

Living

MAGAZINE

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Residents share how relationships are the "win" in sporting together

Meet Jen Wildman

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Quilts for foster kids

COMMUNITY

Creamy tomato smoked sausage and asparagus tortellini

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WELCOME

MORE exercise, fewer excuses

As a younger man, I was an active runner. It was a great stress-reliever and kept my weight where I wanted it to be. I also coached wrestling and worked out directly with many of the young men. And I enjoyed weight lifting. Those activities kept me in decent shape.



Then the kids arrived, along with excuses to not exercise as much. As they grew, it seemed like most of my free time was spent dropping them off and picking them up from their various activities or attending their events. I enjoyed it all, but I did not commit as much time to my own physical exercise, and it now shows. Maybe some of you can relate.

Of course, that was not a great excuse to be inactive, as we all know folks with young kids who run marathons or participate in triathlons. Had I made regular exercise more of a priority, it most certainly would have happened. Maybe not marathons or triathlons, but at least something more than mowing the lawn. The good news is, it's not too late. And as an empty-nester, I can no longer blame it on running the kids.

Admittedly, exercise has changed in each chapter of my life. At 55 years old, I now count walking the dog as exercise. And recreational swimming. And a leisurely bicycle ride. Even a game of disc golf. And why not? That all beats watching another episode of "Yellowstone," doesn't it?

Ideally, Jolene and I would exercise together, but it's not as easy as it sounds. I like to play tennis. She prefers golf. She likes to prep for 20 minutes and go on a bicycle ride. I prefer to plop down on a stationary bike and pedal immediately. We operate at different paces, but that's OK. We do like to go on walks together, and, some day, when I am old enough, I might pick up golf. But probably not.

As most all of us know by now, we are creatures of habit. Good habits and bad habits. Once I break the bad habit of eating Snickers bars and reintroduce the habit of riding that now-dusty exercise bicycle in my basement, I will be started down the right path again.

This month's cover story on active people had me thinking about my exercise, or lack thereof, through the years, and it is even inspiring me to break out that stationary bike again. I might even still catch Beth and Rip on a few "Yellowstone" episodes while I am at it.

Thanks for reading. ■

SHANE GOODMAN

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



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

Angela Ossian
Advertising Account Executive
515-953-4822 x307
angela@iowalivingmagazines.com



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COMPETING for TIME

Residents share how relationships are the “win” in sporting together

By Ashley Rullestad

Central Iowa has become a virtual oasis for those looking for sporting opportunities. Baseball, softball, soccer? Fields abound. How about tennis, volleyball, pickleball, basketball? The courts are there. So are the pools, trampolines, rock climbing walls, bowling alleys, skateboarding parks, trails, ice rinks, rivers, lakes, race tracks, and disc golf and golf courses. Want to learn martial arts, fencing, curling, bodybuilding? Go for it. Those wishing to pursue dreams of wins, trophies, accolades, personal bests and other achievements can find the opportunities to do so.

But not everyone is concerned about wins and losses. Some simply want to play sports for the fun of it. They want it to be about time with friends and family — about building relationships. Instead of looking for a chance to shine, they seek a time to share. Instead of medals, they seek memories. Instead of competition, they seek companionship. When the goal is time together, it’s always a win.

For Mary and Tim White, and their kids, Addison and Parker (not pictured), CrossFit training is a family activity.

FEATURE

Disc golf fans

Matthew Pillman began playing disc golf about 15 years ago. His dad and older siblings all played, and soon he was joining them on the courses.

“We enjoyed it because of the affordable and laid-back nature of the sport. It is also very accessible for novices, like myself, while having plenty of challenges for those with more skill. There are professional disc golf leagues,” he adds.

According to the Professional Disc Golf Association, disc golf is played much like golf except players use a flying disc instead of a ball and clubs. The sport was formalized in the 1970s and shares with golf the object of completing each hole in the fewest strokes (throws).

A disc golf hole begins from a tee area and ends at a target, typically an elevated metal



Matthew Pillman enjoys disc golf and says it is an activity he can enjoy with his father as well as his young children.



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basket. As a player progresses, he or she must make each consecutive throw from the spot where the previous throw landed. When the “putt” lands in the basket, the hole is complete.

Being new to Ankeny, Pillman hasn't explored all the local courses yet, but he's ready to do so with his wife and three young boys (plus another on the way). A number of courses are available in the area. Ankeny is home to a 21-hole course at Heritage Park (302 1/2 N.E. Frisk Drive), and other options can be found around the metro. Des Moines has courses at Grandview, Big Creek State Park, Walnut Ridge, Ewing Park, Pickard Park and Southwoods, while many of the suburbs also have courses.

“A favorite memory of mine was watching my dad bank his shot off a tree for a hole-in-one,” says Pillman. “I look forward to discovering area courses with my family and friends over the summer.”

For more information about disc golf courses and opportunities for competitions and gatherings in the metro, visit desmoinesmetrodiscgolfclub.com.



Mary and Tim White and their kids, Addison, 18, and Parker, 15, enjoy CrossFit training together.

CrossFit crazy

Mary White has been passionate about health and fitness since her youngest child was 6 months old. Both her kids — Addison, 18, and Parker, 15 — have been attending the gym

since they were in baby carriers. When White's job moved the family to Missouri, the group fitness that she had been doing in Iowa wasn't available, but CrossFit was huge there.

CrossFit is a fitness program that produces

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measurable outcomes through lifestyle changes, centered on training and nutrition. Workouts consist of constantly varied, high-intensity, functional movements.

“I joined my first gym, and, after about six months, my husband, Tim, joined as well,” White says. “When my kids got older, at different points, they also became interested.”

At age 10, Parker was asking his parents if he could join them for workouts during the summer because he enjoyed how it made him feel. He continued during the school year, getting up at 4:30 a.m. to get to class. School sports have since replaced some of his gym work.

Addison started on her mission to get healthy at about age 14. She started with cardio, then began lifting, and slowly worked into the group fitness. She then decided to seriously work toward competing at a high level, which meant more hours in the gym and an intentional healthy lifestyle as well.

Today, Mary White, Tim and Addison all coach at CrossFit Ankeny to help others on their mission to be healthier and be the best versions of themselves.

“We love CrossFit for the amazing community of people, the feeling of pushing yourself to accomplish your goals, the outcome on our bodies from the effort in the gym, and how we can enjoy it as a family,” White says.

They attend the CrossFit Games annually, which is the final fitness test of the year of the best in the world. They cheer on their favorite athletes from as close as Ankeny and as far as Iceland.

CrossFit has taught them all a lot, White says. Addison has learned about setting personal goals, having perseverance, and what it feels like not to hit a goal but get back up and keep trying.

“She started quite shy and is now able to lead classes and enjoy her own relationships with gym members,” White says. “She is a senior now, likely attending a top-notch university and leaving high school with a 4.6 GPA. Her grit extends outside of the gym. The benefits of CrossFit can last a lifetime.”



Ashley McLaughlin, pictured with her dad and grandma, is part of a family of horse enthusiasts.

Family riders

Ashley McLaughlin has been riding horses her whole life. She grew up riding with her mom and dad, as well as with her sister, Bailey. Her parents met because of horses. Her dad, an Australian, had a scholarship for farrier work to be in the U.S. to study. Her mom was working as a pleasure horse trainer.

“It’s good to be in an industry like the horse world. All family members had a similar interest and hobby, so it enabled our family to spend a lot of quality time together,” McLaughlin says.

Now she operates AMC Performance Horses with her boyfriend,

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FEATURE



Ashley McLaughlin and her boyfriend, Kevin Gracey, operate AMC Performance Horses.

Kevin Gracey, a team roper.

"I have always been active with horses. I've been showing for years, and Kevin and his mum, Tammy, have always had a passion for the horses. Now I offer lessons and training at K&H Ranch in Mingo. For clinics and cold weather lessons, I'm at Twin Creek Ranch in Bondurant owned by Tammy because it's a lovely heated indoor arena."

McLaughlin's mom and sister are in the NRHA (National Reining Horse Association) community, and her mother still has horses and is trying to breed the girls' old show mare to get more equine athletes.

"I thoroughly enjoy the equine sports with my family, whether it is competing in a reining event or cheering on the boys at a rodeo," McLaughlin says. "I suppose I have always loved the horses. Something always draws me to them. I suppose it's the relationship with the horse that's my personal favorite. I love to train a horse and take them from where they once were to becoming your best friend."

One of her favorite memories is watching the NRHA Futurity with her family. The NRHA Futurity & Adequan Championship Show is one of the most elite reining events in the world with more than \$2 million in purse and prizes and more than 20 countries represented. McLaughlin and her family attend whenever they get the opportunity. This year's event is in Oklahoma City.

"The competition is incredible, with the horses and riders improving every year. So is the equine industry, from equine technology to the opportunities opening for more people to be involved in the horse community. You no longer have to be a horse trainer or own a horse to participate in these incredible events," she says. ■



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MAKING the pitch

Iowa Rush Soccer Club providing opportunities for youngsters.

Meg Brandt of Ankeny has been a lifelong soccer fan.

The 26-year-old grew up playing the sport in school and also for the Iowa Rush Soccer Club, a non-profit 501(c)3 corporation established in 2009 to provide children an opportunity to learn and to play soccer in central Iowa from ages as young as U4 to U19.

Following graduation from high school, Brandt played the sport collegiately, eventually moving back to Ankeny where she could pursue her passion at even greater lengths.

“I wanted to give back to the community where I developed so much as not only a soccer player, but also a person,” she says.

One year later, those dreams are slowly materializing. Now in her second year with the organization, Brandt is one of 10 full-time staff employees, with five of them being full-time coaches. The organization also has seven part-time staff coaches, while the Academy program has more than 30 parent volunteer coaches, Brandt says.

Iowa Rush Central provides opportunities to soccer players to learn and expand on their talents in Ankeny and the surrounding communities and features players from across the metro, Brandt says. Two other teams exist as well.

“We also have Iowa Rush North (Waverly) and Iowa Rush South (Pella) in order to provide more opportunities for the entire state of Iowa,” she says.

The organization recently hosted the Iowa Rush Spring Champions Cup tournament, where more than 450 games were played over the course of three days at sport complexes in Ankeny (Prairie Ridge Soccer Complex), Altoona (Spring Creek Soccer Complex) and Des Moines (James Cownie Soccer Park).

“We had teams from each age group participate in the tournament and ended up with three Iowa Rush teams finishing as tournament champions,” Brandt says. “We welcomed over 12,600 participants and spectators from multiple states, contributing around a \$4 million economic boost in the area. We accommodated 35 referees from the East Coast due to the high demand of referee coverage.”

The tournament also hosted a social for all of the coaches at Uptown Garage in Ankeny. The Champions Cup will return next season once again, from April 11-13, Brandt says.

Until then, it's business — or busyness — as usual.

“We just opened tryout registration for the upcoming fall season,” Brandt says. “And, over the summer, we have several programs and camps to offer to our players.” ■



One of the winning Iowa teams from this season's Iowa Rush Spring Champions Cup tournament.

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Aviation Electronics Technician Third Class Kaelynn Quam, from Ankeny, tests a power supply assembly in the calibration laboratory aboard amphibious assault carrier USS Tripoli (LHA 7) in San Diego on March 18. Tripoli is an America-class amphibious assault ship homeported in San Diego. ■



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Third Class Kaleb Shultz

SHADE Tree Auto celebrates opening, makes donation

International award-winning auto repair shop Shade Tree Auto donated \$1,000 to the Ankeny Art Center at the ribbon cutting of its Ankeny location on April 3. This is the third location for Shade Tree Auto.

“We’re excited to be a part of the Ankeny community and appreciate what our new neighbors at the Ankeny Art Center provide for the residents,” says owner Clint Dudley. “Arts are often overlooked, yet it’s something everyone can connect with. We’re glad to have an organization like the AAC encouraging the next generation.”

Shade Tree Auto is located in the former Midwest Muffler building along Ordinance Road north of The District in Ankeny. The ribbon cutting also paid tribute to Midwest Mufflers owner Jim Williams’ contributions to Ankeny over 41 years of business ownership.

“Midwest Mufflers has been taking care of customers for four decades and three generations. We’re fortunate to continue the tradition of customer service and dedication to the Ankeny community that Jim has built for so long,” says Dudley.

Shade Tree Auto Ankeny will be managed by Dan Kline, a military veteran and Ankeny resident with more than nine years of Shade Tree Auto experience. Customers of the former Midwest Mufflers will recognize Stacey Shaffer and Kenny Semple, who have served with Jim for more than a decade. Shade Tree Auto will provide the same award-winning services as their Grimes and Urbandale locations, including shuttle service, loaner vehicles, and repairs backed by a four-year / 40,000 mile warranty. ■

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EXCELLENCE in Mentoring Awards presented

Established in 2009, the Excellence in Mentoring Awards give Iowa MENTOR certified programs the opportunity to recognize outstanding long-time youth mentors. Nicki Mullins, with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Iowa, was among those honored.

Nicki has been serving as a mentor with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Iowa for more than three years. Her dedication to the program is evident in her work and the relationship she has built with her mentee. Nicki is a strong advocate for the mentor program and takes opportunities to share about the impact mentoring has on young people's lives, encouraging her peers and community to become mentors.

Nicki and her mentee, Reina, have been together for more than three years. They have built a strong relationship through consistency, trust and fun. Nicki prioritizes the time they spend together saying, "It's less about the outing, and more about the conversation and staying present with each other." Throughout their time together, Nicki has encouraged Reina to explore outside of her comfort zone, learning to navigate areas where she might not have had the confidence to do so before.

Reina has shared she likes Nicki as her Big Sister because "she understands me." She also rated their relationship a 10/10 because they have lots of fun, and they have lots of similar interests like scary movies, painting and Spanish.

Reina's guardian said, "The match has had a positive impact on Reina because it's opened her up to new ideas and new experiences."

In addition to her role as a mentor, Nicki also works to support broadening the reach of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Iowa by helping to build relationships with her employer and other organizations in her community. Nicki brought the idea to create a match activity that would allow mentors and mentees to tour the PBS station and work together on a STEAM activity kit. Through creative ideas like this, Nicki is helping to create new and engaging activities to broaden the experience of mentees within the program.

Individuals selected have served as a mentor a minimum of two years and exemplify both the spirit and positive benefits of mentoring. Mentors are selected based on their advocacy and leadership in mentoring, innovation, impact, commitment to their mentee, the match relationship, and the program itself.

Many recipients possess a compelling mentoring story that illustrates the Excellence in Mentoring Award is the most prestigious honor that a youth mentor in Iowa can receive.

Nominations for the Excellence in Mentoring Awards are open year-round. ■

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FAITH

By Pastor John Wagner

BEING saved

Romans 10:9 - "...because if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."



Recently a salesperson stopped by my home to "save" me. They shared that I was paying too much for pest control services and receiving an inferior product. (I confess I am not an expert in pest control, so it's possible they were right.) As I'm sure you can imagine, I had to quickly decide if I really believed what they were sharing. Their "speech" began and ended with similar words: "Can I SAVE you some money and also SAVE you from bug problems?" I politely declined as I was happy with my current situation.

Said differently, I really didn't feel like I needed to be "saved."

In the larger context of the scripture I shared above, the author is speaking with the listener about how much he cares for a particular group of people and about their salvation. They've heard the message, but they haven't understood it to be true. Said differently, they didn't feel like they needed to be "saved," at least not in the way the author of this letter understood God's offer of salvation to work.

As I read this scripture today, I couldn't help but wonder how best to share the gift of God's love and "being saved" with other people. I believe that salvation, through Jesus, is a gift of grace and love that is somehow directly tied to my mistakes and altogether in spite of them. Without regard to my past, God welcomes me in love toward something new. I can be saved from myself, my mistakes, and my denials of God. I am offered a fresh start and an eternal relationship with a loving God. All we have to do is confess and believe!

I think that most people in Ankeny have heard some version of this message about God's love. I acknowledge that at least a portion of the reason people don't feel like they need to be "saved" is because I haven't consistently and repeatedly demonstrated the difference salvation has made in my own life. Maybe I've unintentionally talked about it the "wrong" way?

What if the "salvation sales pitch" doesn't require an expert, a pressure-filled conversation, or pointing out someone else's "bug" problem? What if a different way to help people understand the love of God is by building healthy relationships that give us a chance to demonstrate the new things salvation has done in/through us?

It takes a lot of courage to knock on someone's door and tell them they have a bug problem. Perhaps it takes even more to let them know how much God loves them. Maybe building relationships will help us ALL understand being "saved" a little better? May it be so. ■

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

RECIPE

A CREAMY pasta delight perfect for dining outdoors

(Family Features) Warming weather brings with it plenty of opportunities to celebrate from holidays and birthdays to sunny afternoons offering an excuse to spend time outdoors with loved ones. Dining al fresco brings added freshness to favorite foods, and taking your next meal to the patio can be a fun, delicious way to soak in some vitamin D.

Pasta provides an easy option for sharing with a crowd, like this Creamy Tomato Smoked Sausage and Asparagus Tortellini. A cheesy, filling delight, it's ready to enjoy in less than half an hour.

Plus, locally grown Michigan Asparagus adds an extra level of freshness requiring just about three days to travel from family farms in Michigan to your kitchen. It doesn't need a passport to make it from farm to table, and you won't need one either to enjoy this Italian-inspired dish in the comfort of home.

Find more patio-friendly recipe ideas at michiganasparagus.org. ■

Creamy tomato smoked sausage and asparagus tortellini

Recipe courtesy of the Michigan Asparagus Advisory Board
Servings: 6

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 pound smoked turkey sausage, sliced into bite-sized rounds
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 2/3 cups chicken broth
- 1 can (15 ounces) tomato sauce
- 3/4 cup heavy cream
- 18 ounces cheese tortellini
- 1/2 pound fresh asparagus, trimmed and cut into bite-sized pieces



- In large rimmed skillet, heat olive oil over medium heat.
- Add sausage and brown on both sides. Add garlic and stir until golden, 20-30 seconds.
- Add broth, tomato sauce, cream and tortellini; stir to combine. Bring to light simmer.
- Cover and simmer over low heat 10 minutes. Add asparagus during last 5 minutes of cooking until tortellini is tender and sauce has reduced.



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SUMMER Library Program launches soon



The Summer Library Program is back with a variety of free, fun activities for all ages. Sign up officially begins online or in person at the Library on Tuesday, May 28, with a kick-off concert featuring YouTube sensation Patty Shukla taking place at the Ankeny Bandshell on Thursday, June 6. Here are just a few reasons why you should participate:

- Free swag bag filled with an activity log and coupons
- Chances to win a weekly prize of a Target gift card
- All participants receive a free book (June 24-29)
- Free admission to Cascade Falls for the Finale Pool Party on July 24 from 7:15-9:15 p.m.

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This summer is packed with our regular events for the whole family, including:

- Story time in the park (various parks in Ankeny)
- Sing & Shake at the Ankeny Market Pavilion
- Weekly events specifically designed for school-aged kids, kindergarten through fifth grade
- Family Bingo for Books
- Monthly tween, teen and adult book clubs
- Social games, including cribbage, canasta and chess

And you won't want to miss the following special events:

- Family concert featuring the Jolly Pops
- Interactive Dinosaur Experience
- Iowa State University Insect Zoo
- Broadway-themed Teen Murder Mystery
- Teen Creating Cartoon Characters
- Teen Star Wars Escape Rooms
- Tween & Teen Book-to-Movie Clubs
- The Political Lincoln: Honest Abe on Campaigns & Elections
- Waves of Danger: Adult Murder Mystery
- Live Music: Blues Musician Joey Leone

Be sure to check the calendar for specific dates and times at ankenylibrarycalendar.com. In addition to a full schedule of free events for all ages, participants will have the opportunity to keep track of the time they spend reading, learning, or doing an activity for chances to win a weekly prize of a Target gift card. Complete as many activity logs as you like; the more activities you do, the more chances you have to win. For additional information about the Summer Library Program, visit ankenyiowa.gov/read.

The Summer Library Program is generously funded by the Friends of the Ankeny Library. To support the Friends and show your love of the Summer Library Program, purchase a shirt or tote bag for just \$15 from their online store. Purchases can be shipped to you or picked up from either Wee's Tees or the library. View the online store and order here: ankenyiowa.gov/tshirt.

We hope to see you at the library this summer! ■

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MEET Jen Wildman

Says third grade, for her, is the sweet spot of elementary school

Jen Wildman teaches third graders at Crocker Elementary. The Naperville, Illinois, native has a background in elementary education and a reading endorsement. She taught in Illinois for five years before relocating to Iowa in 2010. Her husband, Adam, is an Ankeny High School alumnus, and the couple decided to relocate to Ankeny from Chicago and start a family.



Jen Wildman on the last day of school last year.

She started her Ankeny teaching journey as a substitute teacher working part-time while balancing time at home with her two children, Reed and Watson. Wildman transitioned to full-time teaching at Crocker Elementary as a building sub in 2021.

“It was a rewarding experience that allowed me to dive back into the classroom environment and learn from every teaching opportunity,” she says.

Now she is completing her second year of teaching third grade. Over the years, she has had the opportunity to teach a range of grades from kindergarten to fifth, but she has found a passion for teaching third grade.

“It’s a wonderful age where students are transitioning from primary to upper elementary, and I love fostering their independence, responsibility, and enjoying their delightful sense of humor,” she says. “Joining the Crocker community in 2021, I immediately felt the special atmosphere that makes it a truly unique place to teach and learn.”

Like many teachers, Wildman says her favorite part of teaching is seeing the growth of her students from August to May. She likes spending nine months of the year with her students and creating their own classroom community.

“I’m passionate about education and dedicated to fostering a love for learning in my students,” Wildman says. “While I enjoy having my own children in Ankeny Community Schools, it can be challenging to balance my own children’s activities and school events with my teacher responsibilities. I try hard to balance the teacher-mom life and make it to as many school activities as I can.”

As Ankeny grows, Wildman appreciates teaching as a Hawk on the southside and cheering on the Jaguars as a northside resident.

Outside of teaching, you might find Wildman gardening, savoring a cup of coffee while immersed in a good book, practicing yoga, or being a spectator at her kids’ school and sporting events. She is an avid reader and enjoys sharing what she is reading with friends, family and her students.

“Our family has a rescue dog named Ruby who loves to snuggle on the couch and enjoys a long walk. As a family, we love to watch cooking competition shows together, spend time outside in our backyard, and go to the movies,” she says. ■

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TEAM Emerson

Tegtmeyers advocate for neurofibromatosis research.

Alicia Tegtmeyer's daughter, Emerson, 10, was only 8 months old when she was diagnosed with NF1, a subgroup of neurofibromatosis. Alicia explains, "neurofibromatosis (NF) refers to a group of genetic conditions that cause tumors to grow on nerves throughout the body... NF affects one in 2,000 people of all populations. There is currently no cure, but the Children's Tumor Foundation, the world's leading organization dedicated to NF, is driving research, expanding knowledge, and advancing care for the NF community."

At 18 months old, Emerson had a tumor on one of her optic nerves. She needed MRIs every six months to monitor the tumor because it could grow and potentially cause vision loss.

"We're thankful that it didn't grow," Alicia says. "At our last MRI, we found that the tumor had disappeared."

In addition to the possible tumors that develop with NF, Emerson's muscles can't develop properly to the extent a typical 10-year-old's would, so she has weakness of her muscles.

"Emerson won't ever be on par with her peers," Alicia states. "For Emerson, physical activity is important to maintain her core muscle strength. There is never a steady state with NF1 over a person's lifetime. Health can change due to NF at any given time. Hormone changes affect tumor growth."

Since Emerson's diagnosis, the Tegtmeyers have been strong advocates for finding a cure through the Children's Tumor Foundation.

"Emerson is aware of her condition and is aware of others with it," Alicia says. "Every year, she holds a lemonade stand to raise money for the foundation, and she understands that she's raising money to help with research that could eventually help her and others like her."

May is national NF awareness month. Similar to other conditions, NF has an awareness ribbon. It is colored blue and green. May 17 is World NF Awareness Day.

"Last year on May 17, Emerson shared relevant information with her class at school," Alicia says. "I am thankful she feels comfortable doing that to help raise awareness with her peers and maybe help someone else with NF someday."

This year, the third grader plans to share



Emerson Tegtmeyer, who has a type of neurofibromatosis, helps raise awareness about the condition and raises funds through a lemonade stand for the Children's Tumor Foundation.

with her class again.

The Tegtmeyers participate in the Iowa Shine a Light Walk to raise awareness about NF. Since its inception in 2009, the walk has taken place in several locations across the state. This year, the Iowa Shine a Light NF Walk will be Saturday, Aug. 17 at the Racoon River Park in West Des Moines. Registration and kids' activities are from 8:30-9:30 a.m., and the walk begins at 9:30 a.m.

"We've participated in the walk for the last

nine years," Alicia notes. "There are lots of free kids' activities, a silent auction, and day-of registration is welcome. It's a great family event that helps build community."

Additional information can be found at <https://join.ctf.org/event/2024-shine-a-light-walk-iowa/e553316>, as well as on Facebook under Shine a Light NF Walk - Iowa. ■



Navigating Social Security election

How to unlock your best option

Knowing when to elect Social Security can feel overwhelming. With the possibility of 81 election options for couples, the choice is anything but straightforward. It is more than just deciding between taking benefits at 62 (when you can first elect), at full retirement age (66 or 67 for most people), or at 70 (the age at which your benefit stops growing). For many retirees, Social Security represents 25% to 35% of their retirement income. You want to make the most of this vital retirement income source.



A lot of times when pre-retirees first meet with one of our Retirement Planners, they are working with a financial advisor. We often hear the following about their Social Security decision, “My advisor said, make your election and then let me know what you decide.” This advice makes me cringe. Social Security benefits over 25 years can add up to \$500,000 for an individual and \$1 million for a couple. This decision deserves a complex analysis, not a “good luck, you’re on your own” approach.

That complex analysis should include all your different retirement savings accounts (including any pensions), your monthly income needs in retirement, your long-term tax plan, and your plans to leave a legacy to

loved ones or charities. Your health, longevity, and marital status should also be considered. Once you have a clear picture of these factors and how they work with your Social Security, you don’t have to rely on luck. You have powerful information that will help you make the most of your benefit.

For married couples, we often recommend a combination strategy. One spouse will take their benefit early, typically the one with the lower benefit, and the other spouse will defer their benefit — maybe until full retirement age, just before or up to age 70. This strategy allows the couple to get some Social Security income right away in retirement and defer some for a higher income down the road and a higher survivorship benefit for the spouse who lives the longest.

That’s just one strategy. There are many more. I have learned that small shifts can cascade into big outcomes in retirement planning, especially when it comes to electing Social Security. Instead of “let me know what you decide,” your Social Security needs more time and attention, and so does your retirement. You spend a lot of time saving for retirement — spending some time planning is one of those shifts that can lead to big outcomes in retirement.

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



Learn how to maximize your Social Security by watching this episode. Scan the QR code to watch or read now.



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QUILTS for foster kids

Nonprofits helping nonprofits



The Ankeny Area Quilters Guild presented 30 quilts to Ellipsis for teens transitioning out of foster care.

This past April, the Ankeny Area Quilters Guild presented Ellipsis, a nonprofit care provider for kids and families, with more than 30 twin-size quilts and pillowcases to give to teens in the community who are transitioning out of foster care.

The project was funded by a \$10,000 grant from 100 Women Who Care Ankeny, a group of women who come together once a quarter to support local nonprofits.

Anne Porter is a member of both 100 Women Who Care and the Ankeny Area Quilters Guild. She explains that, in April 2023, she was chosen to present at a 100 Women Who Care meeting about the quilters guild's project for Ellipsis. The \$10,000 the organization was ultimately awarded was used to pay for fabric, batting and long-arm quilting for the twin size quilts.

Porter says that, without the funds, the

Ankeny Area Quilters Guild wouldn't have been able to create the quilts and pillowcases for Ellipsis, as the average cost per quilt is \$350. About 1,800 in-kind hours were poured into the project as well.

"When a nonprofit can help another nonprofit meet another nonprofit's goals, that's pretty special," Porter shares. "We collaborate together to benefit these kids coming out of foster care."

Since being founded in 1991, the Ankeny Area Quilters Guild has supported many local organizations by donating quilts to those in need. The group is currently partnering with On With Life to create bags for wheelchairs and walkers. They've also donated baby quilts to places like Blank Children's Hospital, presented quilts to local service members and veterans, and much more.

What Porter is most proud of is that

the quilts created by the organization go to people who really appreciate it.

"It's really not work for us," she says. "It's enjoyable."

The Ankeny Area Quilters Guild is always accepting new members. They meet the second Tuesday of each month at Ankeny First United Methodist Church in Uptown Ankeny. Sessions begin at 6:30 p.m. with a social, followed by the meeting at 7 p.m. Each meeting includes locally and nationally known speakers, opportunities to learn new quilting techniques and the chance to share quilting projects. The group will also be at the Ankeny Art Center Art Festival this month and Winterset's Iowa Quilt Festival in June.

For more information, visit the Ankeny Area Quilters Guild website, ankenysquiltersguild.wildapricot.org. ■

Life and Hope After Stroke

Ankeny man shares his inspiring story of rehabilitation, recovery

It was 3:00 in the morning and Brian Clark couldn't sleep. He felt off, so he made his way to the kitchen to retrieve his smartwatch, which was charging there. As he fumbled to put his watch on, he couldn't get his left arm to respond. He went back to his bedroom to awaken his wife, who thought he was sleepwalking when he mumbled a garbled request for help.

Suddenly Brian's left leg went out from underneath him, and he couldn't get back up. His wife called 911, and paramedics were on the scene within minutes. As Brian rode in the ambulance to the hospital, he couldn't help but think, "Is this it? Am I done with my life? Is there more, or not?"

Brian said he resolved then and there that he wasn't going to let this be the end for him. When he arrived at the hospital, they quickly determined he was having a stroke and by 4:30 that morning, he was in surgery having the blood clot in his brain removed.

For Brian and the one in four adults over the age of 25 who will experience a stroke in their lifetime, there is life – and hope – after stroke. Rehabilitation can build strength, capability and confidence. It can also help someone who experiences a stroke continue daily activities, despite the effects of their stroke.

There are more than 7 million stroke survivors living in the U.S. today. But

not all strokes – and not all stroke survivors – are the same. Finding the right rehabilitation plan is vital to recovery after stroke. The American Stroke Association has developed standards to help rehabilitation facilities provide consistent, high-quality care for individuals as they recover from stroke.

Facilities that have agreed to participate in the Association's post-acute stroke standards program agree to follow the Association's treatment guidelines and have made a commitment to providing care that is based on standards aligned with American Stroke Association science and vetted by stroke rehabilitation experts.

Thanks to a wonderful team that included PT, OT, and speech therapists at On with Life in Ankeny, one of several Iowa facilities participating in the Association's post-acute stroke standards program, Brian has experienced a nearly full recovery. While he still has challenges with his left hand and arm, he is back to running his own business and the life that he loves.

"I told myself when I arrived for in-

patient rehab that I was walking out on my own," Brian said. "It's a really long journey. Progress is literally measured in 1/16th of an inch, one step a week."

Brian said that his care team took the time to get to know him as an individual and what motivated him, which in his case included a desire to get back onto the golf course. As a result, golf became a large part of Brian's unique rehab plan. Brian also has incorporated strength training and cross-fit to help him continue his progress.

Nearly three years after his stroke, Brian says he continues to work on his recovery and revisits his care team for "tune ups" every few months. Together they work to map out a program for his continued recovery.

"In the rehab experience, you have a lot of time to think to yourself," Brian said. "You think about how precious those moments you have with your kids and grandkids are, and you want more of that time. So now you cherish every minute you've got with your son, your daughter, your wife, your grandkids. It becomes so much more important."



Brian dancing with his daughter at her wedding.



Congratulations to the following Iowa facilities who have joined the American Heart Association and American Stroke Association's post-acute stroke care initiative.

These providers have agreed to follow the Association's treatment guidelines and have made a commitment to providing care that is based on standards aligned with American Stroke Association science and vetted by stroke rehabilitation experts:

- Community Memorial Hospital, Sumner
- Finley Health Foundation, Dubuque
- Genesis Medical Center, DeWitt
- Guttenberg Municipal Hospital, Guttenberg
- Jackson Country Regional Health Center, Maquoketa
- NewAldaya Lifescapes, Cedar Falls
- Jones Regional Medical Center (UnityPoint Health), Anamosa
- West Ridge Care Center, Cedar Rapids
- Good Samaritan Society- LeMars, LeMars
- Sanford Sheldon Medical Center, Sheldon
- St. Lukes (UnityPoint Health), Sioux City
- Cedar Ridge Village (Pivotal Health Care), West Des Moines
- Hearthstone, A Ministry of WesleyLife, Pella
- Kennybrooke Village (Pivotal Health Care), Grimes
- Mary Greeley Medical Center, Ames
- On With Life, Inc., Ankeny
- Prairie Vista Village (Pivotal Health Care), Altoona
- Encompass Health Rehabilitation Hospital (University of Iowa), Coralville
- Kahl Hom, Davenport
- Lone Tree Health Care Center, Inc., Lone Tree
- Van Buren County Hospital, Keosauqua
- Audubon County Memorial Hospital, Audubon
- Midlands Living Center, LCC, Council Bluffs
- Myrtue Medical Center, Harlan
- Hegg Health Center, Rock Valley
- Lucas County Health Center, Chariton
- Davis County Hospital, Bloomfield
- Buchanan County Health Center, Independence
- Solon Retirement Village, Solon
- Independence Village, Waukee
- Gunderson Palmer, West Union



Brian working on his golf game with a therapist.

Learn more about this initiative at
heart.org/PostAcuteStroke

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American Heart Association.
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EVENTS IN THE AREA

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

Check for cancellations

A Night at the Museum

June 18, 6-8 p.m.
Ankeny Area Historical Society,
301 S.W. Third St., Ankeny

A Night at the Museum will commemorate the 50th anniversary of the 1974 tornado that came through Ankeny. No admission charged.



Annual Ice Cream Social

Aug. 25, 2-4 p.m.
Ankeny Area Historical Society,
301 S.W. Third St., Ankeny

Enjoy a free ice cream social along with homemade baked items.

Write on Thursdays

First and third Thursdays of each month, 6-7:30 p.m.

Ankeny Kirkendall Public Library

Writers of all skill levels, ages and genres are invited to this fun, creative experience.

Free introductory session

Friday, June 7, 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, see a sample lesson in action and get answers for any questions you may have. You'll also learn about Passion Studios, meet an instructor and hear their personal story.

Women's Self Defense Classes

Aug. 5-8 or Nov. 4, 6, 11 and 13,
6-9 p.m.

Ankeny Police Department,
411 S.W. Ordinance Road

The Ankeny Police Department presents this series of four classes per session. The first day is a presentation, days two and three are hands-on techniques and day four is simulations. Cost is \$35. Classes are three hours each. Must be 18 or 14-17 with parent permission. Students are not required to be Ankeny residents. To register or for more information, visit www.ankenyiowa.gov/310/Self-Defense-Training-RAD.



2024 Golf Fore Education

Wednesday, July 31
Briarwood Golf Course

Ankeny School Foundation's golf outing includes 18 holes of golf, a cart, lunch and reception immediately following golf. Cost is \$150 per individual or \$600 for a foursome. To register, visit <https://ankenyschoolfoundation.org/golf-fore-education>.

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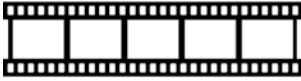
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EVENTS IN THE AREA

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

Check for cancellations



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."

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.



Ankeny Juneteenth Festival

Sunday, June 23, 3-9 p.m. Wagner Park Bandshell, 410 W. First St., Ankeny

Ankeny Community Network is hosting the fourth 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.

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EVENTS IN THE AREA

Check for cancellations

Raccoon River Palooza

Saturday, June 8, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Raccoon River Park, 2500 Grand Ave.,
West Des Moines

The Raccoon River Palooza will feature an array of activities and entertainment, including live music performances, cuisine from local food vendors, interactive games for all ages, and outdoor activities.



Iowa Take Steps Walk

Saturday, June 22, 9 a.m.
Iowa State Capitol Grounds

The public is invited to join the Iowa Take Steps Walk to benefit the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation. The event starts at 9 a.m. with a ribbon cutting ceremony at 10 a.m. Learn more at cctakesteps.org.

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

Events at The Brenton Arboretum

Various dates

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

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

- Nature Club, varying times, register by age group: June 6 and 20, July 4 and 18, Aug. 1 and 15, Sept. 5 and 19, Oct. 3 and 17, Nov. 7 and 21, Dec. 5 and 19.
- Wednesdays in May, 10-11 a.m., Nature's Healing.
- May 19, 1-4 p.m., Plein Air Art Festival.
- May 20, 10 a.m. to noon, homeschool field trip.
- May 30-31, Animal Odyssey camp.
- June 2, 1-3 p.m., Go Hug a Tree.
- June 3-4, Animal Odyssey Camp, 9-11:30 a.m.
- June 6, 6-7 p.m., Outdoor Foraging with Polk County Conservation.
- June 8, 7-9 p.m., Wine on the Prairie.

Vietnam War Living History Event

Iowa Gold Star Military Museum, 7105 N.W. 70th Ave., Johnston
Saturday, June 1, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday, June 2,
9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Discover what life was like for an American servicemember during the Vietnam War. Meet knowledgeable historians, explore historically accurate campsites, and see period military vehicles. Admission is free. ■




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David Rodriguez, 72 Degrees Comfort Company, accepts a certificate for Favorite Heating & Cooling Business.



Travis Cheers, Jack Rounsborg, Jon James and Kurt Greving, Christian Brothers Automotive, accept the certificate for Favorite Auto Service.



Staff at Advanced Family Dentistry accept the certificate for Favorite Dental office.



The staff at On With Life accepts their certificate for Favorite Nonprofit.

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HOW SHOULD I handle my finances after graduation?

Life after graduation can bring a new wave of opportunities and financial responsibilities. Below are key tips you can implement to make the most of this exciting new chapter.



Create a budget

A budget is an important tool to get finances in order and keep yourself accountable. The 50/30/20 approach allocates your money into three separate categories:

- 50% goes to essential expenses
- 30% goes to wants
- 20% goes to savings and debt repayments

Pay down student debt

Budgeting will give you a head start in prioritizing student loan payments and any other debt. It's important to stay on top of making the monthly payments, and it's a good idea to pay more than the minimum payment if you can. This helps lower the principal of your balance and pay off student loans faster.

Open a credit card and start building credit

If you have no credit history, consider opening a credit builder credit card or another introductory card to get started. Use the card and pay off balances on time and in full to establish good credit. In some circumstances, credit scores and/or credit history could be required to rent or buy a home, obtain utility services or enter other contracts.

Pay your bills on time

It's crucial to make all payments — including credit card balances, student loan payments, rent and other payments — on time. Late payments often involve hefty fees and will negatively impact credit scores. Consider setting up automatic payments and calendar reminders before payment due dates.

Establish a retirement plan

The sooner you start saving for retirement, the better off you will be in the future. See if your employer offers a retirement savings plan such as a Roth 401(k). If there's

an employer match on your contributions, it may be advantageous to contribute more than the minimum amount.

Set up an emergency savings fund

Unexpected costs often turn up at the most inopportune times. It's important to be prepared for when costly events occur. Whether it's an injury, a broken-down car, or losing your job, an emergency fund will give you a leg up.

Seek out sound financial advice

There is a lot of financial information on the internet and social media platforms. When you are looking for advice, pay attention to its credibility. There is a big difference between advice given by a Certified Financial Planner® and a social media influencer.

Keep these tips in mind to get started on the right track today. ■

Information provided by Darci Vasiljevic, VP, Bankers Trust, Ankeny Branch Manager, DVasiljevic@BankersTrust.com, 515-245-2934, 1925 N. Ankeny Blvd., Ankeny.

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HOW IS your retirement income taxed?

Once you're retired, you will likely need to draw on several types of income for your living expenses. You'll need to know where these funds are coming from and how much you can count on, but you should also be aware of how this money is taxed — because this knowledge can help you plan and budget for your retirement years.



Here's the basic tax information on some key sources of retirement income:

• **Social Security** – Many people don't realize they may have to pay taxes on their Social Security benefits. Whether your benefits will be taxed depends on how much other taxable income you receive from various sources, such as self-employment, stock dividends and interest payments. You'll want to check with your tax advisor to determine whether your income reaches the threshold where your Social Security benefits will be taxed. The lower your total taxable income, the lower the taxes will be on your benefits. The Social Security Administration will not automatically take out taxes from your monthly checks — to have taxes withheld, you will need to fill out Form W-4V (Voluntary Withholding Request). Again, your tax advisor can help you determine the percentage of your benefits you should withhold.

• **Retirement accounts** – During your working years, you may have contributed to two basic retirement accounts: an IRA and a 401(k) or similar plan (such as a 457(b) plan for state and local government employees or a 403(b) plan for educators and employees of some nonprofits). If you invested in a "traditional" IRA or 401(k) or similar plan, your contributions may have been partially or completely deductible and your earnings grew on a tax-deferred basis. But when you start taking withdrawals from your traditional IRA or 401(k), the money is considered taxable at your normal income tax rate. However, if you chose the "Roth" option (when available), your contributions were not deductible, but your earnings and withdrawals are tax-free, provided you meet certain conditions.

• **Annuities** – Many investors use annuities to supplement their retirement income. An annuity is essentially a contract between you and an insurance company in which the insurer pays you an income stream for a given number of years, or for life, in exchange for the premiums you paid. You typically purchase a "qualified" annuity with pre-tax dollars, possibly within a traditional IRA or 401(k), so your premiums may be deductible, and your earnings can grow tax deferred. Once you start taking payouts, the entire amount — your contributions and earnings — are taxable at your individual tax rate. On the other hand, you purchase "non-qualified" annuities with after-tax dollars, so your premiums aren't deductible, but just like qualified annuities, your earnings grow on a tax-deferred basis. When you take payments, you won't pay taxes on the principal amounts you invested but the earnings will be taxed as ordinary income.

We've looked at some general rules governing different sources of income, but you should consult your tax professional about your specific situation. Ultimately, factors such as your goals, lifestyle and time horizon should drive the decisions you make for your retirement income. Nonetheless, you may want to look for ways to control the taxes that result from your various income pools. And the more you know about how your income is taxed, the fewer unpleasant surprises you may experience. ■

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Edward Jones, its financial advisors and associates do not provide tax or legal advice. Edward Jones, Member SIPC. Information provided by Allison Ver Steegt, 215 N.W. 18th St., Suite 103, Ankeny, 515-964-2122.

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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PLAN AHEAD

By **Sasha Mudlaff** and **Holly Peterson Miller**

THANK YOU, Mom and Dad

Our mother died a few years ago after struggling through the late stages of Alzheimer's disease. Honoring her during this stressful time was our family's ultimate goal. And then, again, when she died, we wanted to honor her life in the best way we could. Well, we can tell you firsthand that having her preplanned funeral in place was extremely valuable in helping us achieve our goal. All of the information surrounding her death, visitation, service and burial were organized in a preplanning file at the funeral home. Knowing her wishes, having merchandise selections already made, having the details about what would be in her obituary already written down, and having the information for the death certificate already recorded all helped to make the process of funeral arrangements so much easier for our family.



Since that time, our dad has been "tweaking" his own preplan, which is currently in place at the funeral home, and, for that, we are so thankful. When that time comes, and our heads are spinning with grief, we won't have to wonder or guess. We will know exactly how best to honor him.

Thank you, Mom and Dad, for this gift. With love, from your two daughters. ■

Information provided by Sasha Mudlaff and Holly Peterson Miller, family owners, Hamilton's Funeral Home, 605 Lyon St., Des Moines, 515-243-5221.

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HEALTH

By **Dr. Todd Pietig**

MACULAR degeneration

My grandmother struggled to see in the later years of her life. I remember having to read the menu to her when we went out to dinner. She, like many elderly people, had macular degeneration, which is the leading cause of vision loss in people older than 50. Macular degeneration results in the loss of your central vision while not affecting the peripheral vision. If you know someone with macular degeneration, you may notice how they look off to the side to use their peripheral vision to see. Most people have the "dry" form, but it can progress to "wet" when the blood vessels start leaking blood into the macula. You are more likely to develop macular degeneration if you are Caucasian, overweight, a smoker, older than 50, have a family history, have hypertension or have high cholesterol. Some treatments for macular degeneration include nutritional supplements and the injection of medicine directly into the eyeball. Lutein and zeaxanthin are the beneficial antioxidants found in the supplements. These antioxidants are thought to filter light and reduce light-inducing damage to the macula. A lot of people with a family history will take these supplements to hopefully delay or reduce vision loss as they age. For those with significant vision loss, a digital magnifier can be a helpful tool with reading. ■



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

WHAT IS a herniated disc?

Many patients with back pain, leg pain or weakness of the lower extremity muscles are diagnosed with a herniated disc. When a disc herniation occurs, the cushion that sits between the spinal vertebrae is pushed outside its normal position. A herniated disc would not be a problem if it weren't for the spinal nerves that are very close to the edge of these spinal discs.

What is the spinal disc? The spinal disc is a soft cushion that sits between each vertebrae of the spine. In a young individual, the disc is soft and elastic. However, like so many other structures in the body, the disc gradually loses its elasticity and is more vulnerable to injury. In fact, even in individuals as young as 30, MRIs show evidence of disc deterioration in about 30% of people.

What happens when a disc herniates? As the spinal disc becomes less elastic, it can rupture. When the disc ruptures, a portion of it pushes outside its normal boundary. This is called a herniated disc. When a herniated disc bulges out from between the vertebrae, the spinal nerves and spinal cord can become pinched. There is normally a little extra space around the spinal cord and spinal nerves. However, if enough of the herniated disc is pushed out of place, these structures may be compressed.

What causes a herniated disc? A herniated disc may occur suddenly in an event, such as a fall or an accident, or may occur gradually with repetitive straining of the spine. Often, people who experience a herniated disc already have spinal stenosis, a problem that causes narrowing of the space around the spinal cord and spinal nerves.

What are the symptoms of a herniated disc? When the spinal cord or spinal nerves become compressed, they don't work properly. This means that abnormal signals may get passed from the compressed nerves or that signals may not get passed at all. Common symptoms of a herniated disc include: electrical, shock-like pain that may travel down the arms or legs, depending on the location of the herniated disc; tingling and numbness experienced in the same region as painful electric-shock sensations; muscle weakness; and bowel or bladder problem, which are important because they may be a signs of a more serious condition that should be evaluated immediately.

If you or someone you know is suffering from a herniated disc and have not found the relief for which you are looking, contact your chiropractor. Chiropractic care may be able to help you. ■

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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OUT & ABOUT

RESIDENTS' Choice

Favorites in the Ankeny/Northern Polk County Residents' Choice poll were presented their certificates.



Chris Richter with Legacy Fitness accepts their certificate in the Health Club or Gym category.



Kaley Coleman at Imagination Street accepts certificates for Favorite Place to Take Your Kids or Grandkids and Favorite Place for a Children's Birthday Party.

NEWS BRIEF

COMMERCIAL Real Estate Transactions

Ankeny, Jan. 15 to Feb. 12, 2024

2675 N. Ankeny Blvd., Unit 107 Bldg 4, Ankeny

Sale date: 2024-01-26
 Sale price: \$260,000
 Seller: IDC Ankeny LLC
 Buyer: IowaComputerGurus Inc
 Acres: 0.134
 Square feet: 1,275

103 E. First St., Ankeny

Sale date: 2024-01-31
 Sale price: \$290,000
 Seller: RT Development Corp LLC
 Buyer: Yellow Turtle LLC
 Acres: 0.157
 Square feet: 2,448

105 E. First St., Ankeny

Sale date: 2024-01-31
 Sale price: \$495,000
 Seller: RT Development Corp LLC
 Buyer: The Ankeny Klothing Exchange Inc
 Acres: 0.389
 Square feet: 4,268 ■

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BEWARE of errors in property deeds

Our firm often sees errors in property deeds that create problems for owners of real estate. There are two ways of holding title to real estate in Iowa: joint tenancy and tenancy in common.

Joint tenancy is a form of ownership where all of the owners hold title together. Joint tenancy has a survivorship component; when one owner dies, the interest is extinguished and the other owners assume the ownership. Usually, all that is required is to record an affidavit reciting that one owner died and that title is vested in the remaining owners.

Tenancy in common is a form of ownership where each owner holds an undivided interest in the property. Unlike joint tenancy, the interest of a tenant in common doesn't terminate upon death. When the owner dies, the interest passes to the decedent's estate. Often, it is necessary to probate the decedent's estate to move an undivided interest to heirs.

The problem arises because, until recently, Iowa law presumed tenancy in common. If a married couple took title as John Doe and Jane Doe, without the phrase "as joint tenants with full rights of survivorship



and not as tenants in common," then they each own 50% of the property. If John dies, his estate would have to be probated so that the court could approve the transfer of half of the property to his heirs. This is frustrating if that heir is Jane, his surviving spouse. The failure to create joint tenancy at the time the property was purchased creates a problem that can only be solved through the timely and expensive probate process.

Iowa Code 557.15 was updated to address this issue. For all deeds executed after Jan. 1, 2015, if the grantees are married, it creates a presumption of joint tenancy, not tenancy in common.

The new law is designed to prevent the probate of a deceased spouse's estate in order to convey half a house. However, the law is prospective — it applies only to deeds executed on or after Jan. 1, 2015. This does not fix older deeds with incorrect vesting language.

It is vital that you understand the differences in types of ownership so that you can ensure that you hold title to your property correctly. If you have questions about how your home is owned, consult with an attorney who is experienced in both real estate and estate planning matters. ■

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

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BLOOMING with events

April showers bring May flowers. This saying has been going around for many years, and it is true. Even though we hate rainy days, they do bring out the green grass, buds on the trees, and flowers begin to bloom. Yes, the chamber is blooming with events this month, and we are so excited to get the year rolling.



I had the opportunity to travel with the Greater Des Moines Partnership on the DMDC 2024 trip to Washington D.C. We heard from elected officials and made connections to help make Ankeny a better place to live, work and play. Some of the initiatives we discussed are workforce, childcare and workforce housing — all important needs of our community. This was a great opportunity for the chamber to make connections with key people in the metro.

We also completed our Tour Ankeny event where we saw behind-the-scenes action at John Deere Des Moines Works. We had hands-on experience and heard from the experts at the plant right here in Ankeny. Thank you to Graphite Construction for making this event possible. Thank you to Rosalind and her crew for taking the time out of their day for the tours.

On May 14, we launched a new event where we got to celebrate everyone who works in Ankeny. Our Celebrate Ankeny Workforce event was presented by Lamberti, Murphy, & Strong LLC. We were able to say thank you to everyone who provides a service in Ankeny. We wanted to make sure they know how much we appreciate what they do for our community. Thank you to everyone who came out to enjoy food, drinks, games and prizes. We gave away more than 100 prizes and even some cold hard cash. Thank you to our sponsors for supporting our community and helping us thank everyone who works right here in our community.

Golf is right around the corner with our Spring Fling golf outing on Wednesday, June 5 at Briarwood Golf & Country Club. Get your foursome together before we are sold out. Ankeny Chamber SummerFest presented by Karl Chevrolet is getting closer every day, and the committee is hard at work planning a safe event for everyone. Something new this year is that the carnival will be open from 4-9 p.m. on Thursday, July 11. All other Ankeny Chamber SummerFest events will begin on Friday, July 12, and will end with fireworks on Sunday, July 14 at 9:30 p.m. at The District at Prairie Trail.

Don't forget, each month we have our Business After Hours and Lattes and Leads events. Join us the first Thursday of each month from 4-6 p.m. at various chamber members' locations for after-hours of networking, food and fun. The fourth Tuesday should be on your calendar to join us for coffee from 7:30-9 a.m. It's a great way to share who you are and what you do for a living with those in attendance. I am always looking for ways to make new connections, so reach out, as I would love to have coffee. To find the locations for these events, please check out our events page at Ankeny.org.

I started a podcast last month and am excited to say we have released four episodes for you to check out on our website, Ankeny.org/podcast. You can also follow us on Spotify- Chamber Chat with Melisa. Each week you will hear stories from our members about living, working and playing in Ankeny. Make sure to follow us on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, LinkedIn and Twitter. This is the best way to stay up to date on everything Ankeny Chamber. ■

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

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OUT & ABOUT



A ribbon cutting was held April 22 for Transworld Business Advisors NorthStar.



Clint Dudley, Brett Millsap and Kathy Evert at the ribbon cutting held April 22 for Transworld Business Advisors NorthStar.



Amanda Kruse and Kelsey Groff at the ribbon cutting held April 22 for Transworld Business Advisors NorthStar.



Sarah Wilson and Melinda Pakebush at the Business After Hours hosted by First National Bank - Ankeny on April 11.



Lynsey Mulder and Jamie Anderson at the Business After Hours hosted by First National Bank - Ankeny on April 11.



Mark and Charlene Ramthun at the Business After Hours hosted by First National Bank - Ankeny on April 11.



Nikki Mulbrook and KLani Waters at the Business After Hours hosted by First National Bank - Ankeny on April 11.



Joanne Friedman and Janet Harrington at the Business After Hours hosted by First National Bank - Ankeny on April 11.



Connie and Bill Catrenlch and Tim McGrath at the Business After Hours hosted by First National Bank - Ankeny on April 11.



Anthony Garcia and Brent Lindquist at the Business After Hours hosted by First National Bank - Ankeny on April 11.



Travis and Mindy Green at the Business After Hours hosted by First National Bank - Ankeny on April 11.

OUT & ABOUT



Dr. Stefanie Gatica and James Van Diest at Lattes & Leads held at Revive Dermatology Clinic and Spa April 23.



Andy Schnurr and Nathan Brewster at Lattes & Leads held at Revive Dermatology Clinic and Spa April 23.



Tracy Gibson and Lisa Lor at Lattes & Leads held at Revive Dermatology Clinic and Spa April 23.



Olivia Bebout and Jayden Gatica at Lattes & Leads held at Revive Dermatology Clinic and Spa April 23.



Lauren King, Rhonda Harvey and Brianna Sandstrom at Lattes & Leads held at Revive Dermatology Clinic and Spa April 23.



Christina Moffatt, Lynsey Mulder and Gina Brown at Lattes & Leads held at Revive Dermatology Clinic and Spa April 23.



James Van Diest and Jonah Knous at Lattes & Leads held at Revive Dermatology Clinic and Spa April 23.



Sara Schweitzer and Makayla Gallentine at Lattes & Leads held at Revive Dermatology Clinic and Spa April 23.



Ross Naylor, Renomads, receives his Residents' Choice certificate in the Favorite Home Builder/Remodeling Contractor category.



The Hy-Vee North Pharmacy staff receives their Residents' Choice certificate in the Favorite Pharmacy category.



St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic School staff receive the Residents' Choice certificate for Favorite School.

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⁹Horsepower and torque ratings based on premium fuel per SAE J1349¹¹ standard. Horsepower, torque, and fuel economy are independent attributes and may not be achieved simultaneously.

¹⁰EPA-estimated rating of 30 city/31 hwy/30 combined mpg, 2.0L I-4 GDI FHEV engine/CVT Auto Transmission/Power Split Electric Drivetrain/AWD drivetrain. Actual mileage will vary.



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