and leading sessions aimed at helping his fellow veterans, all through the spirit of riding a horse. Moorman welcomes



Eric Moorman is the veteran equine specialist at Jester Park Equestrian Center.

any and all veterans in need to reachout to him, or the program. Moorman says he will be adding a First Responder Horse Program to his itinerary soon, and even more programs will follow.

For more information, visit <https://www.polkcountyiowa.gov/conservation/jester-park-equestrian-center/horses-helping-heroes/>.

See a longer article in the North Polk Living magazine later this month. ■

POLK CITY WEATHER FORECAST

FRIDAY HIGH 55 | LOW 31

Mostly sunny



SATURDAY HIGH 56 | LOW 40

Breezy with times of clouds and sun



SUNDAY HIGH 57 | LOW 42

Mostly cloudy with some showers



MONDAY HIGH 66 | LOW 42

Pleasant; times of clouds and sun



TUESDAY HIGH 63 | LOW 42

Mostly sunny




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FROM THE PUBLISHER

MATCH GAME 2024

A few years ago, I wrote a column that seemed to connect with many of you about Tupperware containers and the assortment of lids we have that don't seem to match anything. I also expressed my frustration in how to store these plastic containers and their tops. My email was full of replies of similar annoyances from many of you, with a few solutions, too.

At the Goodman home, we have worked through some of the Tupperware troubles, as my wife found a lid sorter that actually works, for the most part. As for what they pair up with, well, that's still an ongoing match game.

I don't spend a lot of time in the kitchen, but when I do, I like to be able to find things. In recent searches, I realized we have a new cupboard dilemma. It seems that our nation's obsession with carrying water around everywhere has reached a new level. A regular glass no longer will make do. Neither will a plastic bottle. Not even a portable mug. And heaven forbid someone actually drink out of a water fountain. As many of you know, we now apparently must tote

30 ounces or more of water around in massive stainless steel insulated tumblers. The brand names Yeti and Stanley have become synonymous for these trendy types of cups, and they don't come cheap. Fortunately, some knock-off brands have evolved that work just as well. Unfortunately, these things come in a variety of sizes with a variety of lid options that don't interchange. Sound familiar?

Yes, our cupboards that were full of mismatched Tupperware containers and lids are now full of mismatched stainless steel insulated tumblers and lids. Seriously, how many of these things does one family need?

It seems I am part of the problem, or at least that is what my wife tells me. I enjoy a cup of coffee in the morning on my drive to work, and I often pour it in one of those stainless steel insulated tumblers. I don't like to have those awkward lids that prevent the cup from spilling but don't prevent coffee from dripping down my chin. So



I pass on the lid, which I am told creates the initial separation. From there, I don't know where these things go. I have checked the dryer, and they are not in there with my single socks. I looked under my car seat, but all I found was some loose change and what I think was once a banana peel. I even looked in the cupboards at work, but that only resulted in finding even more of these mismatched cups and lids.

In dealing with our Tupperware container dilemma, I didn't hesitate to throw the old, crusty ones away. The mismatched lids, too. But these stainless steel insulated tumblers don't seem to wear out, and they are too expensive to simply discard. So, the collection of mismatched tumblers and lids continues to grow, and I swear I saw the Tupperware containers and those dastardly lids are smirking at me.

Have a great week, and thanks for reading. ■

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POLK CITY LIBRARY

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ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- **Saturday, April 6**, the library will be closed due to fire department training burn on an adjacent property.
- **National Library Week** is April 7-13.
- **Fareway Round-up for the Friends of the Library** is April 15-20.

ACTIVITIES

- **K-5th Comets Kids Club: Scrapbooking with Rhonda George**, Monday, April 8, 4-4:45 p.m. Children will need to bring 10-15 photographs from home to cut and glue with. Registration required.
- **Coloring Night at Fenders Brewing**, Wednesday, April 10, 4-9 p.m.
- **Friends of the Library Meeting**, Wednesday April 10, 6:30 p.m. Anyone interested in supporting the library is welcome and encouraged to attend.
- **Music and Movement**, Thursday, April 11, 10 a.m. Come shimmy and shake with your child. Dance and sing while building pre-reading skills with rhythm and rhyme.
- **Adult DIY Wire Tree Suncatchers**, Thursday, April 20, 6 p.m. Ages 17 and older, reservation required.
- **Monday Book Club, “The End of Her” by Shari Lapena**, Monday April 15, 2 p.m.
- **K-5th STEM Book Club, “Let’s Clean Up the Forest” by Amy Krouse Rosenthal**, Tuesday, April 16, 4-4:45 p.m. Pick up your copy of the book starting April 1 while supplies last. Read, then join us for some fun science experiments that correlate with the book. Registration required.
- **Adult Coloring**, Tuesday, April 18, 5-7 p.m. Ages 17 and older.
- **Messy Munchkins**, Thursday, April 18, 10 a.m. Visit us and let your child explore sensory tables we will put out. Have your child wear clothes that you don’t mind getting dirty.
- **Plant Swap**, Thursday, April 25, 5-7 p.m. Stop by the library to trade plants, seeds, and tips with other enthusiastic gardeners! Registration is requested, but not required. ■

FOUNDER’S DAY CELEBRATION

Meet at the Museum on the Square on May 30, 6:30 p.m., for a half-mile walking tour of Beebe Town for the Founder’s Day Celebration. Learn about Polk City’s early businesses and the fires that destroyed many of them and visit the Beebe family cemetery. This event is hosted by the Big Creek Historical Society. ■

BIG CREEK VOLUNTEER DAY

Friends of Big Creek is hosting a volunteer day Saturday, April 27, 8 a.m. to noon, to help spruce up the playground at Big Creek State Park, 8550 N.W. 142nd Ave., Polk City. For more information about Friends of Big Creek or joining the board, email friendsofbigcreek@gmail.com. ■

LIVE BURN TRAINING DATE SET

The Polk City Fire Department will be conducting a live fire training burn at 1600 W. Broadway on Saturday, April 6. There will be multiple fire department apparatus and firefighters training from 6 a.m. to 3 p.m. This is a great training opportunity for your local firefighters to get real-life experience on an actual structure. Multiple scenarios will be conducted, and the structure will be burned to the ground once the training is finished. Contact Fire Chief Karla Hogrefe with any questions. ■

EARTH DAY FAMILY 5K RUN/WALK AND PICKLEBALL TOURNAMENT

Funds raised at the Polk City Friends of the Parks’ annual Earth Day Family 5K Run/Walk and the Pickleball Tournament being held in conjunction with it will go toward costs of resurfacing the tennis and pickleball courts at Miller Park. The event is Saturday, April 20. For information about the events, visit <https://www.polkcityfriendsoftheparks.com/earth-day-5k>. ■

POLK COUNTY CONSERVATION EVENTS

Visit <https://www.polkcountyiowa.gov/conservation/events/> for information and registration.

MINDFULNESS AND MOVEMENT

At 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 9, Jester Park Nature Center: Sometimes we forget we are part of nature, sharing water and air with all other beings on the planet. Controlling our breath and moving our bodies in focused ways can bring back a connection with the natural world. This class will offer ways to connect with breath, body and the earth, regardless of experience with yoga. Instructors will vary each month. Bring a yoga mat and wear comfortable clothes. This Rooted in Nature program is in sponsorship with UnityPoint. Registration is due the day before. Cost is \$15, and the program is for ages 12 and older.

HOMESCHOOL PROGRAMS

Friday April 12, 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. (The Desert, 1.5 hours), at Jester Park Nature Center: This program series will be delivered in a flexible format that is specially designed for homeschool students. These programs will immerse children and parents in the natural world and drive us to learn, discover and appreciate our environment. Registration is due two days before the event. The program is free and recommended for grades K-5.

NATURE CENTER AFTER DARK: HAWAIIAN LUAU

Friday, April 12, 6 p.m., Jester Park Nature Center: Here's your chance to visit the Jester Park Nature Center after dark. The hour will include storytelling, crafts, open Nature Center exhibits, and a short program on the theme of the night. Feel free to wear your grass skirts and Hawaiian leis. No registration

required for this free event for all ages.

PONY TALES

Monday, April 15, 1 p.m., Jester Park Equestrian Center: Enjoy listening to a pony-themed story while the ponies of the Equestrian Center are listening nearby. A pony meet and greet will follow. We will meet at the outdoor picnic shelter or the arena concourse depending on the weather. Bring a blanket or camp chair to spread out on the lawn. This event is free. Registration is not required but is encouraged.

WOMEN IN THE WOODS WITH WINE

Tuesday, April 16, Light the Night: Enjoy the sights and sounds of nature with a glass of wine before we light up the night — with fire. Learn tips and tricks so that you can easily master or improve fire building. Show off your new skill as a pro firestarter at your next camp, cookout or bonfire. Dress for the weather as the program will take place outdoors. This program is for women, female-identifying, or non-binary adults ages 21 and older who are interested in getting outside. Become more comfortable and knowledgeable about the natural world as you unwind and have fun. Registration is due by March 17. Cost is \$15.

STORY TELLEBRATION

Wednesday, April 17 (April Showers), 10 a.m., Jester Park Nature Center: Join volunteer storyteller Carmen Epstein for a fun, interactive tale tailored toward children ages 2 to 6 that explores the wonders of the outdoors. During each program, participants enjoy interactive stories and an activity. No registration required for this free event. ■

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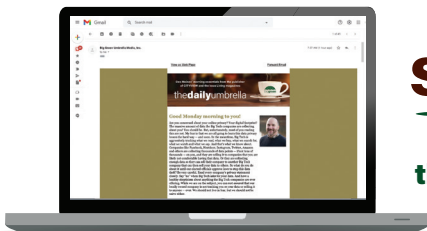
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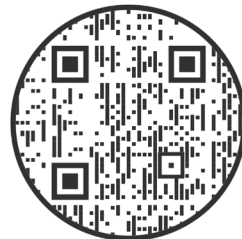
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Wild Lights Festival at Blank Park Zoo

WILD LIGHTS FESTIVAL

April 5 - May 27, 7:30-10:30 p.m.

Blank Park Zoo, 7401 S.W. Ninth St., Des Moines
blankparkzoo.com/events/calendar/wild-lights-festival

The Blank Park Zoo's Wild Lights Festival returns. Visitors can bear witness to more than 50 hand-crafted creations that light up the zoo. The illuminated Asian mythical creatures create plenty of photo opportunities for families.

TORI'S ANGELS 'SPREADING OUR WINGS'

April 11, 5:30-8:30 p.m.

Stine Barn, 4000 Turnberry Drive, West Des Moines
torisangels.org

The Tori's Angels Foundation has helped more than 145 kids with life-threatening medical challenges until their 19th birthday. This fundraising event includes cocktails and hors d'oeuvres; live and silent auctions including Chicago Cubs tickets /hotel/field passes package, Chiefs and Packers tickets, bourbon and wine baskets and travel packages; and an opportunity to meet some of the kids and families who have been assisted.

MIDDLE OF THE MAP TATTOO CONVENTION

April 12-14

Hy-Vee Hall, 730 Third St., Des Moines

middleofthemaptattoo.com

Exhibits, seminars and entertainment, all inside one building that will put any ink enthusiast in tattoo heaven.

Awards will be presented throughout the weekend for different styles, best sleeves and more. Live musical performances are also featured.

POETRY PALOOZA

April 19-20

Grand View University,
1200 Grandview Ave., Des Moinespoetryamp.org/poetry-palooza

Poetry slams, panels, workshops and book launches create a palooza of poetry. This festival celebrates esteemed poets, cultivates students and emerging talent, and demonstrates the positive power of poetry.

SPRING GALLERY NIGHT

April 19

Historic Valley Junction,
137 Fifth St., West Des Moinesvalleyjunction.com

Spring Gallery Night in Historic Valley Junction showcases artwork by regional, national and international artists during their annual Spring Gallery Night. From original artwork, custom jewelry, ceramics, glass, furniture, folk art, fine art reproductions and much more.

DRAKE RELAYS

April 24-27

Drake Stadium, 2719 Forest Ave., Des Moines

godrakebulldogs.com

The Drake Relays draw premier track and field athletes from around the country and some of the best in-state high school track athletes to Des Moines.

GARY'S RIDE: BEAT BRAIN CANCER

Saturday, May 18, 10 a.m.

Rider check-in and pickup is 9-9:45 a.m.

Waukee Raccoon River Valley Trailhead,
Hickman Road and N. 10th St., Waukee

Help support local brain cancer patients and their families by making a charitable contribution toward Gary's Ride's \$45,000 goal. Registration is now open for Gary's Ride. Adult riders registered by May 6 receive the 2024 T-shirt. Register at www.garysrideiowa.org/shop. ■

RECIPE

A BETTER-FOR-YOU WAY TO BEGIN THE DAY

(Family Features) Starting a journey toward better health and wellness can begin the same way you can (and should) start each day: with a nutritious breakfast. A morning meal loaded with nutrient-boosting flavor provides the foundation you need not only for the day at hand, but for a sustainable long-term eating plan, as well.

Consider this Sweet Potato Breakfast Bake as a budget-friendly way to feed your family with plenty of leftovers for days to follow. Full of eggs, bell peppers and turkey sausage, it's a surefire crowd-pleaser that's also loaded with shredded sweet potatoes. According to the American Diabetes Association, sweet potatoes are a "diabetes superfood" because they're rich in vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and fiber, all of which are good for overall health and may help prevent disease. ■

SWEET POTATO BREAKFAST BAKE

Recipe courtesy of Tessa Nguyen, RD, LDN, on behalf of the North Carolina Sweetpotato Commission

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 15 minutes

Servings: 12

Ingredients:

- Nonstick cooking spray
- 1 cup sweet potatoes, shredded
- 1/2 cup cooked turkey sausage crumbles or cooked turkey bacon
- 1/4 cup green onions, sliced
- 1/2 cup bell pepper, diced
- 9 eggs, beaten
- 1/2 cup cheddar cheese, shredded
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper

Directions

Heat oven to 400 F. Spray 13-by-9-inch baking



dish with nonstick cooking spray.

Evenly spread sweet potatoes, sausage or bacon, green onions and bell peppers in dish. Pour eggs carefully into baking dish. Sprinkle shredded cheese and black pepper over eggs.

Bake 15 minutes.

Slice into 12 pieces and serve hot.

THIS SPOT IS AVAILABLE.

Contact Dan Juffer at
dan.juffer@dmcityview.com

JOKE OF THE WEEK



*What has five toes
and isn't your foot?
My foot!*

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WEEKLY EVENTS AT THE POLK CITY COMMUNITY LIBRARY

Story Time Mondays and Tuesdays, 10 a.m. Join us at the library for stories, songs and an activity or craft. Choose the day that works best for you. Register online at our website for one of the programs each week. Every story can be logged in our 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program, too.

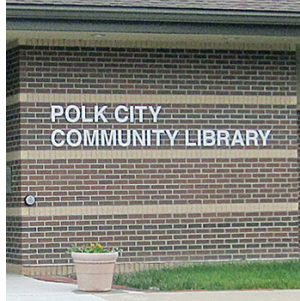
Chair Yoga, Mondays, 9 a.m. Join Rachel Snyder via Zoom. We will be broadcasting the class on the big screen in the library or you can join us from home. Chair yoga is a gentle practice in which postures are performed while seated and/or with the support of a chair. No experience is necessary. *Gentle strength training may also be incorporated into the practice. Props such as hand weights, resistance bands and a yoga block may be helpful if desired, but not necessary. The Zoom link can be found on our online catalog at polkcitlibrary.org.

Geri-Fit® Strength Training Workouts, Tuesdays at 9 a.m. Strength Training workouts that work for all ages and fitness levels, Geri-Fit is challenging, effective and safe to do. The Geri-Fit® program requires a set of light dumbbell weights, a sturdy chair and water to drink during the workout. Ages 50 and older. Stretch bands are available upon request. If you would like to participate from home via Zoom, please let the library know ahead of time so we can email you the link.

Ladies' Wednesday Coffee. Wednesdays, 10 a.m. to noon. Ladies, join us for coffee and conversation.

Sit N' Stitch. Thursdays, 6-8 p.m. Bring your current project and join us for stitching and conversation.

Men's Friday Coffee. Fridays, 10 a.m. to noon. Gentlemen, drop in for coffee and conversation. Enjoy spending time and having a few laughs or interesting discussions with other men from around the area. ■



CITY DATES TO NOTE

- **April 7-13:** National Library Week
- **April 22:** Polk City Cleanup. Have items to the curb by 7 a.m.
- **May 18:** Cops & Bobbers ■

CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR SALE: Vertical cloth blind. 40" x 36". It is a very light gray color. \$75. Text or phone 515-321-0301.

FOR SALE: Bunk beds. Solid built. \$175. Call or text 515-238-3198 and I can send photos.

HELP WANTED: Looking for a handyman or carpenter to tear an old fence down and rebuild in Van Meter. We have the material and have started work but would rather pay someone to do it. It is wood covered with chicken wire attached to railroad ties. if interested please call 515-321-0301.

WANTED: Stereo & electronic radio stuff receivers speakers guitar amp etc. Any age or condition is OK. Call 515-238-3343.

LOOKING TO BUY VINYL RECORDS: Paying cash for 60's-90's rock, blues, country and jazz. Call Brian at 515-326-5033.

BICYCLES WANTED: Any condition is ok. For parts or repair. Will pick them up. Phone 515-238-3343.

WANTED: Electronics, stereo receivers, guitar or amps, speakers, radios, etc. Any age or condition for parts or repair. Call 515-445-6023.

SEND IN YOUR FREE CLASSIFIED AD BY WEDNESDAY AT 10 A.M. TO [BECKHAM@DMCITYVIEW.COM](mailto:beckham@dmcityview.com)

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