

Living

MAGAZINE

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

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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. ■

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COMPETING for TIME

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

By Jackie Wilson

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.

Ruthie Brockway, 12, of West Des Moines, and her grandma, Nancy Cullen of Waukee, have played pickleball together since Ruthie was 6. Photo by Jackie Wilson

FEATURE

Father and daughter enjoy pickleball

A warm day. No wind. An open court. Energy to burn.

These are just a few of the things that Jonathan Anderson and his daughter, Lillian, need for a perfect day on the court playing pickleball.

Jonathan began playing pickleball in 2020 during the pandemic, when he looked for outdoor activities. One day, he invited his daughter, Lillian, now 10, to watch him play. However, Lillian sets the record straight. “I wanted to go early to play with him — not just to watch them.”

She began practicing with Jonathan, and he'd show her the basics of hitting the ball and serving. Yet, she wanted to know more, including the rules and playing a full-fledged game.

They practiced dinking, which is hitting a short shot over the net. They kept track of how many dinks before the ball hit the ground. Their current record is 156.

The pair searches for other families with similar skill levels to play with. Jonathan downloaded an app, PlayTime Scheduler, where he can search for other players. One feature of the app is that you can rate yourself and assign a skill level. It's self-assessing and ensures you play with similarly skilled players. Lillian ranks herself about a 2.5 while dad is about a 3.5.

Jonathan says it's often tough to find parent/child combinations for a doubles match. However, they have hooked up with a few other families in the Waukee area.



Lillian, 10, and Jonathan Anderson began playing pickleball together during the COVID pandemic in 2020. Photo by Jackie Wilson

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Lillian has played with some older folks and says, “I’ve been told by adults that I’m pretty good for my age.”

Jonathan plays when he’s away on business or out of town. He logs onto his PlayTime app to see who is available for gameplay.

“It’s a quick sport and good exercise. It’s better than spending six hours for a golf game, like some of my friends do. My doctor says to get cardio. I’m not a runner, and pickleball is a good replacement for cardio,” he explains.

The pair play locally at Waukee parks, Fox Creek near Grant Ragan School and Campbell Park in Clive. In March of this year, they went to a court with snow on it.

“We went and shoveled it off because we knew it would be sunny the next day,” Jonathan says.

The pair say they’ve played pickleball with other ages groups. Jonathan is surprised at the competitive nature that encompasses all ages.

“I played with a 13-year-old and a 75-year-old, and I’ve been beaten by all of them,” he says.

The rest of the family — twins, Michael

and William, 7; Ethan, 8; and mom, Carey — play little pickleball. However, Lillian says that’s one reason she likes to play.

“It’s a way to get out of the house with all the chaos (with three younger brothers) at home.”

Carey likes that father and daughter can bond.

“It’s gotten people to play together and do more things with the kids instead of just watching them at their sports. I cheer everyone on,” she says.

Eventually, the pair would like to partner and be “legitimate teammates.” Until then, Jonathan continues to help coach his sons’ sports teams while Lillian “dominates” her softball team and plays volleyball. Both agree that pickleball is a fun sport, especially to share time together.

“It’s entertaining and a way to get energy and be outside,” Lillian says.

Jonathan likes the competition and the community.

“Everyone is friendly,” he says. “It’s another reason to get outdoors with my daughter.”

Tennis and ping pong for the Khas

As John Kha was playing tennis matches in a league with the Greater Des Moines Tennis Federation, his son, Kingston, would come to his matches.

Kingston watched his dad play and would occasionally pick up the racquet before or after his games to hit a few balls.

Then he got his own youth racquet, and he and his dad played tennis together regularly. Kingston, now 10 years old, transitioned to an adult racquet. He’s currently taking lessons at Lifetime Fitness. The two play tennis together frequently, close to their Waukee home when possible.

“When we play, I’ll let him win. But, although he’s my son, I’m still competitive. We usually play to train,” John explains.

The two also play table tennis — also known as ping pong — at places such as Smash Park. John is in an adult ping pong league, where he plays at Ricochet. John says Kingston is getting better at table tennis.

“I saw a lot of improvement. I gave him



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FEATURE

his own table tennis racquet. I wasn't sure he wanted it but he was really excited to get his own. It was cool to see that. He loves the paddle," John says.

Kingston says both sports are really fun.

"You can train and get better at it if you keep practicing," he says.

John likes how he can get exercise and spend quality time with Kingston.

"It's a great way to bond with my son," he explains, noting that playing tennis or ping pong isn't like exercise.

"We both don't like to exercise. We disguise fitness with tennis. If you told me to go for a jog, I wouldn't. But, with tennis, I could play for hours. We couldn't make it a quarter of a mile on a treadmill, but we could play tennis for two hours," John says.

Growing up, John didn't participate in many sporting hobbies with his family members. They immigrated from Laos, and he lived in a small town.

"We didn't do much with my parents. Usually we hung out with my siblings or rode our bikes. It was a different life back then," he says.

John hopes to eventually play on a league or partner with his son, either in tennis or table tennis.

"I'd love to play doubles and be his partner," he says. "That's my goal."

John likes to play table tennis as a way to unwind.

"Table tennis gives you a break from every day that consumes you. If I've been on the computer or Xbox, it gives you a break and really connects us. For me, it's a stress reliever. No matter what has happened on the court, nothing else matters. I focus on getting the ball between the lines. I live in the present moment."



John Kha and Kingston Kha, 10, of Waukee, like playing tennis and table tennis together.

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Grandma and granddaughter time

Nancy Cullen of Waukee has spent a lot of time with her granddaughter, Ruthie Brockway. Before Ruthie attended kindergarten, the pair did crafts and other activities at home.

In first grade, Ruthie followed grandma to the tennis and pickleball courts, picking up a racquet or paddle. They counted how many times they could hit the ball over the net without missing. In second grade, Ruthie got better at hitting and practiced with a ping-pong ball against the wall.

"I went 280 times without missing," she recalls. "We got a lot of practice during COVID."

Then the pair started playing while Ruthie was 9 years old.

"I had to let her win or else she'd get too discouraged," says Nancy. "We worked on being a good sport when she was young."

Today, they play each other as much as time allows. Ruthie, now 12 years old, has beat grandma at pickleball several times. She also plays with Nancy's retirement-age friends.

"I beat older people," she says. "It felt really good."

"My friends don't mind playing with her," Nancy says. "She is super competitive."

Nancy plays indoors at the Valley Community Center. The two play pickleball at Dinks Pickleball during the wintertime.

"It's a blessing that we could finally find indoor courts to play in. It was hard to get in at Smash Park."

Both are planning on taking lessons this summer.

"Ruthie can hit hard, and she has a natural ability to slam it," Nancy says. "We are going to work on our serving this summer."

Occasionally, they play with Ruthie's dad, who is Nancy's son. They like how it gives them a healthy connection to a sport.

"I like sewing and crafts, but pickleball gives me a connection with Ruthie. After I play, I have more energy, and I feel happy," Nancy says. "Sports is her thing, and I can be part of it."

Ruthie and Nancy try to play doubles as much as possible, yet it's difficult to find a two-generation team with the same skill level.

"A lot are not that good," Nancy says. "It's hard to find kids to play with."

Ruthie likes the competitive aspect of playing with her grandma and her friends.

"I can run. Some players aren't as active as me. I played softball since I was 3 years old," she says.

The best part is that Ruthie can win when playing against her grandma.

"She's easy to beat and a good sport about it," Ruthie says. ■



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LIBRARY

By Sam Bedford

'ADVENTURE Begins' at the Waukee Public Library

Summer is here, and the Waukee Public Library invites readers of all ages to participate in summer fun with Adventure Begins at Your Library, the 2024 Summer Challenge. The library will offer programs and events sure to spark your sense of adventure.

Pick up a reading log at the library's front desk or register on Beanstack to track your reading and win prizes. For every 10 days that kids and teens read for 15 minutes or more, they earn a prize and an entry for one of the grand prizes. For every half hour that adults read, they earn an entry into the weekly and grand prize drawings.

Prizes include a Blank Park Zoo Family+ membership, gift cards to local venues, a mini fridge, an Igloo cooler, camping supplies, an Apple Watch and more. There's really something for everyone this summer at the Waukee Public Library.

Watch the library's website and follow their Facebook and Instagram to get up-to-date information about upcoming events including performances, weekly activities, and pick-up times for craft packs and prizes.

Summer Challenge FAQs

When does registration begin? Registration opened May 1, but reading for the Summer Challenge starts on June 1.

How do I register? You can register online at waukeelibrary.beanstack.org, through the Beanstack app, or pick up a reading log at the library.

Who can participate? There's something for all ages!

Do I need a library card to join? Library cards are not required. Everyone is encouraged to participate. If you would like to get a library card, you can sign up in person or online at waukeepubliclibrary.org/getacard.

How do I earn prizes? Read! Books, audiobooks, magazines, newspapers, webcomics — you name it.

To find out more about the Library's Summer Challenge, go to waukeepubliclibrary.org/summer.

Programs and events

Most events require advanced registration and can be viewed at waukeepubliclibrary.org/upcoming-events.

- **Art Gallery Exhibit: "Peace," Jordan Denato, June 4-28**

Kids

Elementary STEAM Adventures, Wednesday, June 12, 19 and 26 at 2:30 p.m.

Explore some of your favorite fictional worlds with a variety of hands-on STEAM activities. Kids will enjoy the fictional worlds of Harry Potter, Marvel Heroes and Wings of Fire. For kids entering grades 1-5 in the fall. Registration required for each session.



Teens

DIY Gummies, Monday, June 24 at 6 p.m.

Bring a friend or make new ones as you make and eat delicious gummy creations! For students entering grades 6-12 in the fall. Registration required.

Adults

Pride Friendship Bracelets, Tuesday, June 4, 11 and 25 from 4-6 p.m.

Adorn yourself and those you love in Pride with colorful custom friendship bracelets. There will be a rainbow of colorful and lettered beads to choose from so you can create a bracelet that lets your unique LGBTQIA+ colors shine. All supplies provided on a first-come, first-served basis for this free drop-in craft. Limited to two bracelets per person. Registration requested.

Multi-Age

Tiny Art Show Paint Kit, pick up June 20-22

Display your artistic talents in the Library's Tiny Art Show. Register to receive a tiny art kit and create your masterpiece to be displayed in August's Art Gallery exhibit. Each kit includes a 4-inch by 4-inch mini stretched canvas, a paintbrush, and an acrylic paint set. Return your completed piece to the library by July 22 to be part of the show. You may use materials not provided, but artwork cannot be larger than 4-inch by 4-inch and must be able to hang on one of the gallery hooks. Open to patrons 14 years and older. Registration required. ■

IOWA Red Cross honors Maanya Pandey

Works to end period poverty for Iowa students

The Iowa Red Cross presented Maanya Pandey of Waukee with the Hero of the Heartland Award for her ongoing work as founder and president of Love for Red. Love for Red provides menstrual products to schools in the Des Moines area. For students experiencing period poverty, her services allow them to stay in school and participate in activities.

Heroes of the Heartland is an annual breakfast event that recognizes unsung Iowa heroes. Heroes are nominated by their peers and are selected by a group of board members from each of the three Iowa Red Cross chapters. The breakfast raises money for the Red Cross Home Fire Campaign, which provides for free smoke alarms and fire safety education for Iowans and for Red Cross support to those affected by home fires throughout the state.

This year, six Iowans were presented with the Heroes of the Heartland award, representing communities across the state. ■

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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.



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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VALUE of an asset-protection trust

Estate planning is about more than just drafting a will or trust. It's also about protecting your money from risks such as long-term care costs. A couple's assets may not last as long as they anticipated — often because one spouse is in failing health and will soon need extra assistance.



Studies show that more than half (52%) of adults will develop a disability serious enough to require long-term care services. On average, women need 2.5 years of long-term care and men require 1.5 years.

In Iowa in 2024, the median monthly cost of a room in a long-term care facility is \$7,452. That kind of expense can be devastating. There are strategies that can help shelter assets and ensure that you or a spouse can pay for long-

term care.

One tool to consider is an asset-protection trust, which can help shield you and your spouse from the significant costs of long-term care. A Shield Trust is a unique, highly specialized irrevocable trust that allows you to maintain control over assets while planning for future disability.

Once you establish an irrevocable trust, you deplete your estate of disposable assets, a strategy that eventually will allow you to use Medicaid assistance to help pay for long-term care costs. The trust can still provide you with income to improve your quality of life. For a married couple, if one spouse needs long-term care, the other spouse won't become impoverished while paying for that care.

Medicaid has a five-year "look-back" period to determine if there have been any violations of the rules regarding the spending-down or transfer of assets, so this strategy requires

pre-planning. The Shield Trust shelters assets transferred to the trust after the 60-month exclusion period. Once you've made it past that five-year period, everything inside the trust should be protected.

The Shield Trust is a good option for someone who is planning for future disability — because of the 60-month period — and who has purposefully calculated the tax risks.

There are strategies that can help you meet your goals of asset preservation and protection against long-term care costs. Consult with an attorney who will help you understand the complexities of long-term care and then work with you to come up with individualized solutions to help you. ■

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

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ADDRESSING a growing need for food

Perschaus have been volunteering since WACS's opening

When the food pantry — now named Waukee Area Christian Services — first opened 19 years ago, Don and Rosemary Perschau were on hand to assist clients with obtaining food.



Today, the Waukee couple still volunteers, serving in nearly every job capacity.

Most times, Rosemary works in the pantry stocking shelves, greeting clients and helping them with their monthly food selections. She says food allotment is based on family size.

“Some want to come in more often and try to negotiate with us. We have to be respectful but follow the guidelines,” she says.

Don began volunteering after he retired from teaching science at Hoover High School. In addition to the food pantry, he also represents WACS at various talks or school events, hoping to recruit volunteers or obtain donations.

The former teacher also helps train adult and teen volunteers. He often notifies the teenagers that they might see fellow classmates at the pantry.

“I tell them, they can run and hide or treat them like a customer. But I advise them not to say a word about it outside the pantry,” he says. “We love our teen volunteers and can always use more.”



Travis Gaule, Edward Jones, presents the Neighbor Spotlight certificate to Don and Rosemary Perschau for their volunteer work with Waukee Area Christian Services.

The long-time volunteers both know most everything about the pantry, including one important job reserved for Don.

“I am the king of trash and cardboard. There’s a lot of that,” he laughs.

Rosemary notes how the pantry has changed over the years, now offering more fresh foods instead of just canned goods. She says that volunteering at WACS is ideal.

“It’s an important part of life. The rewards of volunteering are often greater than the time spent,” she reflects. “We wish we could do more.”

Don and Rosemary also volunteer with their church, St. Boniface. Don volunteers with AARP as well.

“It needs doing, and we can do it. We enjoy doing it,” he says.

The couple have witnessed a sizable increase in food pantry clients. Don says the staff at WACS provided an accurate vision when they established the food pantry.

“People questioned why we need a food pantry in Waukee. We knew since day one that we opened, the need is great. It’s growing rapidly, and the need is there as long as Waukee keeps growing,” Don says.

The most impactful part of their job is transport — when they load food into a client’s car.


“We treat them like customers and never ask why they came to the pantry,” he says. “Often, they tell us, and we hear unbelievable stories. We’re there to listen.”

Don sums up why volunteering is like family.

“For us, it’s like family — the staff, other volunteers, the clients — we’re all in this together.”

Volunteers are needed and can name their days and hours, volunteer for one-time events, donate food or clothes, or volunteer in the community garden. For more information, visit <https://waukeechristianservices.org/food-pantry/>. ■


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Travis Gaule
Financial Advisor
14225 University Ave Ste# 240
Waukee, IA 50263
515-270-5375

EDS-5422-A AECSPAD 2/2018

Do you know a neighbor who deserves recognition?

Nominate him or her by emailing tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com.

SENIOR

By Jay Heaton

MAINTAIN your cognitive health

Maintaining cognitive health past the age of 55 requires making a few lifestyle choices. You should engage in mentally stimulating activities such as puzzles, reading or picking up new hobbies to keep your mind sharp with the hope of potentially delaying the decline of your cognitive skills. Regular exercise is key. Try to get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity each week to boost blood flow to the brain and lower the risk for cognitive decline.



Consider adopting a Mediterranean-style diet, packed with fruits, veggies, whole grains, lean proteins and healthy fats, to support your brain health. Don't forget the importance of staying socially active. Keeping in touch with loved ones and participating in community activities can provide both mental stimulation and emotional support.

Make sleep a priority, aiming for seven to nine hours per night, and find ways to manage stress through practices like mindfulness or yoga. It's also crucial to keep health conditions like high blood pressure and diabetes in check, as they can increase the risk for cognitive decline.

Lastly, if you notice any changes in your cognitive function, don't hesitate to seek medical advice. Early detection and management are key. While these lifestyle changes aren't foolproof, they can certainly make a positive impact on your overall wellbeing. So, take care of yourself and consult with healthcare professionals for personalized advice tailored to your needs. ■

Information provided by Jay Heaton, leasing counselor, Attivo Trail Waukee, 835 N.E. Boston Parkway, Waukee, www.attivotrail.com.

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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WACS annual fundraiser sets new record

Facing ever-increasing demands for services, Waukee Area Christian Services (WACS) has completed a highly successful annual fundraiser with the total amount contributed \$138,000. The total exceeded this year's goal by 38%.

When the annual campaign kicked off on April 1, WACS Executive Director Melissa Stimple reported the number of new households becoming food pantry clients was already 38 percent greater than at this time in 2023.

"We have distributed more food in the past year than at any other time in our 19-year history," she said.

Corporate sponsors were critically important to the success of the 2024 fund drive. This year's corporate sponsors included Ingrid Williams Real Estate Team, Gilcrest Jewett Lumber Company, United Health Care, Stivers Ford-Lincoln Waukee, Walter Roofing, Craig Dental Center and GreenState Credit Union.

In addition to the fund drive, WACS conducted a raffle for a \$2,000 gift card. The winner of the raffle was Roland Joiner.

Each year, the organization also conducts



Veridian Credit Union won this year's Canned Food Sculpture contest conducted by Waukee Area Christian Services. The cans, weighing a total of 6,180 pounds, were stacked in the shape of a taco.

a Canned Food Sculpture competition. The winner of this year's contest was Veridian Credit Union.

A fundraiser After Party at The Palms Theatres was held on April 25.

The community's generosity was demonstrated when a family offered a \$2,000 match contribution at the After Party.

The WACS fundraiser committee expressed gratitude to the community for its support of the organization.



Hannah Lisle and Jadzia Cox display the trophy Veridian Credit Union won for the winning entry in this year's Waukee Area Christian Services' Canned Food Sculpture competition.

Waukee Area Christian Services is an outreach of eight Waukee churches including Immanuel Lutheran Church, Lutheran Church of Hope, St. Boniface Catholic Church, Waukee Christian Church, Waukee Community Church, Waukee United Methodist Church, Westview Church and Westwind Church. WACS' facilities are in the Westview Church building at 1155 S.E. Boone Drive in Waukee. ■

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AMERICAN Legion awards students

Boys State offers premiere experience in government, civics.

Six local high school juniors have the opportunity to learn how the government functions at Boys State, thanks to scholarships from the Waukee American Legion Post 737, along with the West Des Moines and Anamosa American Legion Posts.

The American Legion Boys State program provides hands-on course experience in learning various aspects and functions of city, county and state governments. Boys State is made up of high school juniors who demonstrate an interest in U.S. history and the operation of the U.S. democratic form of government and civics. Students include: Gavin Lambertsen and Drake Lambertsen, Waukee High School; Brady Frye, Dowling Catholic High School; John-Henry Larson and Graham Johnson, Valley High School; and Kinnick Sager, Waukee Northwest High School.

Iowa conducted its first American Legion Boys State in 1938 and has held one every year since then, except in 1945 during World War II. The six-day event takes place at Camp Dodge in Johnston.

During Boys State, the young men are divided into 12 cities and separated into four counties. In each city, the citizens are split into mythical political parties, consisting of the Nationalist Party and Federalist Party.

Boys State delegates hold party caucus meetings, conventions, conduct campaigns and hold a primary and general election.

After students are elected, elected officials appoint the necessary staff to assist them in conducting and governing the office. As in real life, not everyone is elected, and there are other jobs to be filled, such as writing a daily newspaper, banking and business management roles.

A functioning court and law enforcement system help educate the young men through mock trials. The teaching staff includes qualified individuals from the American Legion, Boys State Board of Directors, Iowa State Patrol, agencies of Iowa government, Iowa National Guard, U.S. Military, along with professionals, including lawyers, teachers and more.

Boys State offers opportunities outside of government. They can participate in sports or in The American Legion Boys State band and/or chorus, meet elected officials, job shadow the Highway Patrol and complete the National Guard leadership reaction course.

Bob Aplin, pastor for the Waukee American Legion, says Boys State is an ideal experience for students to explore public service opportunities.

“The students gain hands-on experience in these fields,” he says. “The program emphasizes learning by doing, and citizens are encouraged to be innovative and are not bound by rigid design.”

Jim Allen, who is the Waukee American Legion historian, says it's important for the American Legion to promote youth leadership and civic engagement opportunities.



From left: Graham Johnson, John-Henry Larson, Gavin Lambertsen, Drake Lambertsen and Kinnick Sager. Not pictured is Brady Frye.

“The program encourages students to become more engaged within their local communities and continue to build strong character traits that last a lifetime.” ■

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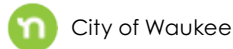
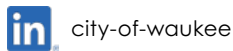
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City of Waukee Bulletin

MAY 2024

Find more information on City services, programs and events at Waukee.org

Follow City of Waukee on



Waukee.org



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515-978-7900



It's easy to fill the extra daylight hours this summer with great programs, fun community events and more. Check out all the offerings at Waukee.org/ParksandRec and WaukeePublicLibrary.org.

Fun for Adults

- Love Pickleball? Compete in the Pickleball League at Fox Creek Park on Mondays, July 1-August 5. Save your team's spot by June 7.
- Looking for some zen? Practice mindfulness and engage with the natural world with help from Brandy, a certified forest therapy guide, at Intertwined Forest Bathing on June 7 (register by May 31) or July 14 (register by July 8).
- Want a low pressure, inexpensive fitness commitment? Try out one barre and one strength class with Be Fit & Fierce on June 15 & 22. If you love it, you can use the complimentary one-week studio pass to keep the fitness fun going.
- Need an easy hangout spot? Try Friends & Family Game Night at the Waukee Public Library. From classics you remember from childhood to brand new games you've never heard of, all ages are welcome on the 2nd Tuesday of the month, 4:30-7:30 p.m.

Fun for Ages 55 & Up

Perfect your swing with the Senior Golf League
Whether you're just getting started or want a refresher, this series of group lessons runs July 16-30. PGA Pro Chad Proehl will help increase your skills, knowledge and love for the game.

National WWI Museum & Memorial Day Trip in Kansas City on July 10

Check out the world's most comprehensive collection of WWI objects and get fabulous views of beautiful, historic Kansas City from the Liberty Memorial Tower. You get to enjoy the day while Waukee Parks & Recreation handles the logistics. The \$114 fee includes transportation, museum tickets and lunch. Save your spot by June 7.

Fun for All Ages

Fox Creek Splash Pad (522 NE Westgate Drive) usually opens around Memorial Day weekend, weather permitting. Daily hours are 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Admission is free. Follow Waukee Parks & Recreation on Facebook to learn when the splash pad opens for the season.

The Summer Challenge with the Waukee Public Library runs June 1-July 31. Attend events and submit your reading logs to earn prizes. Learn more and register at WaukeePublicLibrary.org/Summer or pick up a paper reading log at the Library.

Movies in the Park brings free screenings of Hollywood's biggest hits to Centennial Park. The series kicks off Friday, June 7 at dusk (approximately 8:45 p.m.) with Encanto (PG). Bring your own lawn chairs, blankets and snacks.

Yoga in the Park runs the 2nd and 4th Saturdays, June-September from 8:30-9:30 a.m. at Windfield Park. No registration needed. Participants 12 years and older should bring \$5 per person, a yoga mat or towel and a water bottle.

Dates to Know

Regular City Council Meetings

June 3 & 17 at 5:30 p.m.
Waukee City Hall and Zoom

Snacks & Facts (free)

Friday, June 7 at 11 a.m.
Waukee Community Center



Backpack Drive with Waukee Police

If you have a gently used backpack that you no longer need, drop off the empty bag at our Public Safety building or City Hall. Waukee Police will give the backpacks to students in need this fall. Find more info at Waukee.org/BackpackDrive.



Adding Something to Your Property?

As you plan for a deck, fence or shed, allow time to secure a permit from the City. This ensures improvements are in the right location and up to code. Go to Waukee.org/BuildingPermits for more information. If you belong to a homeowners association, review covenants or rules and regulations for your neighborhood; there may be specific requirements on materials and location. Be safe! Before you or your contractor dig, call 811 or submit a request at Call811.org to have utility lines marked. Summer is busy, so request line marking at least one week in advance.



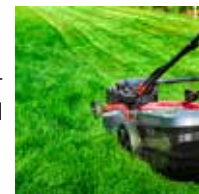
Calling All Library Lovers

Mayor Clarke is accepting applications for the Library Board of Trustees. This board is responsible for establishing Library policy, authorizing services provided by the Library, establishing the Library budget and approving purchases. Board members must live within Waukee city limits. Apply at Waukee.org/TrusteeApplication by June 2.



Lawn Maintenance & Grass Clippings

Per City ordinance, property owners must keep grass and weeds under 8 inches tall on developed properties and under 10 inches tall on undeveloped properties. Do not blow or sweep clippings into streets. When piled up, clippings can be hazardous to motorcyclists and bicyclists, and they can cause problems for aquatic life downstream by way of the storm sewer. Any lawn-related concerns can be submitted at Waukee.org/ReportaConcern.



HELP OUR COMMUNITY! COMPLETE YOUR CENSUS FORM

Check your mailbox for your letter from the U.S. Census Bureau. Filling out the form takes about 10 minutes online and directly impacts our community. Each new person counted adds \$188 in state funding to help fix and maintain our streets; 5,000 new people in our official census count means nearly \$1 million for roads in Waukee. If you don't have a computer or internet, the Waukee Public Library has computers for public use. In June, field representatives will knock on doors to help ensure any residences that do not complete the online census form are not missed. Find census job openings and more details on the Waukee census at Waukee.org/SpecialCensus.



Free Movie in the Park: Encanto
Friday, June 7 at dusk
Centennial Park

Summer Challenge
June 1- July 31
Waukee Public Library

Waukee Farmers Market
Wednesdays, 4-7 p.m.
June-September

EVENTS IN THE AREA

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

Be sure to check for cancelations.



Waukee Memorial Day Ceremony

Monday, May 27, 10-11 a.m.
Waukee Cemetery Veteran's Memorial (near the water tower)

The Waukee Veterans of Foreign Wars and American Legion Posts invite the Waukee community to attend their annual Memorial Day ceremony and wreath laying at the Waukee Cemetery honoring our nation's fallen and departed comrades. Bring a lawn chair.



Live Music

Wednesdays in June, 6-9 p.m.
Mickey's Irish Pub, 50 S.E. Laurel St., Waukee

Enjoy live music: **June 5** - Spam Band; **June 12** - Tom Buckmiller; **June 19** - Damon Dotson, **June 26** - Kevin Lindgren.

Ice Cream Social

Sunday, June 9, 4-5:30 p.m.
Waukee United Methodist Church, 2075 S.E. L A Grant Parkway

The Waukee United Methodist Women will host their annual Ice Cream Social, serving cake, pie and ice cream for a freewill donation for missions. Come and enjoy good food, fellowship and the new worship center.



Bingo

Sundays, 3-6 p.m.
Kenny's Garage, 605 Ashworth Drive, Waukee

Enjoy Bingo Sunday evenings at Kenny's Garage.



Tuesday Night Trivia

Tuesdays, 7-9 p.m.
Central Standard Burgers, 1222 S.E. University Ave., Waukee

Come one come all and test out your thinking skills while having a great time. Trivia night is every Tuesday, with featured themed trivia nights once a month. Hosted by Think and Drink Entertainment.

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EVENTS IN THE AREA

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Be sure to check for cancelations.

Fun Day Trip for Seniors

Waukee Parks and Recreation has fun day trips planned for seniors to get together to explore and have some fun.

• **The National WWI Museum and Memorial Day Trip is July 10.** The Liberty Memorial Association (LMA) formed shortly after World War I to create a lasting monument to the men and women who had served in the war. In 1919, The LMA and citizens of Kansas City raised more than \$2.5 million in just 10 days. This is equivalent to more than \$40 million today. Visit America's official WWI Museum and Memorial, home to the most comprehensive collection of WWI objects in the world. The Liberty Memorial Tower has a 217-foot-high, open-air observation deck where you can view Kansas City from up high. You have the option to climb the tower or just enjoy the rest of the museum. To reach the top of the tower, guests ride an elevator and climb 45 steps. The registration fee includes transportation via charter bus, a tour of the museum and lunch. Cost is \$114. The group is leaving from Waukee Community Center. Register by June 7. Save your spot today at Waukee.org/Registration.

• **Nothing Compares to the Iowa State Fair Day Trip, Aug. 14.** Do you like taste-testing food on a stick or seeing the Butter Cow at the Iowa State Fair? How about strolling through the homemade crafts and quilts? Take a trip to the 2024 Iowa State Fair for Older Iowans Day. Don't worry about fighting traffic because you'll be dropped off at gate 15. The fee includes transportation and admission to the world-famous fair. Cost is \$25, and the bus leaves from Waukee Community Center. Register by Aug. 5 at Waukee.org/Registration.

Bowling events

Various Sundays, noon to 1:30 p.m.
Warrior Lanes, 190 S.E. Lauren St.,
Waukee



Various parties are planned with registration required two days prior. Themes are: June 16, Summer Kick-Off; July 14, Celebrate America; Aug. 18, Back To School Luau; Sept. 15, Festive Fall Fun; Oct. 20, Halloween; Nov. 17, Turkey Time; Dec. 15, Ugly Sweater Holiday. On Tuesday, Dec. 31, 11 am. To 1 p.m. is the Countydown to Noon Year's Eve Party. For more information and registration, visit warriorlanes.com.

CITYVIEW's Summer Stir - Downtown Des Moines

Friday, June 21, 5-9 p.m.

Court Avenue District, downtown Des Moines

CITYVIEW's traveling cocktail party is back in downtown Des Moines. Sample many of summer's finest drinks at some of the area's best bars and restaurants. Try 10 different drinks for only \$25 with your online order (\$30 at the door). For more information and for tickets, visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/cityviews-summer-stir-2024-downtown-des-moines-tickets-875340997487?aff=oddtcreator>.

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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.

- 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**.



Celebrasian

May 24-25
Western Gateway Park,
1205 Locust St., Des Moines
www.iowaasianalliance.com

A weekend of Asian cuisine, music and entertainment. Vendors and performers will fill the area with an authentic celebration of Asian culture.

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 historians, explore historically accurate campsites, and see period military vehicles. Admission is free. ■

Des Moines Con

May 31-June 2
Hy-Vee Hall at Iowa Events Center, 730 Third St.,
Des Moines

A celebration of all things nerdy. From Marvel to Star Wars to LEGOs and around the universe and back, this con has you covered.



Wild Lights Festival

Through May 27, 7:30-10:30 p.m.
Blank Park Zoo, 7401 S.W. Ninth St., Des Moines
www.blankparkzoo.com

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

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MEET Ann Swenson

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Ann Swenson with her family, Jason Masters and Nolan Masters.

After a student teaching placement at the Waukee Middle School, Ann Swenson knew she wanted to teach in the Waukee Community School District. Swenson grew up in New Hampton before receiving a bachelor's degree from Simpson College and a master's degree from Viterbo University.

Now she is in her 14th year teaching with the district and 20th year teaching overall. She currently teaches first- through fifth-grade general music and fifth-grade choir at Brookview Elementary School.

"I love working with such a diverse population. I am also thankful for forward-thinking district leaders and a team of music educators and colleagues who are willing to learn and grow," Swenson says.

She adds she likes working with elementary school students because she gets to introduce them to different types of music, instruments and experiences they have never had before. She hopes to instill a love and appreciation for music that will last her students a lifetime.

Students in elementary music sing, dance, move, play instruments and create. Every student at Brookview Elementary experiences barred percussion instruments and tubano drums. The fourth-grade students also learn how to play recorders, and the fifth-grade students spend a few weeks learning the ukulele.

"The biggest reward is having a new classroom full of eager kids every 30 minutes. COVID was a huge challenge as a music educator. It was unsafe for us to sing or share instruments. I hope never to experience something like that again," Swenson says.

During the remainder of the school year, Swenson is looking forward to her students creating music and having fun together. When not teaching, she enjoys spending time with her family. She also enjoys reading and traveling. ■



SUMMER FUN IN JOHNSTON 2024



MOVIES IN THE YARD

MAY 16 - JUNE 21 - AUG. 15 - SEPT. 19

MOVIES BEGIN AT DUSK



FAMILY FEST

SATURDAY, JUNE 1

11:00 AM TO 2:00 PM



FARMERS MARKET

TUESDAYS FROM JUNE TO SEPT.

4:00 PM TO 7:00 PM



SOUNDS OF SUMMER

JUNE 8 - JUNE 29 - AUG. 24 - SEPT. 28

7:00 PM TO 10:00 PM



TUNES AT TWILIGHT

JULY 18 - AUG. 8 - SEPT. 12

7:30 PM TO 9:00 PM



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WAUKEE

Warriors

2024 SUMMER SCHEDULE

VARSIY BASEBALL

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
May 14	7:00PM	Norwalk	Waukee Baseball/Softball Complex
May 15	5:00PM	Ames	Ames High School Softball/Baseball
May 20	7:00PM	Ankeny Centennial (DH)	Waukee Baseball/Softball Complex
May 22	5:00PM	Ankeny (DH)	Waukee Baseball/Softball Complex
May 24	5:00PM	Fort Dodge	Waukee Baseball/Softball Complex
May 28	7:00PM	Southeast Polk (DH)	Southeast Polk High School
May 29	5:00PM	Dowling Catholic (DH)	Waukee Baseball/Softball Complex
May 31	7:00PM	Waukee Northwest (DH)	Waukee Northwest High School
Jun 3	5:00PM	Urbandale (DH)	Urbandale High School
Jun 5	7:00PM	Johnston (DH)	Waukee Baseball/Softball Complex
Jun 6	5:00PM	WDM Valley (DH)	Valley High School
Jun 7	10:00AM	Multiple Schools	Harlan Rogers Sports Complex
Jun 12	5:00PM	Ankeny Centennial (DH)	Ankeny Centennial High School
Jun 13	7:00PM	Ankeny (DH)	Ankeny High School
Jun 14	10:00AM	Multiple Schools	TBA
Jun 17	5:00PM	Southeast Polk (DH)	Waukee Baseball/Softball Complex
Jun 19	7:00PM	Dowling Catholic (DH)	Dowling Catholic High School
Jun 20	5:00PM	Waukee Northwest (DH)	Waukee Baseball/Softball Complex
Jun 1	12:15PM	Multiple Schools	Johnston Middle School
Jun 24	7:00PM	Urbandale (DH)	Waukee Baseball/Softball Complex
Jun 26	5:00PM	Johnston (DH)	Johnston Middle School
Jun 27	7:00PM	WDM Valley (DH)	Waukee Baseball/Softball Complex
Jun 28	5:00PM	Des Moines Roosevelt	Roosevelt Baseball Stadium
Jul 1	5:00PM	Ottumwa	Ottumwa High School
Jul 8	7:00PM	Dallas Center-Grimes	Waukee Baseball/Softball Complex

VARSIY SOFTBALL

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
May 22	5:00PM	Ankeny (DH)	Waukee Baseball/Softball Complex
May 23	7:30PM	Dallas Center-Grimes	Waukee Baseball/Softball Complex
May 24	5:00PM	Ames	Waukee Baseball/Softball Complex
May 29	5:00PM	Dowling Catholic (DH)	Waukee Baseball/Softball Complex
Jun 1	TBD	Valley	Valley High School
Jun 3	5:00PM	Urbandale (DH)	Urbandale High School
Jun 5	5:00PM	WDM Valley (DH)	Valley High School
Jun 7	TBD	Valley	Valley High School
Jun 10	5:00PM	Iowa City Liberty	Iowa City Liberty
Jun 12	5:00PM	Ankeny Centennial (DH)	Ankeny Centennial High School
Jun 14	TBD	Jack North Tournament	Waukee Northwest High School
Jun 15	TBD	Jack North Tournament	Waukee Northwest High School
Jun 17	5:00PM	Southeast Polk (DH)	Waukee Baseball/Softball Complex
Jun 20	5:00PM	Waukee Northwest (DH)	Waukee Baseball/Softball Complex
Jun 21	7:15PM	Winterset	Winterset High School
Jun 24	5:00PM	Sioux City East	Sioux City East High School
Jun 26	5:00PM	Johnston (DH)	Johnston Middle School
Jul 1	5:00PM	Prairie	Waukee Baseball/Softball Complex
Jul 2	5:00PM	Des Moines Lincoln	Lincoln Baseball/Softball Complex
Jul 8	7:00PM	Fort Dodge	Waukee Baseball/Softball Complex

FOR ALL WARRIORS'S SCHEDULES



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



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NORTHWEST

Wolves

2024 SUMMER SCHEDULE

VARSITY BASEBALL

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
May 13	3:30PM	Des Moines East (DH)	Des Moines East High School
May 14	5:00PM	North Polk (DH)	Waukee Northwest High School
May 17	5:00PM	A-D-M (DH)	A-D-M, Adel
May 20	7:00PM	Des Moines Lincoln	Des Moines Lincoln High School
May 22	5:00PM	Johnston (DH)	Johnston Middle School
May 23	5:00PM	DCG (DH)	Dallas Center Grimes Baseball Field
May 28	7:00PM	WDM Valley (DH)	Valley High School
May 29	5:00PM	Southeast Polk (DH)	Southeast Polk High School
May 31	7:00PM	Waukee (DH)	Waukee Northwest High School
Jun 3	5:00PM	Ankeny (DH)	Ankeny High School
Jun 5	7:00PM	Urbandale (DH)	Waukee Northwest High School
Jun 6	5:00PM	Dowling Catholic (DH)	Dowling Catholic High School
Jun 10	7:00PM	Ankeny Centennial (DH)	Ankeny Centennial High School
Jun 13	7:00PM	Johnston (DH)	Waukee Northwest High School
Jun 15	TBD	Council Bluffs	Council Bluffs
Jun 17	5:00PM	WDM Valley (DH)	Waukee Northwest High School
Jun 20	5:00PM	Waukee (DH)	Waukee Baseball/Softball Complex
Jun 21	10:00AM 12:15PM	Van Meter Ballard	Ankeny High School Ankeny High School
Jun 24	7:00PM	Ankeny (DH)	Waukee Northwest High School
Jun 26	5:00PM	Urbandale (DH)	Urbandale High School
Jun 27	7:00PM	Dowling Catholic (DH)	Waukee Northwest High School
Jul 1	5:00PM	Ankeny Centennial (DH)	Waukee Northwest High School
Jul 3	11:00AM	Multiple Schools	Waukee Northwest High School
Jul 5	7:00PM	Southeast Polk (DH)	Waukee Northwest High School
Jul 8	7:00PM	Norwalk	Waukee Northwest High School

VARSITY SOFTBALL

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
May 20	5:00PM	Des Moines East (DH)	Des Moines East High School
May 22	5:00PM	Johnston (DH)	Johnston Middle School
May 28	6:45PM	North Polk	Waukee Northwest High School
May 29	5:00PM	Southeast Polk (DH)	Southeast Polk High School
Jun 1	8:45AM	Multiple Schools	Greater Des Moines Softball Complex
Jun 3	5:00PM	Ankeny (DH)	Ankeny High School
Jun 6	5:00PM	Dowling Catholic (DH)	Dowling Catholic High School
Jun 7	7:00PM	Fort Dodge	Waukee Northwest High School
Jun 11	6:45PM	Indianola	Waukee Northwest High School
Jun 14	TBD	Jack North Tournament	Waukee Northwest High School
Jun 15	TBD	Jack North Tournament	Waukee Northwest High School
Jun 17	5:00PM	WDM Valley (DH)	Waukee Northwest High School
Jun 20	5:00PM	Waukee (DH)	Waukee Baseball/Softball Complex
Jun 21	7:00PM	Ames	Ames High School Softball/Baseball
Jun 26	5:00PM	Urbandale (DH)	Urbandale High School
Jul 1	5:00PM	Williamsburg	Williamsburg High School
Jul 3	5:30PM	Norwalk (DH)	Norwalk High School
Jul 6	5:00PM	Ankeny Centennial (DH)	Waukee Northwest High School
Jul 8	1:00PM	Multiple Schools	Valley High School
Jul 9	7:00PM	Humboldt	Humboldt High School
Jul 10	7:30PM	Dallas Center-Grimes	Dallas Center Grimes Baseball Field

FOR ALL WOLVES'S SCHEDULES



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A BACKYARD oasis

Water features soothe Clausens.



A tiered water feature is the highlight of the Clausens' backyard, and they find the colors and sound create a relaxing space.

Paige and Chris Clausen's deck overlooks a gorgeous backyard scene. A sheet of red rocks covers the hill in their yard. Scattered throughout the area are potted plants, birdfeeders suspended from shepherd hooks, garden statues of various designs, Victorian cast iron chairs and even an archway with clematis growing up the sides. But those do not even compare to the uniqueness of their outdoor water features.

One spews water out of the top of a rock. Gravity pulls the water down through a narrow crevice before it falls into a shallow reserve. An arrangement of flat rocks forms the spout of the other. The water pours into a tiered pond, trickling down the hill and into each tier. At the bottom, it joins a half-dome fountain that glimmers as it is hit with sunlight. At night, lights illuminate the space, creating a Midwestern oasis.

For a visual artist like Paige and a musician like Chris, their backyard is the best of both

worlds. On a bright, sunny day, everything comes together to produce a rich blend of bright colors. Likewise, the trickling water and chirping birds are an auditory relief from everyday life.

"Because I'm a painter, everybody says, 'Oh yeah, that makes sense that you have that in your yard,'" says Paige. "I didn't build it; it came with the house."

The couple moved into the house in 2022. From their understanding, the previous owner's father owned the home first and was the one who installed the water features. When the Clausens moved in, they were left with a short sheet of maintenance instructions.

"This is a fairly low-maintenance set of fountains," Paige explains. "There's no koi. There's no fish... it's simply water. It's not hard to take care of."

"I really want to give credit to the people who were here before us because they did all the heavy work," Chris says. "And we've just made it our own."



The Clausens think landscaping like theirs is great for artistic brains. They also find it helps them to relax. But they recognize not everyone has the lawn or resources for it.

"It's really great in a yard like ours that has contour and size," says Chris.

"My recommendation would be to start smaller than a waterfall," says Paige.

"Always have in mind what you can care for because I feel like we're only now getting a handle on this," adds Chris.

The Clausens' oasis is a perfect mix of peace and tranquility. Humans and wildlife alike come to the backyard to escape the metro's cityscape. But nothing can slow down Waukees growth and expansion. Soon, University Avenue will run parallel to the development. But for now, the birds continue to chirp, and water continues to trickle. ■

WELLNESS

By Kaylin Sandy, BSN

HOW FUNCTIONAL nutrition helps improve health

What is functional nutrition, and how can it help improve your health? Functional nutrition focuses on using food as medicine to optimize health and prevent or manage chronic diseases. It considers individual differences in genetics, environment and lifestyle to create personalized nutrition plans. By addressing underlying imbalances and deficiencies, functional nutrition aims to support the body's natural healing processes, promote optimal digestion and nutrient absorption, regulate hormones, reduce inflammation and enhance overall wellbeing. Program options might include suggestions for dietary changes, like eliminating overly processed foods or entire food groups like gluten or dairy. This approach often incorporates whole foods, supplements, lifestyle modifications, and sometimes specialized testing to identify specific nutritional needs. The approach is not about quick fixes or trendy diets — it's about personalized, sustainable solutions that address the root causes of your health concerns and working with a team of dedicated professionals who take the time to understand your unique biochemistry, lifestyle and goals. With a comprehensive assessment process, personalized nutrition plans are tailored specifically to you. It's about providing you with the tools, support and guidance you need to make meaningful changes that last a lifetime. ■



Information provided by Kaylin Sandy, BSN, certified functional nutritionist, Vivid Wellness Lounge, 1980 N.W. 94th St., Suite E/F, Clive, Livin-Vivid.com, 515-415-1550.

HEALTH

By Dr. Jason Brown

CAUSES of tooth sensitivity

There are many factors that can cause tooth sensitivity. Healthy teeth with normal development have a nice layer of enamel (the white outer layer of the tooth above the gumline), which allows us to chew our food and protect teeth from sensitivity. The layer underneath the enamel is called dentin, which has very tiny tubules that can be a pathway for air, liquids or acids to reach the nerve and cause hypersensitivity.



Conditions such as cavities, gum recession, cracked or fractured teeth, tooth defects and worn fillings can cause sensitivity. The duration of sensitivity can sometimes give more clues to a diagnosis. Short, sporadic periods of hypersensitivity can often be managed by something as simple as switching to desensitizing toothpaste. Chewing pain can mean a cracked tooth that may require a crown, and lingering hot or cold discomfort may signify that the tooth would require a root canal procedure. For those people with receded gums, many teeth can be involved with hypersensitivity. This situation may require the need for gum-grafting surgery.

Your dentist can evaluate older fillings or gum problems that can lead to tooth sensitivity. ■

Information provided by Dr. Jason Brown DDS, Timberline Family Dental, 515-644-2264, 2153 S.E. LA Grant Parkway, Waukee. Information gathered from mouthhealthy.org by ADA.

PRETTY pollinator plants

Hundreds of trees, shrubs, perennials, vines and annuals can attract various types of pollinators.

Bees, butterflies, moths, beetles, flies, wasps, ants, hummingbirds and bats all have two things in common. They are pollinators, and they are in decline. Those are big deals.

Did you know 75% of our crops depend on pollinators to some degree? One way to help is to add pollinator plants to your landscape, and now is the perfect time, as June is pollinator month.

Hundreds of trees, shrubs, perennials, vines and annuals can attract various types of pollinators. For now, we'll highlight a few of the prettiest perennials that attract primarily bees, butterflies and hummingbirds.

CONEFLOWER (*Echinacea*)

Mix natives with showier cultivars for a display that is attractive to both pollinators and humans.

- **Pale Purple Coneflower** (*Echinacea pallida*)
- **White Coneflower** (*Echinacea purpurea* "Alba")
- **Pica Bella Coneflower** (*Echinacea purpurea* "Pica Bella")
- **Pixie Meadowbrite Coneflower** (*Echinacea Pixie Meadowbrite*™)
- **Ruby Star Coneflower** (*Echinacea purpurea* "Ruby Star")
- **Rocky Top Tennessee Coneflower** (*Echinacea tennesseensis* "Rocky Top")

Designer's Tip: Rocky Top Tennessee Coneflower is fairly short with blooms that nod to the east, so be sure to position it accordingly.

BLAZING STAR (*Liatris*)

Liatris looks best when mixed with other *liatris* or with other perennials such as coneflower. Try these cultivars for best results.

- **Kobold Gayfeather** (*Liatris spicata* "Kobold")
- **Floristan White Gayfeather** (*Liatris spicata* "Floristan White")
- **Marsh Blazing** (*Liatris spicata*)
- **Rough Blazingstar** (*Liatris aspera*)
- **Prairie Blazingstar** (*Liatris pycnostachya*)

Designer's Tip: Plant *liatris* amongst ornamental grasses such as prairie dropseed, little bluestem and autumn moore grass.

BEEBALM (*Monarda*)

So many *monarda*, so little time. It's tough to pick a favorite, but I did my best. Look for these mildew resistant cultivars.

- **Garden View Scarlet** (Similar to Jacob Cline, but more resistant to powdery mildew)
- **Raspberry Wine**
- **Pardon My Purple**
- **Purple Rooster**

Designer's Tip: Pair *monarda* with Little Joe Joe Pye Weed (*Eupatorium dubium* "Little Joe"). They both attract pollinators, love full sun, and tolerate moist soil.

BUTTERFLY WEED (*Asclepias*)

I'm amazed at how the showy orange blooms of butterfly weed steal the show for about two months straight, but that's nothing compared to the butterflies it attracts.

- **Hellow Yellow Milkweed** (*Asclepias tuberosa* "Hello Yellow")
- **Butterfly Weed** (*Asclepias tuberosa*)
- **Common Milkweed** (*Asclepias syriaca*)

Designer's Tip: Without common milkweed, there would be no monarch butterflies, so if possible let it grow if it pops up in your landscape. Be aware it can be aggressive and is not suitable for formal gardens.

For these plants and so much more, check out this local plant source: <https://plantlifedesigns.com/native-and-pollinator-plant-sale>

Celebrate Pollinator Month by adding these pretty perennials to your landscape, then sit back and enjoy the show. ■

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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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OUT & ABOUT



Greg Grote, Ciara Halverson and Jennifer Brown at the groundbreaking for Brilliant Boardsers Landscaping on April 19.



Waukee Area Chamber of Commerce hosted a groundbreaking for Brilliant Boardsers Landscaping on April 19.



Chief Chad McCluskey and LeRoy Mains at the groundbreaking for Brilliant Boardsers Landscaping on April 19.



Charles Mains and Jason Buckingham at the groundbreaking for Brilliant Boardsers Landscaping on April 19.



Tim Peltzer and Ben Auxier at the groundbreaking for Brilliant Boardsers Landscaping on April 19.



Waukee Area Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Playgrounds Cafe on April 9.



Sydney Hinders and Taylor Weaver at the ribbon cutting for Playgrounds Cafe on April 9.



Jamie and Justin Thompson at the ribbon cutting for Playgrounds Cafe on April 9.



Chief Chad McCluskey, Nick Osbourne, Andy Kass and Mayor Courtney Clarke at the ribbon cutting for Playgrounds Cafe on April 9.



Shane and Natalie Goodall at the ribbon cutting for Playgrounds Cafe on April 9.



Jamie Willard and Renee Lupkes at the ribbon cutting for Innovative Wellness Center on April 11.



Waukeee Area Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Innovative Wellness Center on April 11.



Dani Lin and Heather Noble at the ribbon cutting for Innovative Wellness Center on April 11.



Chief Chad McCluskey and Travis Gaule at the ribbon cutting for Innovative Wellness Center on April 11.



Jenna Williams and Dana Jeun at the ribbon cutting for Innovative Wellness Center on April 11.



Kelly Troxel, Chris Juhl and Terry Snyder at the ribbon cutting for Guidepost Montessori on April 27.



Waukeee Area Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Guidepost Montessori April 27.



Alexis Morlan and Madeline Balder at the ribbon cutting for Guidepost Montessori on April 27.



Derica Sanchez and Kristina Lofgreen at the ribbon cutting for Guidepost Montessori on April 27.



Lisa Scranton and Anari Anderson at the ribbon cutting for Guidepost Montessori on April 27.



Rylie and Mayor Courtney Clarke at the ribbon cutting for Guidepost Montessori on April 27.

RIBBON Cutting

Waukee Area Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Dupaco on April 25.



Waukee Area Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Dupaco on April 25.



Zack Elsbecker, Mayor Courtney Clarke and Kelly Troxel



Jodi Allen, Madison Grady and Brittany Freeman



Ellen Goodmann Miller and Steve Chapman



Don Frazer and Lance Farrell



De'ja Sales and Courtney Wilson



Matt Loesche, Becky Beschoner and Aaron Plein

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