



Living

MAGAZINE

RESIDENTS' CHOICE AWARDS



Ankeny/Northern Polk County residents share their favorites



Meet Marcela Mallett

EDUCATION

Mexican cactus pork stew

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WELCOME

SOMETHING different each issue

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



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

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

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

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

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

Thanks for reading. ■

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RESIDENTS' CHOICE AWARDS

Ankeny/Northern Polk County residents share their favorites



Another year has rolled around, and it is once again time to check in with local residents about their favorite professionals, businesses, local attractions and more.

The results of the Ankeny/Northern Polk County Residents' Choice Poll have been tallied, and congratulations are in order. Many of last year's favorites return to the top three, but some new ones have also emerged. Regardless, all can truly be proud, for they have earned the respect and loyalty of those who matter most — customers. From favorite restaurant, to hair salon, bank, veterinarian, health club, park and more, the people who know — because they live here — have shared their opinions.

This year we give special recognition to the business that received the most votes overall. Call it the Favorite of Favorites, The Supreme Favorite, Sweepstakes winner, or The Ultimate Favorite. Whatever the title, this business dominated in several categories and racked up more nods from residents than any other. Congratulations Rising Sun Café. You're The Tops.

Enjoy reading this year's list of favorites. Whether you agree or not, these are the views of your friends and neighbors. If you didn't cast your votes, be sure to do so next year. To the top three, great job dazzling your customers. To those striving to be in next year's winner's circle, get in gear now. The competition is fierce.

Volunteers Jerry Linde and LuAnn Barnes help at The Ankeny Klothing Exchange (TAKE). Photo by Todd Rullestad

FEATURE

Ankeny/Northern Polk County Residents' Choice for favorite...

(Runners-up in alphabetical order.)

Restaurant

Rising Sun Café

Runners up: Main Street Café & Bakery; Papa's Pizzeria

Restaurant for breakfast

Rising Sun Café

Runners up: The Ankeny Diner; Early Bird

Restaurant for lunch

Main Street Café & Bakery

Runners up: Papa's Pizzeria; Rising Sun Café

Restaurant for dinner

Papa's Pizzeria

Runners up: Portofino's Italian Restaurant & Pizza; Sports Page Grill

Restaurant for dessert

Rising Sun Café

Runners up: The Creamery; Main Street Café & Bakery

Place for ice cream

The Creamery

Runners up: The Outside Scoop; Rising Sun Café

Pizza establishment

Papa's Pizzeria

Runners up: Leaning Tower of Pizza; Wig and Pen Pizza Pub

Bar

Fender's Brewing

Runners up: Polk City Pub; Yankee Clipper

Coffee shop

Rising Sun Café

Runners up: Café Diem; Porch Light Coffeehouse

Server/bartender

Alex Fahey - Rising Sun Café

Runners up: Lance Beving – Fenders Brewing; Noelle Hoffman – Papa's Pizzeria

Auto service

Christian Brothers Automotive

Runners up: Karl Chevrolet, Inc.; Nelson Automotive

Auto Body Shop

Karl Chevrolet, Inc.

Runners up: Caliber Collision; Christian Brothers Automotive

Car dealership

Karl Chevrolet, Inc.

Runners up: Bob Brown Buick GMC; Dewey Ford

Preschool/Daycare

Our Lady's Little Learners

Runners up: Lakes Early Learning Center; The Treehouse Growing & Learning Center

Nonprofit

The Ankeny Clothing Exchange (TAKE)

Runners up: NP Comet Cupboard; On With Life

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FEATURE

School

St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic School
Runners up: Ankeny Christian Academy; North Polk High School

Park

Ankeny Miracle Park
Runners up: Big Creek State Park; Jester Park

Community festival or event

Ankeny SummerFest
Runners up: Ankeny Farmer's Market; Polk City Four Seasons Festival

Church

St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic Church
Runners up: Lutheran Church of Hope; Polk City United Methodist Church

Pastor

Scott Rains
Runners up: Fr. Kenneth Halbur; Mike Van Rees

Chamber of commerce

Ankeny Area Chamber of Commerce
Runner up: Go Polk City Chamber & Economic Development

Library

Ankeny Kirkendall Public Library
Runner up: Polk City Community Library

Camping spot

Jester Park
Runners up: Cherry Glen Campground; Prairie Flower Campground

Coach

Tim TeBrink, North Polk Football
Runners up: Rick Dillinger, North Polk Softball; Aaron Dose, North Polk Boys Basketball

Teacher

Angie Jacobs, North Polk Central Elementary
Runners up: Katie Jones, North Polk West Elementary; Molly Sheldahl, North Polk Central Elementary

Grocery store

Fareway Meat & Grocery
Runners up: Aldi; Hy-Vee

Boutique

Real Deals
Runners up: The Funky Zebras Boutique; Meraki Mamas & Co.

Retail Store

Target
Runners up: Real Deals; T.J. Maxx

Thrift store

Stuff Etc.
Runners up: The Attic, Inc.; Goodwill

Home improvement retail store

Menards
Runners up: Ace Hardware; The Home Depot

Nursery or garden center

Earl May Garden Center
Runners up: Canoyer Garden Center; Goode Greenhouses

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FEATURE

Place to purchase a gift for a man

Fleet Farm

Runners up: Home Depot;
Sportsman's Warehouse

Place to purchase a gift for a woman

Real Deals

Runners up: T.J. Maxx.; Tweedle
Dee's

Florist

Carmen's Flowers

Runners up: Flowerama; Hy-Vee
Floral

Dad/child date spot

Rising Sun Café

Runners up: B&B Theatres Ankeny
12 & B-Roll Bowling; Papa's Pizzeria

Mom/child date spot

Rising Sun Café

Runners up: B&B Theatres Ankeny
12 & B-Roll Bowling; Papa's Pizzeria



Mindy Green, owner of Carmen's Flowers



MEET THE AUTHOR

with Linda McCann

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FEATURE

Place to take your mom and dad

Rising Sun Café

Runners up: B&B Theatres Ankeny 12 & B-Roll Bowling; Papa's Pizzeria

Place to take your kids or grandkids

Rising Sun Café

Runners up: Imagination Street; Urban Air Adventure Park

Children's birthday party spot

Let's Slumber It

Runners up: Imagination Street; Urban Air Adventure Park

Golf course

Otter Creek Golf Course

Runners up: Jester Park Golf Course; Tournament Club of Iowa

Hair salon

The Cutting Edge Salon

Runners up: Anani Salon & Spa; Salon PC

Physicians clinic

North Polk Family Medicine

Runners up: The Iowa Clinic - Ankeny Campus; MercyOne Ankeny Family Medicine

Dental office

Advanced Family Dentistry

Runners up: Ankeny Dental Arts; Summit Family Dental

Orthodontist office

Ankeny Orthodontics

Runner up: Central Iowa Orthodontics

Chiropractic office

Polk City Chiropractic

Runners up: Designed 2 Move Spine & Sport; Iowa Chiropractic Clinic & Sports Injuries

Vision care

Ankeny Family Vision Center

Runners up: Eyecare of Ankeny; Polk City EyeCare

Health club or gym

Trail Point Aquatics & Wellness

Runners up: Albaugh Family Senior Community Center; Legacy Fitness

Pharmacy

Hy-Vee Pharmacy

Runners up: CVS Pharmacy; Walgreens

Cosmetic services

Sephora at Kohl's

Runners up: RenuYou Aesthetics & MedSpa; Walgreens

Physical therapy

Rock Valley Physical Therapy

Runners up: DMOS Orthopaedic Centers; Luke Carlson Physical Therapy & Sports Medicine

Dance studio

Michelle's School of Dance

Runners up: Ashlee's Creative Arts Academy; Encore Dance Academy

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FEATURE

Gymnastics and/or tumbling studio

Triad Gymnastics
Runners up: Encore Dance Academy; Michelle's School of Dance

Audiologist/hearing clinic

Hearing Doctors of Iowa
Runners up: The Iowa Clinic; Iowa ENT Center

CBD Store

515 CBD
Runners up: Smoke & Vape; Sunmed Your CBD Store

Financial planner

Brian Herbel
Runners up: Brandt R. Hockman; Kyle Matzen

Law firm

Lamberti, Murphy & Strong
Runners up: Letsch Law Firm; Mark Gray Law



Amy Kinney, Let's Slumber It

"It's been through the addition of MAPLE that we have been able to get the kids to talk."

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YOUR FAVORITE

- Restaurant for Dinner
- Pizza

Runner-up FAVORITE

- Restaurant (General)
- Dad/Child Date Spot
- Mom/Child Date Spot

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FEATURE

Accounting firm

RW Tax Advisors

Runners up: Jason D. Ihle CPA; Lincicum & Albertson

Veterinarian

Ankeny Animal & Avian Clinic

Runners up: Creature Comforts Veterinary Hospital; Polk City Veterinary Hospital

Lawn care business

Total Quality Inc.

Runners up: Latitude 41 Lawn and Landscape Services of Iowa; Nolte and Sons Lawn and Irrigation

Landscaping company

TNT Landscaping & Nursery

Runners up: Kroeger Lawn and Landscape; Perennial Gardens

Heating and cooling business

72 Degrees Comfort Company

Runners up: Obsidian Heating and Cooling; Polk County Heating and Cooling



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ANKENY/NORTHERN
POLK COUNTY
WINNER!

- Favorite Restaurant (General)
- Favorite Restaurant for Dessert
- Favorite Restaurant for Breakfast
- Favorite Coffee Shop
- Favorite Server - Alex Fahey
- Favorite Place to Take Your Kids or Grandkids
- Favorite Place to Take Your Mom and Dad
- Favorite Mom / Child Date Spot
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FEATURE

Electrical business

Kline Electric

Runners up: Gurnsey Electric; Whitlatch Electric

Plumbing company

Todd's Plumbing, Heating & Cooling

Runners up: Polk County Heating and Cooling; Premier Plumbing

Senior living establishment

Mill Pond

Runners up: The Bridges at Ankeny; Rock Creek Senior Living

Insurance Agency

Cupp Insurance

Runners up: Adamson Insurance & Associates; Cullen & Associates

Realtor

Susie Sheldahl

Runners up: Amy Wiederin; Jacquelyn Duke

Bank/credit union

Veridian Credit Union

Runners up: Grinnell State Bank; Luana Savings Bank

Photographer

Sandeen Photography

Runners up: Nicole Sage Photography; Picture Perfect Photography by Marcy Donelson

Place for guests to stay

Qube Hotel

Runners up: Courtyard by Marriott; Homewood Suites by Hilton

Home builder/remodeling contractor

Renomads

Runners up: Amazed Construction Services, Inc.; Black Birch Homes and Design

Pest control company

Pest Pro

Runners up: Fenix Pest Control; Greenix Pest Control



Cleaning company

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Runners up: Molly Maid; Sanela's Cleaning Co.

Painting company

Painting By Jen

Runners up: Five Star Painting; Nick's Painting Plus LLC ■

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FAITH

By Pastor John Wagner

CONNECTED and growing

John 15:1-5: “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vineyard keeper. He removes any of my branches that don’t produce fruit, and he trims any branch that produces fruit so that it will produce even more fruit. You are already trimmed because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, and I will remain in you. A branch can’t produce fruit by itself but must remain in the vine. Likewise, you can’t produce fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, then you will produce much fruit. Without me, you can’t do anything.”



Early in April, I was looking out my back window, and I saw something which I hadn’t seen in months... growing things. My back lawn was starting to change color. The trees in my lawn were beginning to bud. There is a “marsh” of sorts behind our home and, in the middle of trampled and snow-downed brush, I saw BRIGHT green shoots of tall grasses breaking out from under the brown.

As I consider the season of spring and the renewed life which is more clearly visible in nature, I wonder to myself where the signs of growth and life are showing up within me. When I take an inventory of my activities and my being, it should come as no surprise that the parts of my life that are focused on God or include God are the ones that are “bearing fruit.”

The grasses, bushes, flowers and trees in my yard that are beginning to bloom are connected to water, nutrients and the ground, which protects the roots and feeds the plant. The branches of my life, which are thriving and “blooming,” are connected to the vine of Holy love, God-honoring activities, study and prayer — all of which protect and feed me. As hard as a plant may try, it cannot grow — it cannot sustain growth — without being properly connected. So, too, even though we may be able to conjure up temporary growth, we cannot fully develop into who we are intended to become without connection to the Divine.

Consider more intentionally connecting to the VINE which is God. Allow God to “remove/prune” those branches or activities which do not produce good fruit. Allow God to further trim branches (or busyness) that get in the way of even more efficient growth and life. Producing fruit as a person is visible evidence of the life within us. It is also one of the best ways we can share God’s love with others. The fruits of being connected to God aren’t only for us, but are things the world needs — love, joy and peace.

I see in you, the potential for SPRING and GROWTH and NEW LIFE. God does, too. ■

Information provided by John Wagner, campus pastor, Christian Life Center, Ankeny First United Methodist Church, john.wagner@ankenfirst.org.

PUT a traditional spin on Cinco de Mayo

(Family Features) Whether Cinco de Mayo means an opportunity to celebrate your family's heritage or it's simply an excuse to gather with the ones you love, every holiday truly is about the same thing: special moments together.

Take this year's festivities the traditional route with recipes that combine familiar favorites with ingredients you normally may not use otherwise, such as cactus. This Mexican Cactus Pork Stew makes Cinco de Mayo a cinch with the use of a Dutch oven.

Visit Culinary.net to find more family-friendly recipes perfect for celebrating holidays throughout the year. ■

Mexican cactus pork stew

- 1 pound pork shoulder (leftover or fresh)
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 jalapeno pepper, chopped
- 3 cups beef broth
- 1 can (28 ounces) diced tomatoes
- 2 cans (15 ounces each) mild chili beans
- 1 cup chopped cactus (nopales)
- 1 tablespoon garlic powder
- 2 tablespoons smoked paprika
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- salt, to taste
- pepper, to taste
- 4 green onions, chopped, for garnish
- 1/4 cup chopped cilantro, for garnish

- If using fresh pork, in Dutch oven, cube and brown it with onion and jalapeno pepper. If using leftover pork, reheat in Dutch oven with onion and jalapeno pepper.
- Add beef broth, diced tomatoes, chili beans, cactus, garlic powder, smoked paprika, cayenne pepper and salt and pepper, to taste.
- Simmer 25 minutes then garnish with green onions and cilantro.



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LIBRARY

By Nancy Medema, trustee,
and Cami Brazelton, Friend of the Library

ADVOCATING and fundraising for the library

The Ankeny Library depends on two groups to support its mission and operations. One group, the Board of Trustees, functions as the governing board for the library, and the other, the Friends of the Ankeny Library, fundraises to supplement the library's operating budget. They both act as advocates for the library as well.



FRIENDS OF THE
ANKENY LIBRARY

The Library Board of Trustees has been busy this spring advocating at the state level. Many bills were introduced in both the Senate and House that would have changed the taxing requirements for public libraries, changed library boards from governing to advisory, removed the requirement for gender balance on library boards, and reinstated the special tax levy for supporting public libraries that was removed last year. Library board members attended several legislative committee meetings, both in person and online, regarding those issues and to provide information and ask questions. In addition to the committee meetings, the Iowa Library Association's annual Legislative Day was attended by board members Gene Lucht, Nancy Medema and Fred Schuster, and library director Sam Mitchel. It was a great time to interact with many librarians and trustees from across the state as well as having great conversations on library issues with Senator Mike Boussetol and Representatives Molly Buck and Heather Matson.

The Friends of the Ankeny Library plays a crucial role in ensuring that the library has the resources it needs to serve our community effectively. As a nonprofit organization, the Friends supports the library by securing funding and resources for the library for services not covered under the city of Ankeny's budget. In addition, the Friends are advocates for the free access to information, collaborative learning and community interaction available through the library.

A few examples of what the Friends of the Ankeny Library supports include:

- **Summer Library Program** – programming to engage readers of all ages throughout the summer. In 2023, more than 3,500 adults, teens and children participated in the summer library program.
- **Hoopla** – an online streaming service with eBooks, eAudiobooks, TV shows, movies and more, available to cardholders based on residency. In 2022-2023, nearly 5,000 online items were "checked out."
- **Group Book Club Sets** – an opportunity for community members to engage in meaningful conversation and discussion. In 2022-2023, book club groups had more than 400 participants.

You can help the Friends continue to meet the needs of our growing community. If you're interested in volunteering, send us an email at friends@ankenylibraryfriends.org. Or, learn more about the organization and how you can support the library at www.friendsoftheankenylibrary.org. ■

MEET Marcela Mallett

As a Brazilian native, educator relates to students learning English.

Marcela Mallett is a new educator in the Ankeny school district this year. She's currently the ESOL (English speakers of other languages) teacher at Ankeny Centennial High School, and her students are from all over the world.



Marcela Mallett says being an immigrant helps her relate to her ESOL students.

Mallett holds a bachelor's degree in modern languages (Portuguese and English) and a master's degree in teaching English as a second language. Before coming to Ankeny, she worked in Des Moines schools, at Des Moines Area Community College, and taught English as a second language in Brazil.

"I am from Brazil, and this is where my journey as a teacher began," she says. "In my home country, I started teaching English to Brazilians so that they could have better professional opportunities. When I moved to the United States, I decided to help students with the same background I have. I want to help students that come from a different country to learn the language so that they can keep pursuing their dreams. Being an immigrant helps me relate with my students, and I believe this also makes me a better teacher for them."

Another reason Mallett chose this work is to serve as an advocate for her students. She not only helps them learn English, but she can become their voice when needed. Students who come from a different country can't always voice their needs due to language barriers.

Mallett enjoys working with her students, and they have built a strong connection. She also enjoys working with her professional learning team, which offers support and collaboration.

"Imagine you are a teenager and just moved to a country where you don't speak the language. You go to school and have to learn all different types of content in a language that is not yours. As an ESOL teacher, this is the biggest challenge I face, because I need to help these students be successful in every class."

Her students are problem solvers, though. Mallett says newcomers connect with one another even though they do not speak each other's language.

"They are so creative and use technology to help them speak with one another," she says.

Mallett enjoys spending time with her husband and daughter and using her time outside the classroom to share English lessons with even more people through her YouTube channel, www.youtube.com/@MarcelaMallett. She currently has 343,000 subscribers and more than 150 videos.

"I love creating videos and teaching English to people from all over the world. There is a fire in my heart to help others be the best they can be, and I can't see myself doing anything else than teaching," she says. ■

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There are funding options for people at all ages and in all health situations and, as we all know, the prices for everything only go up as time goes by. So, the sooner you do this, the more opportunity you have to save.

What an incredible gift from you to your family. ■



Information provided by Dave Cortner, Hamilton's on Westtown Parkway, 3601 Westtown Parkway, West Des Moines, IA 50266, 515-697-3681

ACA adds secondary principal

Ankeny Christian Academy (ACA) is committed to academic excellence and is adding a new secondary principal role to support that ongoing commitment. ACA announces Joe Venema will be the new secondary principal.

"ACA is excited to be expanding its leadership team to include the role of secondary principal," said Brent Knoll, head of school. "This position will support our middle school and high school teachers, students and parents as we continue to focus our school on high-quality academics, discipleship and relationships. Mr. Venema is the right fit for this position, and we're excited to welcome him to ACA."

Venema earned his masters of arts in educational leadership from Dordt University and his master of arts degree in history from Purdue University Calumet. He has more than 20 years of experience in Christian education, including the last eight years in a leadership role. He currently serves as secondary principal at Ripon Christian.

"I am thankful for the opportunity to begin working at ACA," said Venema. "I look forward to being part of a school and faculty that values academic excellence and also pointing students to Christ in every part of their day."

Venema will join ACA later this summer, along with his wife, Rachael, and children, Isaac, Seth and Abby. ■



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CASEY'S supports DMACC Transportation Institute



Several Casey's and DMACC employees attended a recent check presentation at the Casey's store at 1515 S.E. Corporate Woods Drive in Ankeny.

Casey's made a \$100,000 donation to help build the new DMACC Transportation Institute, which is training a new generation of truck drivers. The donation by the Ankeny-based company is another important milestone for completion of the new DMACC training facility. The new building will allow the CDL training program to double its student capacity, resulting in more fully-certified truck drivers. The project, which started last year, will be completed in 2025. It will include a three-story garage; new concrete pad; and demolition of the old Transportation Institute building. ■

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KRILE finds benefits of Ankeny go beyond location

Neighborhood offers access to amenities.

Throughout the four years Jackson Krile has lived in Ankeny, he's realized he's right where he needs to be.

He moved to the community in 2020 because of his work as a Realtor at RE/MAX Real Estate Center.

"Growing up in West Des Moines and attending Iowa State University, I wanted home to be somewhere in the middle, as my business is pretty much split 50/50 in the Des Moines and surrounding areas and Ames and surrounding areas," says Krile. "My fiancé, Katlynn, also grew up in Ankeny. We couldn't be happier here."

Krile adds that, while Ankeny certainly isn't a small town, he likes the community's small-town feel, as well as all the amenities it has to offer.

"This is why we ultimately decided to buy in Ankeny and make it 'home' for us," he says.

Since moving to town, Krile and his fiancé have lived in three different homes. With their current home in the Prairie Trail neighborhood, they especially enjoy how close they are to The District, where they can get to some of their favorite restaurants, like Grimaldi's Pizza and Main Street Café, within minutes.

In fact, location is what Krile has liked about each home he's lived in.

"What we have loved about each place is the proximity to everything in Ankeny," he says. "No matter what side or what part of town you're in, you're less than 10 minutes from everything: parks, grocery stores, schools, gas stations, healthcare, the High Trestle Trail — the list is endless."

And while the couple appreciate the Prairie Trail area where they live now, Krile says they love Ankeny as a whole just as much. ■



Jackson Krile and his fiancé, Katlynn, enjoy living in Ankeny because of all the amenities the community offers.

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Could tax hikes crack your nest egg?

Our national debt problem became unprecedented long ago, now it's ballooned to \$34 trillion. You are not alone if you think the country's debt could become a headache for you in retirement. Many agree that one way to tackle the debt is to raise taxes.



While lawmakers have been relatively hesitant to increase tax rates over the past two decades, that philosophy could change. And with the national debt-to-GDP ratio ballooning to its highest point in seven decades, we could be nearing a point where leaders are forced to take action.

Federal income tax rates are still relatively low, historically speaking. For example, between 1982 and 1986, the income tax rates reached as high as 50%. Before that, the top rates reached 70% and as high as 94%, primarily due to World War II. The top bracket for 2024 is 37%.

The headache comes when you are on the cusp of retirement and lawmakers in Washington pass legislation that changes your tax bracket. If you've been investing in a traditional 401(k) or IRA, this scenario could mean you end up with less money to fund your retirement than you anticipated. That's because these accounts have never been taxed. When you take distributions in retirement, the money is subject to federal

income tax rates. That's when that nest egg can crack, and you could send more of your retirement savings to the IRS than you have to, leaving you with less to spend in retirement.

Fortunately, there are steps you can take now to help protect your retirement from the uncertainty of tomorrow. All else being equal, tax-free money is the best type of retirement income. There are three main types of investments that produce tax-free income: life insurance, a Roth IRA or municipal bonds.

So how do you keep the nest egg together? One way is to reduce taxable income — but don't wait until you are retired. Small changes now can pay off big in retirement, including converting pre-tax money into a Roth account. Qualified distributions from a Roth account are tax-free in retirement. Then you can worry a lot less about what happens with tax brackets in Washington and focus on all of the fun you want to have in retirement.

Like any retirement strategy, tax decisions should be made with a clear understanding of the rules, the impact on your tax situation, and how the strategy fits into your overall retirement vision. Your retirement planner and trusted tax preparer should work together to help you get it right.

Information provided by Loren Merkle CFP®, RICP®, Certified Financial Fiduciary®, Merkle Retirement Planning, 1860 S.E. Princeton Drive, Grimes, 515-278-1006. Sources: Bradford Tax Institute. "History of Federal Income Tax Rates: 1913 – 2023." https://bradfordtaxinstitute.com/free_resources/federal-income-tax-rates.aspx. Accessed May 1, 2023.

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EVENTS IN THE AREA

To submit calendar items for consideration, send to tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com.

Check for cancellations

Youth Leadership Symposium

Saturday, April 27,
9-10:30 a.m.

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

This free leadership event, for students in grades 8-12, is organized by the Mayor's Youth Council and designed to help Ankeny's youth develop important leadership skills. A continental breakfast will be offered. Keynote speaker Jan Herke's topic will be "From Basketball to Boardrooms: Leadership lessons from a professional basketball player, WNBA referee and Parks & Recreation director." Door prizes will be offered, and the Mayor's Youth Council will present the Youth Appreciation Awards to honor recipients for their positive impact and enrichment of the community.

Neighbor to Neighbor free meal

April 28, 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 Westside Maidrites with side dishes and great desserts. 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.



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.

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.



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EVENTS IN THE AREA

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Check for cancellations



Ankeny Art Festival

May 11, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Uptown Ankeny, Third Street and Walnut Street

CORRECTION: The Ankeny Art Center is organizing the first Arts Festival in Ankeny on May 11. The Ankeny Art Center Arts 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 (acrylic, oil, pastel, etc.), ceramics, woodworking, jewelry, mixed media, metal works, glass, digital, and so many others. There will be 50 vendors displaying and selling their artwork, as well as live music and artistic demonstrations, food trucks, and entertainment for the children.



Movies Under the Stars

Fridays, June and July
Bandshell at Wagner Park,
410 W. First St., Ankeny

Bring a blanket and enjoy the show. Movies start at dusk. **June 7:** "The Super Mario Bros. Movie"; **June 14:** "Shark Tale"; **June 21:** "Elemental"; **June 28:** "Paw Patrol: The Mighty Movie"; **July 19:** "Trolls Band Together"; **July 26:** "Dr. Seuss' the Lorax"; **Aug. 2:** "TMNT Mutant Mayhem."

Earth Day Trash Bash

April 20-27 • Earthday.dsm.city

Earth Day Trash Bash, is a collaboration between the cities and citizens of Clive, Des Moines, Johnston, Norwalk, Pleasant Hill, West Des Moines, Boone County Conservation, Polk County Conservation, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, Trees Forever, and Des Moines Water Works. Register at the above website.

Beats and Eats

Thursdays, June 8, 15, 22 and 29; July 13, 20, 27, 5-7:30 p.m.
Ankeny Market & Pavilion,
715 W. First St., Ankeny

Enjoy food trucks, live music and entertainment, family activities, games, beer truck and more at Beats and Eats. Details about the participating food trucks and the planned activities can be found at www.ankenyiowa.gov/461/Beats-Eats. Entertainment **June 8** is Sumpin Doo; **June 15** is Unfortunate Sons; **June 22**, BitterSweet Nation; **June 29**, The Kris Karr Band with Encore Dance Academy at intermission; **July 13**, Randy Burk and the Prisoners; **July 20**, The Tony McGhee Project with Kinetic Entertainment at intermission; and **July 27**, Kali Indiana with special guest K.C. Cameron. Beats & Eats is a free community program sponsored by Uptown Ankeny.

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EVENTS IN THE AREA

Check for cancellations

Ankeny Juneteenth Festival

Sunday, June 23, 3 p.m.

Wagner Park Bandshell, 410 W. First St., Ankeny

Ankeny Community Network is hosting the 4th annual Juneteenth Celebration focused on highlighting the beauty and power of Black culture in Ankeny, central Iowa and around the world. This community event will be free and is open to everyone. It will feature local performances as well as vendors and artists, food trucks, music, a kids area, and more. Juneteenth is a day that we celebrate not just the end of slavery in the U.S. but also honor our ancestors, celebrate our families, honor the contributions of Black people and showcase the strength and diversity of our stories, experiences and lives as residents of Ankeny, of this state, and as Americans. There will be something for everyone — live music, activities, artists, basketball, a kids corner, and more.



Earth Day Family 5K Run/Walk and Pickleball Tournament

Fenders Brewing, 212 W. Van Dorn St., Polk City

April 20, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

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. To register, visit <https://www.polkcityfriendsoftheparks.com/earth-day-5k>.

Earth Day at the Brenton Arboretum

April 21 from noon to 3 p.m.

25141 260th St., Dallas Center

thebrentonarboretum.org

Even more fun family activities have been added to this year's popular event. Come and enjoy the arboretum grounds and make an afternoon of exploring and visiting the vendors. A variety of stations will be offered throughout the event including a Kids Planting Station, Selfie Station, OMG Bees with Bee Expert Julia MCGuire, Found Object Bug Craft with Artist Jill Woodward, Experience Nature's Healing with Dennis Kelly, Hot Off The Presses Food Truck, and Erin Huiatt with Des Moines Parent talking about her new book, "100 Things To Do in Des Moines Before You Die." At 1:30 p.m., a special presentation will be made on how to plant a tree with Director Of Horticulture Andy Schmitz. ■

Ankeny Art Center

Arts Festival

20
24

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www.ankenyartcenter.org

Saturday, May 11th, 2024

10am - 4pm

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COMPELLING reasons to refinance

The most popular reason homeowners refinance their mortgage is typically to reap the benefits of a lower rate. However, there are other reasons to refinance that can be beneficial and are worth looking into.

Switch your mortgage type or term: When you initially purchased your home, you chose the length of time and kind of loan. Perhaps you chose a 15- or 30-year term and a fixed rate or adjustable-rate mortgage (ARM). Consider if your circumstances or financial goals have changed since then. Maybe you have an ARM and are anticipating a rate increase, so you would rather switch to a fixed-rate mortgage for rate stability and consistent monthly payments. Or maybe you have a fixed rate already, but the original term was set for 30 years, and you would like to switch to 15 years to pay your mortgage off faster. Another situation could be that you now qualify for a VA home loan, which offers benefits like no private mortgage insurance and possibly lower interest rates to veterans, service members and eligible surviving spouses. If so, it might make sense to refinance and take advantage of those benefits.

Access funds: If you have sufficient home equity, you may want to consider cash-out refinancing that allows you to refinance for more than your current mortgage balance. This is different than a home equity line of credit — although this option is still a good fit for many homeowners

— in that cash-out refinancing sometimes offers a lower interest rate and replaces your existing mortgage.



Mindy Selix



Yvonne Silvers

Mortgage refinancing process

Step 1: Research and compare lenders: Compare reputable lenders and their mortgage refinancing offers. Research interest rates, fees and customer reviews.

Step 2: Gather documentation: Prepare the necessary documentation, including proof of income, credit reports and details about your current mortgage.

Step 3: Apply for refinancing: Submit a refinancing application to the lender you choose. Be prepared to provide follow-up information and respond promptly to any requests for additional documentation. The quicker you can provide all the necessary documentation, the smoother the process will go.

Step 4: Appraisal and underwriting: The lender will typically conduct an appraisal to assess the current value of your home. The underwriting process involves a detailed review of your financial information to determine loan approval.

Step 5: Closing: If your loan is approved, you'll attend a closing meeting where you sign the new loan documents. At that time, you pay any closing costs, and the new mortgage officially replaces your old one. ■

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

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HOW CAN women bridge the retirement gap?

March 8 is International Women’s Day, a day for celebrating all the accomplishments of women around the globe. But many women still need to make up ground in one key area: retirement security.



Women’s challenges in achieving a secure retirement are due to several factors, including these:

- **Pay gap** – It’s smaller than it once was, but a wage gap still exists between men and women. In fact, women earn, on average, about 82 cents for every dollar that men earn, according to the Census Bureau. And even though this gap narrows considerably at higher educational levels, it’s still a source of concern. Women who earn less than men will likely contribute less to 401(k) plans and will ultimately see smaller Social Security checks.

- **Longer lives** – At age 65, women live, on average, about 20 more years, compared to almost 17 for men, according to the Social Security Administration. Those extra years mean extra expenses.

- **Caregiving responsibilities** – Traditionally, women have done much of the caregiving for young children and older parents. And while this caregiving is done with love, it also comes with financial sacrifice. Consider this: The average employment-related costs for mothers providing unpaid care is nearly \$300,000 over a lifetime, according to the U.S. Department of Labor — which translates to a reduction of 15% of lifetime earnings. Furthermore, time away from the workforce results in fewer contributions to 401(k) and other employer-sponsored retirement plans. Ultimately, these issues can leave women with a retirement security deficit.

Here are some moves that can help close this gap:

- Contribute as much as possible to retirement plans. Try to contribute as much as you can afford to your 401(k) or similar employer-sponsored retirement plan. Your earnings can grow tax deferred, and your contributions can lower your taxable income. (With a Roth 401(k), contributions aren’t deductible, but earnings and withdrawals are tax free, provided you meet certain conditions.) At a minimum, contribute enough to earn your employer’s matching contribution, if one is offered, and try to boost your contributions whenever your salary goes up. If you don’t have access to a 401(k), but you have earned income, you can contribute to an IRA. Even if you don’t have earned income, but you have a spouse who does, you might be eligible to contribute to a spousal IRA.

- Maximize Social Security benefits. You can start taking Social Security at 62, but your monthly checks will be much bigger if you can afford to wait until your full retirement age, which will be around 66 1/2. If you are married, you may want to coordinate your benefits with those of your spouse — in some cases, it makes sense for the spouse with the lower benefits to claim first, based on their earnings record, and apply for spousal benefits later, when the spouse with higher benefits begins to collect.

- Build an emergency fund. Try to build an emergency fund containing up to six months’ worth of living expenses, with the money kept in a liquid account. Having this fund available will help protect you from having to dip into your retirement accounts for large, unexpected costs, such as a major home or car repair.

It’s unfortunate, but women still must travel a more difficult road than men to reach retirement security. But making the right moves can help ease the journey. ■

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Edward Jones. Member SIPC. Information provided by Stacey Koeppen, 1210 N.W. 18th St., Suite 120, Ankeny, 515-965-7853.

Feeling like you paid too much in taxes this year?

Your financial advisor can help you design an investment strategy to potentially reduce your future tax liability.



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HEALTH By Dr. Todd Pietig

SLOWING down nearsightedness

Myopia, also known as being nearsighted, is on the rise and has become a worldwide epidemic. Today, around 40% of people in the U.S. are nearsighted compared to 20% only 30 years ago. One reason nearsightedness is on the rise is the increase in the amount of time people spend looking up close. Kids are especially affected, as they are now spending less time outdoors and more time indoors and on devices. Digital devices have become common among children for education and entertainment at a young age. On a positive note, studies have shown that outdoor time has some protective benefits in preventing myopia, and getting at least two hours of outdoor time daily is recommended. Other beneficial lifestyle modifications include taking a break after 30 minutes of near work and increasing the distance between you and your screen. Clinically, there are three options that can slow down nearsightedness by around 50%, and they are ortho k contact lenses, atropine eye drops, and MiSight soft contact lenses. Ortho-k is a hard contact lens you wear while you sleep. This option has the added benefit of allowing you to see clearly without glasses or contacts during the day because it flattens the cornea. Atropine drops are low dose eye drops that are put in every evening before bed and can be combined with the other options. The third option, MiSight contact lenses, are similar to the soft contacts many people currently wear, but with the benefit of slowing down nearsightedness due to their multifocal design. ■



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

HEALTH By Shelly Stewart-Sandusky, MS, LMFT

LIVING with an anxiety disorder

Anxiety is a common emotion everyone experiences at some point, generally when there is a situation or stressor that warrants an anxious response, after which, unhealthy levels of anxiety will go away as the situation is resolved. Problematic anxiety doesn't go away. People who suffer from anxiety disorders often experience anxiety in a chronic way, resulting in thought patterns and physical symptoms that are a constant part of their life. For instance, racing thoughts that can't seem to be stopped or deflected, constant worry or fear of something bad happening, and physical symptoms such as fatigue, muscle tension or nausea, among others. For a person with an anxiety disorder, it can be hard to imagine not having to constantly battle your own mind to be functional throughout the day or to always be worried about something even when there doesn't seem to be a reason to worry. But there are different things you can do to help.



- Therapy can be a helpful way to process through anxiety and learn about coping strategies to better manage it and to learn about triggers and patterns associated with your anxiety.
- Medication management with a psychiatrist or psychiatric nurse practitioner can be helpful for some people.
- Meditation can help calm the central nervous system and help give your mind a reset that helps alleviate some anxiety. ■

Information provided by Shelly Stewart-Sandusky, MS, LMFT, SS Therapy and Consulting, Ltd, 4725 Merle Hay Road, Suite 205, Des Moines, 515-528-8135, www.sstherapyandconsulting.com.

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WHAT IS a cervical radiculopathy?

Some people have neck pain that may radiate into the shoulder, arm or hand that can sometimes be misdiagnosed as carpal tunnel syndrome or cubital tunnel syndrome. This type of pain is often caused by an injury near the root of a spinal nerve. The medical term for a “pinched” nerve in the neck is a cervical radiculopathy.

Cause

As spinal discs age, they lose height and begin to bulge. They also lose water content and become stiffer. As the discs lose height, the vertebrae begin to move closer together and degenerate. The body recognizes the thinning of the disc as a possible weak area and responds by splinting the joint with more bone, often called “spurs,” around the disc to strengthen it. The bone spurs that grow also contribute to the stiffening of the spine. Bone spurs may narrow the tiny holes where the nerves exit the spine and pinch the nerve root.

The disc changes that occur with age are often referred to as degenerative disc disease. It is important to keep in mind that these changes are often “normal” and that they occur in nearly everyone. In fact, if MRI scans were performed on people greater than 50 years of age, nearly half of the scans would show degenerative discs and pinched nerves that do not cause painful symptoms. It is not completely understood why some patients have symptoms and others do not.

Symptoms

Cervical radiculopathy is pain that travels down the arm in the area of the involved nerve. This pain is usually described as sharp. There may also be a “pins and needles” sensation or even complete numbness. In addition, there may be a feeling of weakness with certain activities.

Symptoms can be worsened with certain movements, like extending the neck backwards or turning the head from side to side. These symptoms are often made better by placing the hand on top of the head to relieve the nerve tension.

Examination

After reviewing your medical history and symptoms, your chiropractor will examine your neck. This should include testing your strength and sensation as well as reflexes. Your chiropractor may also have you do certain neck and arm movements to try to recreate or relieve your symptoms. X-rays may be ordered to show the extent of damage to the bones and discs of the neck. They can also show any narrowing of the holes where the nerves exit.

Treatment

It is important to note that the vast majority of patients with cervical radiculopathy get better with chiropractic care and never require surgery. Some patients will have the pain go away quickly, over days to weeks, while others will have it take longer. It is also not uncommon for cervical radiculopathy to come back at some point, but again, this problem usually gets better with conservative treatments.

As with most spinal conditions, healing takes time. In my opinion, it is advisable to undergo a reasonable trial of conservative care consisting of approximately six to 12 treatments, depending on the severity. If, at some point, the condition significantly worsens or fails to respond adequately to conservative care, your chiropractor should refer you for a CT scan, MRI, or a surgical consultation to be sure there is nothing more sinister evolving.

If you or someone you know is suffering from back or neck pain and have not found the relief you are looking for, contact your chiropractor. ■

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 or call the office at 965-3844.



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BASIC estate-planning documents

You should ensure you have a full slate of basic estate-planning documents in place. These documents exist in the event of your death or incapacitation and provide your family instructions as to how to proceed. Here are the three key documents in constructing an effective estate plan:



Durable financial power of attorney

In the event you become incapable of making financial decisions, a durable power of attorney allows someone you trust to sign documents and manage your assets. You can give someone a limited power of attorney that limits the authority to specific transactions, but a durable power of attorney that covers all transactions gives your trusted ally the ability to handle your affairs regardless of what lies ahead.

Last will and testament

Most people know what a will is, but less than 40% of Americans have one. While it is difficult to contemplate your own mortality, it can be just as painful to think of leaving a mess for your heirs if you are no longer here. A will appoints an executor — the person who will manage your

affairs — and outlines a plan for the distribution of your assets.

A will can provide comfort to the person creating it, especially if you have children who are unable to handle or manage money. Avoiding the creation of a will can cause untold problems. If you don't take the time to create one, the state of Iowa will simply distribute your assets for you — and not necessarily in the same way you want.

Medical directives

A healthcare POA is in place for a designated representative to be able to communicate your wishes to medical professionals if you are unable. These documents also include instructions as to whether or not you want to have life-saving measures performed. Creation of healthcare directives removes the need for your family members to make heart-wrenching decisions for you, which can be especially concerning if those decisions wouldn't necessarily match your own.

It's not easy to think about death, much less plan for it, but the true focus of estate planning is taking care of yourself today and your loved ones in the future. Schedule an appointment with an experienced estate planning attorney to make sure your plan is in place. ■

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

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NURTURING the next generation of leaders

Are great leaders born? Or are they made? What if it is both? In a time of ever-evolving growth and change in our community, the only constant is the need for individuals with the skills to lead others who are willing to step up.



The Ankeny Leadership Institute (ALI) once again is seeking the next generation of Ankeny residents who are ready to increase their understanding of our community challenges and refine their personal and professional skills to help move the next great ideas and accomplish the important work ahead. Our program focuses on community understanding and leadership skill development through collaborative learning experiences.

When someone thinks of a “leadership academy,” they may immediately picture workshops or seminars. At ALI, we see our Emerging Leaders Experience program as a catalyst for transformation, creating a ripple effect of positive change within individuals and their community.

At the core of our program, we believe that everyone has the potential to enact meaningful change within their community. Through monthly class sessions from August to April, learning from community leaders and hands-on experiences, participants are equipped with vital skills like clear communication, problem-solving and collaboration. These skills not only empower individuals to take on leadership roles but also enable them to mobilize others and work toward common goals in their office, neighborhood or local organization.

One of the most powerful impacts of ALI is building a connection to the past, present and future of Ankeny. Many individuals enter these programs with limited knowledge of our community, but, by the end of the program, they discover paths to engage in leadership roles, throughout Ankeny. This new engagement propels participants to become advocates for issues they are passionate about and to drive positive change in their neighborhoods.

Furthermore, the Ankeny Leadership Institute program identifies experiences and skills in participants and works to help them develop ways to use those strengths to make an impact. The program utilizes CliftonStrengths to create a common “leadership language” for class members to support each other’s personal and professional development.

With nearly 400 graduates over the history of the program, our alumni can be seen in every part of our community from elected positions to community organizations. A recent graduate of the Emerging Leaders Experience had this to say about their participation: “When I was first selected for the program, I thought I knew what I wanted to get out of the experience. However, I quickly learned that I was gaining so much more through our small groups, Strengths work and meeting with community leaders. I can’t wait for the rest of my team to be a part of future years.”

If you are looking for ways to increase your impact and understanding of the Ankeny community, increase your leadership strengths and partner with fellow community members to identify solutions to our most pressing challenges, the Emerging Leaders Experience welcomes your application. Applications close May 15. To learn more about the program and to apply for consideration, visit www.ankenyleadership.org. ■

Article submitted by Blake Campbell, Lead Facilitator of Ankeny Leadership Institute.

OUT & ABOUT



David Elliott, Joe Herst and Kelli Jarrard at Ankeny Chamber's Lattes & Leads held at Rustic Salon on Feb. 27.



Makalya Gallentine and Kayla Deighan at Ankeny Chamber's Lattes & Leads held at Rustic Salon on Feb. 27.



Kay Thompson and Cathy McDaniel at Ankeny Chamber's Lattes & Leads held at Rustic Salon on Feb. 27.



Elena Dunblazier, Melissa Muschick and Tiffany Tope at Ankeny Chamber's Lattes & Leads held at Rustic Salon on Feb. 27.



Tim Ure and Kaitlyn Hulseberg at Ankeny Chamber's Lattes & Leads held at Rustic Salon on Feb. 27.



Kirsten Veenstra, Chloe Hines, Andi Mark and Hailey Turner at Ankeny Chamber's Lattes & Leads held at Rustic Salon on Feb. 27.

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OUT & ABOUT



Trevor Schorzmann and Bryon Moore at the Business After Hours sponsored by The District at Grimaldi's Pizzeria Ankeny on March 14.



Todd Wehr and Mark Putney at the Business After Hours sponsored by The District at Grimaldi's Pizzeria Ankeny on March 14.



Zach Ahrenholtz, Melinda Packebush and Chad Johnson at the Business After Hours sponsored by The District at Grimaldi's Pizzeria Ankeny on March 14.



DJ Doff and Misty Trogdon at the Business After Hours sponsored by The District at Grimaldi's Pizzeria Ankeny on March 14.



Lauren Pickerins, Jacob Davis and Michele Cheek at the Business After Hours sponsored by The District at Grimaldi's Pizzeria Ankeny on March 14.



Nate Schweers, Sam Rankin and Nicole Strom at the Business After Hours sponsored by The District at Grimaldi's Pizzeria Ankeny on March 14.

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OUT & ABOUT



A ribbon cutting was held for Des Moines Deck LLC March 19 in Ankeny.



DJ Doff and Addison Daughenbaugh at the ribbon cutting held for Des Moines Deck LLC March 19 in Ankeny.



Addison Daughenbaugh, Shane Wessel, Ron Thomas and Misty Trogdon at the ribbon cutting held for Des Moines Deck LLC March 19 in Ankeny.



Misty Trogdon and DJ Doff at the ribbon cutting held for Des Moines Deck LLC March 19 in Ankeny.



Andrew Clausen and Brian Thammathay at the Ankeny Chamber's Lattes & Leads held at Two Rivers Bank & Trust on March 26.

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OUT & ABOUT



Kelsey Groff, Rachel Reavis, Erica Ziel and Joleen Goodman at the Ankeny Chamber's Lattes & Leads held at Two Rivers Bank & Trust on March 26.



Muhammed Frmic, Brian Thammathay, Maria Alvarez, Rique Bravo Cardona and Igor Cavlovic at the Ankeny Chamber's Lattes & Leads held at Two Rivers Bank & Trust on March 26.



Makayla Gallentine, Sara Schweitzer and Brandon Converse at the Ankeny Chamber's Lattes & Leads held at Two Rivers Bank & Trust on March 26.



Amanda Kruse, Dan Blakeslee and Kayla Deighan at the Ankeny Chamber's Lattes & Leads held at Two Rivers Bank & Trust on March 26.



Karen Roa, Alexa Middleton and Zoey Schmitz at the Ankeny Chamber's Lattes & Leads held at Two Rivers Bank & Trust on March 26.

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OUT & ABOUT



Shade Tree Auto celebrates its new location in Ankeny. The Ankeny Chamber organized the ribbon cutting.



Mike Fierro, Paul Kennedy and Cale Driskill at the ribbon cutting for Shade Tree Auto's newest Ankeny location on April 3.



Troy Kuhn and John Frunzar at the ribbon cutting for Shade Tree Auto's newest Ankeny location on April 3.



Molly and Henry Dudley at the ribbon cutting for Shade Tree Auto's newest Ankeny location on April 3.



Kyle Lee and Keith Riden at the ribbon cutting for Shade Tree Auto's newest Ankeny location on April 3.



Kenzie Bonifas and Alicia Winterboer at the Attivo Trail Shamrocks & Showings event March 14.



John and Dollie Accola at the Attivo Trail Shamrocks & Showings event March 14.



Don Winkie and Ken Cockerham at the Attivo Trail Shamrocks & Showings event March 14.



Duane Lubben and Marlene DaRos at the Attivo Trail Shamrocks & Showings event March 14.



Chuck Lee, Sandy Schmitt and Kathy Lee at the Attivo Trail Shamrocks & Showings event March 14.



Rick Ludwig, Jan Brown and Barb Lewis at the Attivo Trail Shamrocks & Showings event March 14.



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