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JULY 2024

INSIDE: HOW-TO GUIDE

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MAGAZINE

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WELCOME

DIRT under the fingernails

My dad worked in the “dirt business” much of his life. He and my uncle owned a gravel and excavation company in a small town in northern Iowa. They dug basements, built pads, cleared out groves, hauled gravel and did most anything else that involved heavy equipment and moving dirt. Dad’s hands were stained from years of exposure to dirt and oil and grease, a symbol of his many years of manual work and service to his customers.



My hands may be stained with ink from time to time, but I don’t work in the dirt like Dad did. The exceptions are when I am motivated to tackle a landscaping project or two, and those seem to be annual events. Tearing shrubbery out. Putting new bushes in. Wheelbarrowing dirt. Setting stones. Planting flowers. And watering, watering, watering. It’s all part of the landscaping process. I am certainly not an expert, and I need to call in the pros from time to time, but I don’t hesitate to dig in the dirt when I get a chance to do so.

Landscaping is something my wife and I can do together and not disagree much about. She has a good eye for landscaping design, and I still have a reasonably strong back — at least I think so until the day after proves otherwise.

We have done our share of landscaping in each home we have lived in, and we would like to think that each place looked better when we were done. Of course, the new owners likely tore out what we did and replaced it with something more their style, but that’s OK. Landscaping is art, and beauty is in the eye of the beholder in lawns, too.

This month, we share examples of landscaping projects local residents have embarked on. We hope these stories inspire you to break out the shovels and get some dirt under your fingernails, too.

Thanks for reading. ■

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RESTAURANTS



YARDS WITH

personality

Residents share how their landscaping choices reflect their style.

By Ashley Rullestad

A plethora of pots. A hillside of hostas. Wildflowers willy nilly. Manicured hedges and straight edges. From wild and unruly to precise and planned, the landscaping around a home often reflects the owner's own unique style. While some prefer lush, thick foliage, others enjoy succulents among a garden of rocks. From a tropical vibe to the charm of a country cottage. From mad about mulch to mad for magnolias. Whatever their preferences, homeowners with a green thumb and plenty of imagination enjoy creating landscaping masterpieces with pizzazz.

The floor of an old shed serves as a platform for a shaded seating area, which Sherry Whisler enjoys.



Garden of whimsy

Sherry Whisler has lived in her southeast Ankeny home for 25 years. When the family moved in, there was little landscaping.

"I brought one peony bush from our last house on the east side of Des Moines — an anniversary gift from my husband," she says. "That house had been beautifully landscaped by the previous owners. At that time, we knew nothing of flowers or gardening."

Once they settled in, they started planting and used the trial-and-error method of landscaping. They did have a brick patio professionally installed, but, beyond that, they have just tried things that don't cost a lot and are low maintenance. Many of the plants they have put in were given to them from family and friends.

About 15 years ago, Whisler's husband and brother-in-law built a covered deck for the backyard.

"We had hoped to have a space for people to sit outside for my dad's 80th

birthday party, which was on July 1. That July 1 happened to be cold and rainy, so only a couple of brave souls sat under the brand-new gazebo roof in about 50-degree weather and rain."

Now that she's retired, Whisler uses the space frequently for afternoon naps. The yard also features a special stepping stone her dad, a stained glass artist, created, along with one Sherry herself made. A few rustic cement statues accent the landscaping, as well as birdbaths she likes to fill for the birds, squirrels and honeybees.

Her husband also built a large shed during COVID where they used to have a vegetable garden. They tore down the rusty old metal shed they had erected shortly after they moved in, exposing the rustic wood floor now used to support a small sitting area covered by a blue sunshade. The setup adds texture and functionality to the yard.

"We just enjoy experimenting and seeing how it goes and grows," Whisler says.



Sherry Whisler has a variety of plants and features in her backyard.

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FEATURE



The Nuzums have planted crocus, tulips, daffodils, giant allium and daylilies, among other flowers, in their yard.

Low maintenance landscaping

"I love having a nice yard but really hate yard work," Matt Nuzum laughs.

Matt and his wife, Melissa, have lived in their home for seven years now. The landscaping was basic when they arrived. They decided first they were going to create a container garden using the book "Square Foot Gardening" as a guide. Their dream of a productive vegetable garden died when they realized it needed a lot of work at the end of July and early August, which was often when the family went on a vacation.

"One year, our tomatoes grew out of control during this time and went over our fence and started to take over our neighbor's garden," Nuzum says. "The perennial flowers are so much easier to manage than garden veggies, so we focused our energy on flowers."

The hardest part is getting all-year color, Nuzum says. At first, they made a novice mistake and chose flowers that all bloomed at the same time. They had a great splash of color in May through June, and then it was over.

Last fall and this year, the Nuzums have worked on getting fall color added, but they won't fully see the fruits of that labor until next year. But then their yard should have some color from May (crocuses) through October (salvia).

"It's really nothing too fancy," Nuzum says. "Our yard is modest. We have several varieties of lilies, some hostas, a few varieties of climbing plants, tulips and such. We did plant some wildflower perennials this year in a spot near our utility pole where it is hard to grow stuff. Also, we're planting zinnias to hopefully attract pollinators."

FEATURE

They got bit by the gardening bug while at the Madison County Covered Bridge Festival. They found a booth by PepperHarrow Farms that had some unusual bulbs, so they bought some for the rocky area next to the house.

"It turns out that was the gateway drug that led to our perennial flower garden habit," Nuzum says. "In addition to the crocus, tulips, daffodils, giant allium and daylilies, we added a clematis. I was skeptical of the clematis because I've seen climbing vines take over gardens, but when it burst out in a sea of beautiful purple flowers, I decided I could like them. We have since added three more."

Nuzum's suggestion is to add a little each year and pay attention to when the plants bloom. So far, they have bought plants entirely from local places and haven't had to buy online. If you want deals on plants, he adds, you can buy earlier in the season because small plants are less expensive than large ones. Also, many stores stock up on plants for Mother's Day and then steeply discount them the day after, so you can get bargains if you're not picky.

The easiest plants he's found for beginners are hostas, lamb's ear and daylilies, so, if you don't think you have a green thumb, try those out.

"Our goal is low-effort plants that bring all kinds of colors but also provide ground cover to force out weeds," Nuzum says.

Brand new beginning

Ozzie and Sue Klufas moved to Ankeny from the Chicago suburbs in February to be closer to their daughter, Alana, and her family. Though they were ready for the move, they knew they'd miss their long-time Illinois home and its established landscaping.

"Our previous home was in an older, well-established neighborhood with mature trees and plantings," Sue Klufas says. "Tree-lined streets provided lots of shade and greenery. We landscaped it all ourselves, front and back. My favorite parts of our yard have always been the mature trees and a climbing hydrangea."

Their new duplex was void of landscaping, with not one tree or flower. The only landscaping was directly in front of the duplex, and it was half dead.

The couple decided to add plants and trees as soon as possible. They sought two estimates from local landscapers to see what they would recommend, and they used TNT in Ankeny to get started. They were sure to add a pear tree to the design, as they had one in Illinois and enjoyed the flowers in the spring.

"We moved here to bare bones, so now we have to be patient and plant and wait for things to grow," Klufas says.

They brought ornamental items to use in the landscape from their old home, including a horse head address marker from the farm Sue grew up



Melissa and Matt Nuzum have added color to their yard, including a clematis with its vibrant purple flowers.

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Ozzie and Sue Klufas recently moved to Ankeny and quickly set out to transform their barren landscape into a vibrant addition to their home.

on, and decorative rabbits to place among the plantings.

Klufas recommends knowing your budget and preferences before you get started because, like everything, landscaping is expensive. But,

it can also be long-lasting. The couple is happy with the results and are excited to see how their plants develop while they add more.

“We figure, in the next couple of years, we can add plants and maybe even another

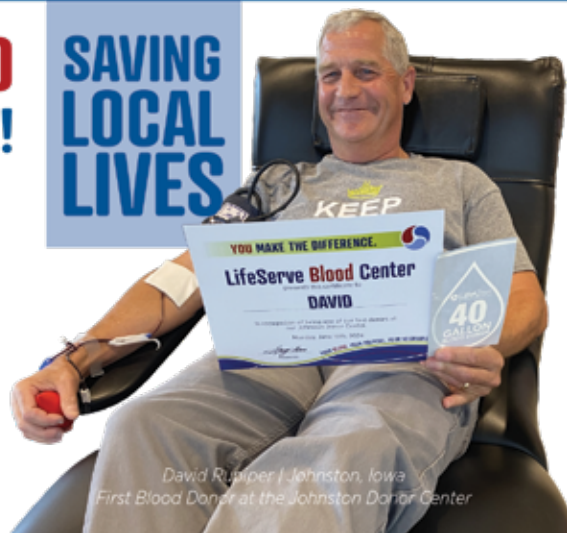
tree,” Klufas says. “A budget is necessary because taking on a landscaping project is expensive. We are hoping everything grows quickly, and we can make it more personal along the way.” ■

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Maximizing Social Security

John and Sue's journey to an extra \$93,000

As retirement nears, many face the critical question of how to optimize their resources, ensuring they can live the lifestyle they want and have the money to pay for it. One of the most significant

components of this journey is the Social Security decision. The Social Security decision made by John and Sue, the stars of our online Journey to Retirement Workshop, is a shining example of how thoroughly analyzing your options can maximize your Social Security benefit.

John and Sue, aged 62, are at the crossroads of making their Social Security election. Their goal is clear: maximize their benefits while considering their income and lifestyle needs. Through our workshop, we illustrated three different Social Security scenarios to help them make an informed decision.



In the first scenario, John and Sue both opt to take Social Security at the earliest possible age of 62. We use some assumptions about their benefit and an assumed life expectancy of 81 for John and 84 for Sue. In scenario No. 1, cumulatively, over their lifetimes, they would collect \$941,000.

In the second scenario, only Sue starts her benefits at 62, while John waits until full retirement age (FRA), which for him is 67. This strategic delay allowed John to receive his full Social Security benefit of \$3,000 monthly, yielding \$998,000 in total lifetime benefits.

The third scenario involves further delaying benefits. John waits until age 70, letting his benefit grow 8% yearly from age 67 to 70, while Sue begins taking her Social Security benefit at 65. Ultimately, this strategy brought their total Social Security benefits to \$1,034,000—a staggering \$93,000 more than the first scenario.

Why does this matter? Beyond the obvious

financial gain, this additional income provides John and Sue with the flexibility to adapt their plans as needed. Whether it's dealing with unforeseen health expenses, adjusting for inflation, or simply enjoying a few extra vacations, the additional \$93,000 adds a significant cushion to their retirement portfolio.

This type of Social Security analysis works best when the final decision on when to elect Social Security is made in connection with a broader retirement strategy that includes retirement lifestyle goals, other sources of income, investable assets, health status, market conditions and more.

Integrating these choices into a broader retirement strategy can unlock substantial benefits, offering financial security and the freedom to fully enjoy the retirement years. For those nearing retirement, I encourage you to take the time to explore your Social Security options thoroughly. Your future self will thank you.

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



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FAITH

By Pastor John Wagner

DO unto others

I can remember my elementary school teachers asking whether students were familiar with the “Golden Rule.” Their query was usually in response to kids being disrespectful toward one another. Sometimes that disrespect took the form of name calling or pushing and shoving at recess.

I remember the teachers sharing these words: “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” But when someone “cheated” against me at four-square or took my favorite book away during silent reading time, the last thing on my mind was whether or not I needed to modify MY behavior. “Why are you telling me to do something unto someone else? They are the ones doing something wrong!”

I think my teachers were on to something when they offered both the “accused” and the “accuser” the exact same rule to be applied. As with many Biblical behavioral insights, the verse in the Bible which birthed the “Golden Rule” wasn’t about getting someone else to behave differently. In the Gospel of Luke, we read the “Golden Rule” in the middle of a teaching from Jesus about how we are to love our enemies and pray for those who harm us. That same teaching includes a lesson about, if we only love people who love us, what’s the big deal about that? Most people are kind to those who already offer kindness.



(Un)expected tangent

I recently watched an event on TV where two people with very different ideas/opinions debated with one another about the merits of their own leadership. Even before the “conversation” between those two adults had ended, I snuck out to see how news authorities and social media might respond.

I didn’t get far before I remembered that I (we) could use a strong reminder about the Golden Rule. God is reminding me that I can disagree with someone and still be kind. I can even pray for those whose ideas, behaviors or agenda might harm me. When I hear Jesus saying to me “Do unto others,” I hear that I should offer as much grace and forgiveness as I would hope to receive — and since God has offered me more forgiveness and grace than I can measure... Wow. I’ve got some work to do.

Might I suggest that humanity is at its very best when we decide to be audaciously kind and compassionate simply because we want someone else to receive kindness and compassion.

Over the next few months, we won’t agree on everything and, yes, things will occur which are wrong. But we will ultimately be known by our ability to love and care for others because it was the right thing to do, not because someone did it to/for us first.

Even when we disagree, for the sake of Jesus’ good name, I’m going to keep trying to do unto others...

God bless you. ■

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

WANT TO stay in your home as you age?

Preparation is key.

Continuing to live in your home as you age — “aging in place” — is not always within the grasp of every person who desires to do so. If you end up needing a little assistance to remain in the place you love, chronic health challenges can make living independently ill-advised, and full-time care at home can cost nearly as much as community living (sometimes even more, if you need 24/7 care, for example).



You might be asking yourself, then: “If I am not able to live at home, and I don’t want to move into a community, what can I do?” Great news: Some organizations that serve older adults have designed Continuing Care at Home (CC@H) membership programs designed to help people proactively focus on their health at home while enabling them to financially plan for potential services and care down the road.

If you’re evaluating a CC@H program, here are some questions to help you make sure the program’s premises, amenities and outcomes will be the best ones for you.

• **Do you fully understand the program and what it offers?** The primary advantages of a good CC@H program are twofold: Not only will it offer services and amenities to enhance your wellbeing so you can remain independent longer, but it will also help fund future long-term care needs.

• **Does it provide personal support?** Studies tell us people who embark on any kind of life-altering program or activity, such as a nutrition or exercise regimen, will be exponentially more successful with encouragement from a trusted adviser or advocate (think personal trainer, life coach, etc.). A program that provides you with a written guide but no personal interaction may not be setting you up for success.

• **What will your care options be?** A solid program will help fund your care, if it’s needed, whether through home healthcare or services in a senior living community later on. If the program you’re considering does offer both, make sure you’re comfortable with the services and care provided by the organization’s home healthcare team as well as in its communities. A reputable provider will have longevity and solid outcomes behind it.

If you’re considering becoming part of a CC@H program, make sure it fits your current and future needs. Your health, your wellbeing, and your checkbook will thank you for it. ■

Aaron Wheeler is Vice President of Home and Community-Based Services for WesleyLife, which provides health and well-being services, including WellAhead — A WesleyLife Well-Being Experience, a CC@H offering designed for people who never want to move to a senior living community. To learn more, visit wesleylife.org/wellahead.

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LIBRARY

By Beth Schaefer

A LOOK back at fiscal year 2024

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The fiscal year ended on June 30, which means it's time to total up all of the library's checkouts, programs, visits and more to share with the State Library of Iowa for its annual statistics report. Let's take a look back at what has happened at the Ankeny Public Library since July of 2023.

Our librarians participated in Ankeny Chamber SummerFest and Dazzling in the District and brought the library to you through local school visits and programs in parks across Ankeny. The library has provided a meeting space for more than 1,000 birthday and graduation parties, bridal showers, gender reveals, educational camps and business and school meetings. Our Friends have fundraised tens of thousands of dollars through bingo and trivia nights as well as the Novel Findings used bookstore, which is filled with donated items thanks to the generosity of the Ankeny community. We forgave \$1,200 in fines and gave back to the IMPACT Community Action Partnership foodbank with more than 600 donated food items from Ankeny residents during Food For Fines.

Some of our staff's favorite memories this year include walking in the SummerFest parade, seeing the success of new programs like Puzzle Palooza, setting an all-time high number of Summer Library Program participants in 2024 (5,000 registered, which is 1,500 more than the previous record), and hosting more than 20 tweens and teens to eat tiny snacks, play tiny games and do tiny crafts at a Tiny Party.

The most popular titles from our fiction, nonfiction/biography, and movie collections:

- "It Starts With Us" by Colleen Hoover (264 checkouts)
- "The Woman in Me" by Britney Spears (107 checkouts)
- "Oppenheimer" (196 checkouts)
- "The Pigeon Will Ride the Roller Coaster!" by Mo Willems (115 checkouts)
- "Encanto" (77 checkouts)
- "Diary of a Wimpy Kid: the Getaway" by Jeff Kinney (93 checkouts)
- "A Court of Thorns and Roses" by Sarah J. Maas (74 checkouts)
- "Killers of the Flower Moon: the Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI" by David Grann (78 checkouts)

A total of 373,604 people visited the library, an average of 1,024 people each day, and 546,959 physical items and 162,983 digital items were circulated, for a total circulation of 709,942. That's nearly 2,000 items a day. A total of 11,711 Ankeny residents, 1,160 unincorporated Polk County residents and 1,393 residents from other cities in Iowa borrowed items from the Ankeny Library.

Thank you for making this a great year, and we can't wait to see what FY25 brings. ■



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Investing for your future is important — but it can be challenging. How can you navigate the complexities of the financial markets and make the right decisions for your situation?

Fortunately, you don't have to go it alone. A financial advisor can help you in these key areas:

- **Developing a personal financial strategy** – Many factors go into creating a long-term financial strategy. What is your risk tolerance? When would you like to retire? What sort of retirement lifestyle have you envisioned? What are your other important goals? A financial advisor will ask these and other questions in getting to know you, your family situation and your hopes for the future. By taking this type of holistic approach, a financial advisor can help you create financial and investment strategies appropriate for your needs.

- **Avoiding mistakes** – A financial advisor can help you avoid costly investment mistakes. One such mistake is attempting to “time” the market. Investors pursue market timing when they try to “buy low” and “sell high.” In theory, of course, this is a great idea. If you could consistently buy investments — stocks, in particular — when their price is down and then sell them when the price has risen significantly, you'd always make some tidy profits. The main drawback to this technique, though, is that it is virtually impossible to follow, especially for individual investors. Nobody, not even professional money managers, can really predict with any accuracy when stock prices have reached high or low points. Consequently, those who try to make these guesses could miss out on opportunities. For example, investors who are determined to buy low might not want to purchase investments when the market is up — but this practice could lead to taking a “time out” from investing just when the market is in the midst of a rally. But a financial advisor can steer clients toward a more disciplined approach, such as buying quality investments and holding them for the long term, regardless of the ups and downs of the market.

- **Checking progress toward your goals** – If you were to invest without any guidance, you might not be looking at your investments' performance with the proper perspective. For example, some investors simply compare their portfolio returns against a widely used market index, such as the S&P 500. But this comparison may not be that useful. The S&P 500 only measures the stock prices of the leading publicly traded U.S. companies by market capitalization — but, your investment portfolio, if properly diversified, will include investments other than U.S. stocks, such as bonds, government securities, international stocks and more. Consequently, the performance of your portfolio won't track that of the S&P 500 or any other single index, either. Your financial advisor can help you employ more meaningful benchmarks, such as whether your portfolio's progress is on track toward helping you meet your financial goals. Also, a financial advisor will review your portfolio and investment strategy regularly to determine what changes, if any, need to be made, either in response to the markets or to events in your life.

Investing for your future can be exciting and rewarding — and you can feel more confident in your decisions when you have someone helping you along the way. ■

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Edward Jones. Member SIPC. Information provided by Luke Boyd, 1200 S.W. State St., Suite B, Ankeny, 515-964-2089.



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Edward Jones
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

BRING joy to mealtimes by dining together

(Family Features) The renowned Mediterranean Diet, celebrated for its myriad benefits, has been rated as a top diet in the world for years.

Recognizing the benefits of the foods included in the Mediterranean Diet, it's important to broaden the understanding beyond its ingredients to embrace the elements of the Mediterranean lifestyle, which also contribute to these benefits. Essentially, it's not just about what you eat; it's also about how you enjoy it and with whom you share the experience.

Nutrition, physical activity, sleep and togetherness comprise this balanced way of living, with preparing, eating and enjoying food together being key elements of the Mediterranean lifestyle. You can immerse yourself in the vibrant spirit of the Mediterranean lifestyle simply by inviting friends or family to gather around the table for a meal — like a family favorite pasta dish.

“Eating together is a joyful and important practice of the Mediterranean lifestyle that truly contributes to overall well-being,” said Michele Lefebvre, registered dietitian nutritionist and manager of nutrition and well-being at Barilla America. “As a traditional yet versatile food, pasta brings a sense of nostalgia to meals as people gather together around the table and connect in an impactful way.”

Visit barilla.com/recipes to discover more dishes that can help you follow the Mediterranean lifestyle. ■

Cellentani Caprese pasta salad

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 15 minutes

Servings: 7

- 1 box Barilla Protein+ Cellentani pasta
- 4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 2 pints grape tomatoes, mixed color, halved
- 4 tablespoons lemon juice
- 8 basil leaves, julienned
- 2 cups small mozzarella cheese balls, halved
- salt, to taste
- black pepper, to taste



DIRECTIONS

- Bring large pot of water to boil. Cook pasta according to package directions and drain. Drizzle pasta with 1 tablespoon olive oil and place on sheet tray to cool. Set aside.
- In large bowl, combine tomatoes, lemon juice, basil, remaining olive oil and cheese. Season with salt and pepper, to taste. Add pasta and stir.

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THE IMPORTANCE of having a will

Occasionally, clients believe they don't need a Last Will and Testament. Reasons for this vary, including the assumption that the person's family knows how assets are to be distributed or the belief that verbal instructions or written lists are sufficient. Without a formal will, however, assets must pass according to Iowa law.



from your current marriage, your entire estate passes to your surviving spouse. However, if you have children from another marriage, your surviving spouse will receive either one-half of your estate or the first \$50,000, whichever is greater. Your children will share equally in the remaining portion of your estate. That may come as a surprise to a client who assumes a surviving spouse will inherit everything.

If you have no surviving spouse, your estate will be divided equally among all of your surviving children. While this includes adopted children, it does not include stepchildren. If you have no surviving spouse and no children, the rules of inheritance follow a strict pattern to your parents, then to your siblings (the children of your parents), then to your grandparents and the children of your grandparents. In the absence of surviving family members, your entire estate could revert to the State of Iowa.

These rules assume you want all your immediate relatives to share equally in your estate. But you may not want certain relatives to receive assets from your estate. Significantly, the intestate rules do not account for the needs of heirs with disabilities.

In a legally executed and properly drafted written document — your Last Will and Testament — you can nominate the representative of your estate and set out a plan for dividing your assets. The major benefit of a will is that it allows you to direct the distribution of your estate according to your wishes rather than according to statute.

If you need to update your will, or if you need to create one for the first time, consult with an experienced estate-planning attorney. ■

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

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HOW-TO GUIDE

HOW TO FIND THE RIGHT BANK

Choosing the right bank is a crucial decision that can significantly impact your financial wellbeing and satisfaction. A true partner ensures alignment with your personal and/or business needs. Typically, a local bank can offer more personalized services and better relationships.

Evaluating the bank's reputation and stability, customer service, rates and fees, technology and accessibility should be considered. Meeting with a bank representative lets the customer ask questions and assess compatibility before deciding. Consider the potential for a long-term relationship rather than just immediate needs.

CONSIDER A COMMUNITY BANK

Community banks offer a level of personalized service and commitment to their customers that larger institutions often struggle to match. Community banks can provide all the essential banking services with a focus on building lasting relationships within their neighborhoods. By banking with

a community bank, customers contribute to a healthier local economy.

PERSONALIZED SERVICE AND EXPERTISE

One of the most significant advantages of banking with a community bank is the personalized service you receive. Community banks are often more focused on customer satisfaction, as their business relies heavily on local customer loyalty and positive word-of-mouth. Whether you need assistance opening a first account for a child, funding your small business, or buying your first home, community banks offer expert advice and support every step of the way.

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES THAT FILL YOUR NEEDS

Community banks offer modern conveniences such as online banking, mobile apps, online deposit, account opening and ATM access. Additionally, they are more flexible and willing to customize their products and services to meet the

customers' requirements.

DEEP COMMUNITY ROOTS

Community banks reinvest local deposits back into the community through loans for local businesses and mortgages for local families. In addition, they commit significant resources, both financial and time-based, to support local organizations and events aimed at enhancing community wellbeing. This reinvestment plays a crucial role in fostering economic growth and prosperity within our community.

MAKING THE RIGHT CHOICE

Finding the right bank is about more than just debit cards and loans. It's about finding a financial partner that understands your needs and values. Community banks often provide advisory support and guidance, helping the customer make informed financial decisions. Those decisions for business or personal needs are critical decisions that can impact your financial health and success. ■

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*APY = Annual Percentage Yield. \$2,500 minimum balance required to obtain APY. Public funds are not eligible for this offer. Interest will be compounded and credited to your account quarterly and at maturity. Early withdrawal penalties will apply. Fees may reduce earnings. The offer will renew automatically for a term of 12 months at a new rate. APY is accurate as of 03/06/2024 and is subject to change without notice.

HOW TO CHOOSE A GYM

If you've made the decision to get in shape, joining a gym can help you achieve your fitness goals. Most popular gyms offer a variety of equipment, training circuits and activities. Some even offer extras such as pools and cycling studios. Gyms are also a great way to have fun and meet people.

Don't worry about fitting the profile of the average gym-goer. No one was a fitness model the first day they set foot in a gym. While you might feel out of shape on your first day, trainers and experts at the facility will be happy to educate you about nutrition and wellness.

Gyms can also benefit your mental health. A good workout releases endorphins, improving your mood and fighting stress. Exercise also increases energy levels and improves sleep. Building muscles helps you burn calories more effectively. Consistent workouts lower blood pressure while reducing the risk of some types of cancer, osteoporosis and Type 2 diabetes.

People often have a hard time forming good fitness habits. Fitness regimens can be difficult to maintain. We often create excuses, or our schedules simply don't permit

time to exercise. It can be hard to stay motivated. By committing to a gym membership and taking advantage of available workout options, you can develop better habits.

Personal trainers can be especially helpful if you need instruction or encouragement. Each trainer will have his or her style of communication — from mild and uplifting to severe and harsh. They will help you map out realistic goals that are tailored to meet your individual needs.

If you have health restrictions such as joint pain, low-impact workouts are available. Many gyms have a pool. They might even offer aqua aerobics. This comprehensive workout uses the water's resistance for extra toning. It is usually very safe for people with joint pain. If you can find a private instructor, you can get an excellent workout involving both cardio and endurance training.

When choosing a gym, remember your future goals. Whether you opt for the services of a personal trainer or participate in a group fitness, weight training or water aerobics class, your aim should be to improve constantly and have fun. ■



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HOW TO CHOOSE A MATTRESS

You may have heard that we sleep a third of our lives away, so a comfortable mattress is key to ensuring we spend our waking hours feeling well-rested. When it's time for a new mattress, your options are more varied than ever before.

Don't lose sleep shopping for a new mattress. Sure, the number of options can be as daunting as the wide range of prices, but selecting the right mattress for your needs at the right price is simple.

Purchasing a mattress is a long-term investment in your health and self-esteem. Don't be afraid of looking at pricier options. Quality mattresses last longer, so you can save yourself the trouble of buying another mattress in a year or two because the mattress is sagging and breaking down.

HERE ARE A FEW OTHER THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND:

Do you need a firm or soft mattress? People with a bad back, neck or leg pain, or circulatory problems might require firm support to keep their spines aligned. Other people prefer flexible support that fits the contours of their bodies.

Do you sleep with another person? Mattresses made to reduce motion transfer are beneficial, as they will give you a personalized experience without disturbing the other person's sleep.

WHEN YOU ARE LOOKING AT ACTUAL MATTRESS OPTIONS, THE FOLLOWING ARE POPULAR CHOICES:

Pillow-top mattresses are famous for their softness; however, they do have levels of firmness. They also require a larger bottom sheet because the pillow-top adds extra thickness. They can also trap body heat.

Coil spring construction is an option for a firm mattress. Coils can keep your spine aligned. Mattress stores can show you samples of their product lines. Choose the best construction you can afford.

"Memory" or high-density foam or latex mattress are helpful if you have physical issues, such as skeletal pain or circulatory problems. This mattress conforms to the shape of the body. It also minimizes pressure points on the head, shoulders and hips.

When shopping for a mattress, don't be afraid of lying down and trying it out. Roll over and pay attention to how your body feels. Are you comfortable?

Inquire about the mattress guarantee or warranty. A standard warranty is 10 years. If the warranty is shorter or non-existent, look elsewhere.

Remember, your mattress is a long-term investment. Choose wisely and you will be rewarded with years of restful nights and energetic days. ■

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HOW TO CHOOSE A LAWN CARE SERVICE

Keeping your lawn healthy and attractive is the goal of every homeowner. But even those who enjoy mowing, trimming and weeding can find the routine maintenance time-consuming.

Hiring a professional lawn care service can give you back that time and, in exchange for some of your “green,” bring a new level of care to your land.

Here are a few things to keep in mind:

DECIDE WHAT YOU WANT

What is it that you need? Lawn mowing, fertilization and weed control services? Tree and shrub care? Understanding the different services that each company offers is key. Sometimes a lawn care professional will offer quotes for mowing but nothing else. Make sure you know what you need and what you’ll be getting.

PHILOSOPHY AND METHODS

Some chemicals are eco-friendly and others are not, so if environmental issues are a central concern, find a company to keep your

yard green with green practices.

A good way of testing a company is to see their methods of preparation. Maybe your lawn needs an additional service to help achieve your goals.

Another deciding factor could be consultation fees. Requesting a free estimate of service costs will benefit you in the long run. Beware of organizations that offer annual pricing without seeing the size of your yard.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The people you interact with every day can help you make the best use of your money by recommending proficient lawn care services.

People who live near you will also be acquainted with the services provided by various professionals in your area. They can recommend a service based on what you need.

METHOD OF PAYMENT

Some companies will utilize a verbal agreement that can be canceled by either party at any time while others will require a

yearly contract.

Understanding what will happen if there is an early cancellation or change in terms halfway through your contract is important.

ANNUAL FEES OR PAY-PER-TREATMENT?

Most lawn care providers will offer multiple methods of payment. For the majority of providers, an annual contract will save you money in the long run. But compare the prices between one-time treatments and long-term agreements to know for sure.

ARE THEY FLEXIBLE?

Last on our list is flexibility. Find a company that will customize a plan for your lawn. If you want to exterminate the bulk of your weeds, will the company skip the pre-emergent crabgrass herbicide and utilize post-emergent removal treatment? Not all lawns are the same and cannot be treated as such.

The journey to finding a reliable lawn care provider should not be hard. Thankfully, there are many extraordinary businesses right around the corner if you shop carefully. ■

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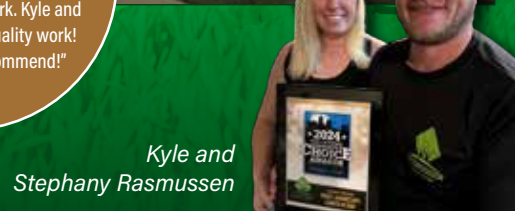


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HOW TO CHOOSE A TATTOO STUDIO

Tattoos and tattoo studios have gone mainstream, and it's safer and easier than ever to wear your passions on your sleeve. In fact, more than 30% of Americans have at least one tattoo. If you've been considering a new tattoo, read these important steps to ensure a safe, professional and satisfying experience.

1. RESEARCH AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Word of mouth: Ask friends, family and colleagues with tattoos for recommendations. Personal experiences can give you valuable insights.

Online reviews: Check platforms like Google Reviews, Facebook, and social media for customer feedback. Pay attention to comments about cleanliness, professionalism and overall satisfaction.

Portfolios: Look at the tattoo studio's website and social media pages to view their artists' work. Ensure the style matches what you're looking for.

2. HEALTH AND SAFETY STANDARDS

Licensing: Ensure the studio and its artists are licensed according to local regulations. A store license and an artist license should be visibly posted.

Cleanliness: Visit the studio in person. It should be clean, well-organized and hygienic. Look for proper sterilization equipment like autoclaves and single-use needles.

Safety protocols: The studio should follow strict protocols for sterilizing equipment and using new, disposable gloves and needles for each client.

3. ARTISTIC STYLE AND SPECIALIZATION

Match your style: Each tattoo artist has a unique style. Choose an artist whose work resonates with the design you have in mind, whether it's traditional, realism, watercolor or something else.

4. PRICING

Understand costs: Tattoo pricing varies

based on size, complexity and artist experience. Ask for an estimate during your consultation or prior to the tattoo.

Value over cost: Don't choose a studio based solely on the lowest price. Quality and safety should be your top priorities.

Deposits and policies: Inquire about deposit requirements and the studio's cancellation and rescheduling policies.

5. COMFORT AND ATMOSPHERE

Studio vibe: The studio should feel comfortable and welcoming. You should feel at ease with the artist and the environment, and the artist should make you feel confident about their skills and approach.

6. GUT FEELING

Trust your instincts: If something doesn't feel right, trust your instincts and keep looking. The right studio should give you confidence in their professionalism and artistry. ■

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A DREAM trip for Willow

Honored with a wish from local family foundation.

Willow Malone is a sweet, curious, observant 5-year-old who feels things deeply and has a passion for dinosaurs and animals.

She's also a warrior.

Willow was diagnosed with Ewing's Sarcoma in November 2022 at the age of 3. Her treatment lasted 10 months and included 14 rounds of chemotherapy, 25 rounds of radiation and an extensive tumor resection surgery that resulted in removing the top two ribs on her left side. She has mobility issues with her left arm and hand.

Willow has been through a lot, but, since completing treatment in September 2023, she's made a lot of progress in her development, even though she deals with lingering side effects.

Recently, Willow was named a 2024 Champagne and Dreams recipient by the Wiedenman Family Foundation. This annual event, put on by the Ankeny-based foundation, was created to raise funds to grant wishes for local children with a physical, mental or financial need.

Willow's "dream" was to take a trip to the ocean.

"She loves all things animals and creatures, so we're excited for our family to travel to Florida later this summer," says her mom, Chris. "We'll stay at a resort with an aquarium, pools and plenty to do, and also visit Busch Gardens for some extra fun. She's also excited for her first plane ride."

Chris shares that, for so long, their family's world revolved around Willow's cancer.

"It split up our family, forcing us to spend many days and nights in the hospital, away from Willow's younger brother, Marshall," she says. "It dictated all our plans regardless of holidays, birthdays or milestones. We were unable to work throughout treatment and, regardless of generous financial support from our village, it has made it challenging to prioritize a big vacation. So, this dream is giving us something we can't give ourselves — time as a family, making memories, doing something novel and new we'll be able to reminisce about down the road."

For the Malone family, it's hard to adequately express their gratitude to the Wiedemann Family Foundation for choosing Willow as a Champagne and Dreams recipient. The event gave Willow a chance to wear a fancy dress while giving her parents a way to acknowledge and celebrate her journey — especially her resilience making it through treatment and continuing to work through the challenges that follow a child after cancer.

"It gave us something tangible to see, feel and accept what Willow went through," Chris says. "We think it will be special for Willow to be able to look back on this award as she gets older." ■



Willow Malone and her family were recognized at the 2024 Champagne and Dreams event.

A SAFE spot

Emmaus House has offered spiritual direction for 50 years

In this day and age, having a place to meditate, reflect and hone one's faith is more important than ever.

Emmaus House is one of those safe places.

A ministry of the Des Moines Catholic Diocese, Emmaus House exists to provide spiritual direction, retreats and other offerings, Associate Director April Young says.

Named after a biblical story in Luke 24, Emmaus offers Mass on Tuesdays and Thursdays at noon in a contemplative environment and offers centering prayer via Zoom on Tuesday mornings. There are no overnight accommodations, but private retreat rooms exist that can be reserved for private day retreats.

Emmaus House also offers spiritual direction with its two full-time directors, Young and Kevin O'Donnell. A spiritual director is someone with whom one meets to discuss and reflect upon his or her spiritual life.

"Our ministry seeks to help people come to that same recognition of Christ in their lives," Young says. "Through spiritual direction, retreats and other opportunities to share about our lives and the scriptures, and in the celebration of Eucharist, we, too, become better able to recognize the risen Christ ever in our midst."

Emmaus House originally opened in the Sherman Hill neighborhood in Des Moines, spending its first 46 years in traditional, Victorian-style houses. As the ministry grew into the 21st century, so did the need for more space, particularly more accessible space, Young says.

"For years, the search committee searched and toured literally hundreds of properties across the metro," she says. "Then the committee looked at 3315 70th St. and saw potential. The building was centrally located within the metro, availing us to be a space of quiet and respite, literally in the busyness of daily life. There were also zero steps through the east entrance and lots of space to reframe how our community could continue to grow."

The building was purchased in 2021, and the renovation process began. An official opening was held in 2022.

Young originally became acquainted with Emmaus House while in search of her own spiritual direction.

"At the time, I was discerning becoming a religious sister," she says. "While I did not feel called to religious life, what I found in spiritual direction and the Emmaus House community has nourished me and helped me to grow for nearly 15 years."

Young began working toward a certificate in spiritual direction in 2020, and, in 2022 a position became available at Emmaus House.

"I feel privileged and overjoyed to continue to be a part of such a welcoming and loving community," she says.

Those interested can visit the Emmaus House website at www.theemmaushouse.org or Facebook and Instagram @emmaushouseia.

A 50th year celebration/open house will take place on Wednesday, July 31 from 4-7 p.m. at 3315 70th St. All are welcome. ■



Emmaus House, 3315 70th St., will host a 50th year celebration/open house on Wednesday, July 31 from 4-7 p.m.



April Young is an associate director at Emmaus House.

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*Sales ranking based on 2023 car and truck sales report of the Kansas City Region of Lincoln Motor Company.

EVENTS IN THE AREA

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

Check for cancellations

Neighbor to Neighbor free meal

July 28, 5 p.m. Doors open at 4 p.m.

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

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



Bike Nights

Every fourth Friday of the month
Mean Machines Cycles, 462 W.
Walnut, Elkhart

Enjoy food, music, prizes, bikes and more.

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](https://ankenyschoolfoundation.org/golf-fore-education).



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. Cost is \$35. Must be 18 or 14-17
with parent permission. To register or for
more information, visit [www.ankenyiowa.
gov/310/Self-Defense-Training-RAD](http://www.ankenyiowa.gov/310/Self-Defense-Training-RAD).

Beats and Eats

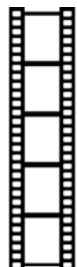
Thursday, July 25, 5-7:30 p.m.
Ankeny Market & Pavilion (AMP),
715 W. First St., Ankeny

Enjoy food trucks, live music and
entertainment, family activities, games, beer
truck and more at Beats and Eats. Blacktop
Rock Band will be featured with Pink Stew
Entertainment, soccer darts, basketball
shootout, football toss and TB Creations.
Beats & Eats is a free community program
sponsored by Uptown Ankeny. ■

Movies Under the Stars

Fridays, July 19, July 26, Aug. 2
Bandshell at Wagner Park, 410 W.
First St., Ankeny

Bring a blanket and enjoy the show.
Movies start at dusk. July 19: "Trolls Band
Together"; July 26: "Dr. Seuss' the Lorax";
Aug. 2: "TMNT Mutant Mayhem."



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ANKENY

📍 1329 SW Ordinance Rd. Ankeny, IA ☎ 515.964.9492

"Good luck to all the students, and here's to another year of fun and learning!"



BUDGETING for your next vacation

The notion that a little saving goes a long way is especially applicable to budgeting for a vacation. If careful thought is put into budgeting, then the vacation you need may be within reach. In this article, we'll go over how you can plan, budget and save.



If you fly, be sure to consider whether you will need a rental car once you arrive, or factor in ride share and public transportation costs. If you drive, try to estimate the cost of gas and the impact on your vehicle.

3. Food – Will you eat out for every meal or buy a few groceries when you arrive and make some meals yourself? There are probably meals you'll want to splurge on, and you may find perks such as breakfast being included at your hotel.

4. Activities – Most tourist destinations have a website that lists all the activities in the area. While some activities will surely cost money, usually there are a lot of free things to do in almost every destination. You can also look for deals if you buy tickets early or online, or if you buy as part of a package. When building your budget for this category, also consider whether you will be bringing home souvenirs or memorabilia from your trip.

Finding room in your budget

If you don't already, track your spending for two or three weeks. This will allow you to see where

you put every dollar, and you may find yourself saying, "I spend that much money at the coffee shop each week?" There may be items like this in your budget that aren't crucial to your day-to-day life. Cutting back in those areas leaves more money to put toward your goal each month. If you can be disciplined in this area, you will reach your goal before you know it.

Expect the unexpected

It is also a good idea to set aside a small amount of money for unplanned expenses on vacation. For example, if you forget to pack everyday items such as soap or shampoo. Bigger ticket items like car problems or lost luggage can also pop up unexpectedly. You will have more peace of mind knowing you can cover these expenses.

If you remember to plan, budget and save, you can soon be on vacation. ■

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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CHAIRS for charity

Grimes makes use of time and lumber for good causes.

During the COVID pandemic of 2020, Geoffrey Grimes had a puzzle to solve. He was stuck at home and had a stack of old deck lumber sitting in his yard. Instead of having someone come haul it off, he decided to find a use for it. He didn't have much knowledge working with tools, beyond hammers and nails, but that didn't deter him. He set his mind to learn, and, soon, he had a picnic table. His skills developed, and the idea to make Adirondak chairs, with the intention of giving them away, was born.



Geoffrey Grimes makes many Adirondak chairs, some for his business and many that he gives away to benefit others.

"I started by making a double chair set with a table in the middle of them," he says. These he has in front of his own home. "I made a few to give away, and people started asking to buy them. At that point, I figured I'd give this a go."

He now runs a business called Geoffrey's Adirondaks.

Grimes enjoys making double chairs, but most often he builds single chairs. Most of the lumber he uses is refurbished.

"I get a lot of used deck lumber and refurbish it," he remarks. "I use the good pieces, cut them to size, sand them, put the chairs together, and stain or paint them. In the beginning, it took me a couple of hours or more to get everything done for a chair. Now, I can make an Adirondak chair from start to finish in about an hour and a half."

Sometimes Geoffrey gets help from his wife, Julie, and daughters, Joy, 14, and Julia, 10. They occasionally assist in painting or by cleaning up the work area in his garage.

Over the last few years, Grimes has donated Adirondak chairs to many worthy causes, including Freedom Coffee Blend, Ruth Harbor Homes, Alpha Women's Center, Can Do Cancer auctions, and a few other auctions around Des Moines.

"Sometimes people offer to donate paint, screws and other materials for the chairs that I give away. That's nice help for the free ones," he adds.

Grimes gives away around 30 to 40 chairs a year.

"Typically, the chairs sell really well during the warm months. Once the weather starts cooling off, around Halloween, I start making chairs to donate," he says. "Sometimes I reach out to different locations to see if they would like any, and sometimes the charities will reach out to me."

Grimes says it feels good to help someone out that may not be able to afford it otherwise.

"It's nice to see the joy and happiness at the gift," he shares. "People seem so grateful, and that just feels so good, especially if I happen to drive by and see people sitting in them. I think it's cool to see something that I built being used."

Though he has developed working relationships with a variety of charities for his donations, Grimes welcomes new collaborators.

"I am open to anyone that's out there looking for this kind of partnership," he says. ■

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PLAN AHEAD By Scott Eriksen

THE ROLE of funeral staff

"We don't need to worry about it; the church will take care of everything."

I have recently experienced the planning that goes into a family member's funeral service. When you want a celebration that truly reflects and honors the loved one who has died, you learn firsthand about the many details which need to come together.

You also appreciate the job of the funeral director and support staff, who make sure all of these details come together seamlessly.

So, when a family says they do not need the funeral home involved with services... we cringe.

We cringe because we know that churches don't typically have staff ready to take care of the many details that need to be attended to: creating memorial folders, memorial DVDs and other service items; checking in flowers and arranging them for the service; setting up displays of personal items for the service; and providing ushers, just to name a few.

Individually, these may not seem like big things; however, these details can quickly become overwhelming. That is why I urge you to take my personal experience to heart and let the funeral home do what they are here to do for the family. Let the funeral director "direct" and guide the family through these many details and decisions.

And remember... planning in advance will make this a smoother and less stressful process for everyone. ■



Information provided by Scott Eriksen, Director of Hamilton's Advanced Planning, Hamilton's Funeral Home, 605 Lyon St., Des Moines, 515-697-3670, www.HamiltonsFuneralHome.com.



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HEALTH By Dr. Todd Pietig

THE IMPORTANCE of sunglasses

Sunglasses are more than a fashion accessory; they play a crucial role in maintaining eye health. By blocking harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays from the sun, sunglasses protect the eyes from a range of potential issues. Prolonged exposure to UV rays can cause short-term effects like photokeratitis (sunburn of the eye) and long-term damage such as cataracts, macular degeneration, pterygium and skin cancer on the eyelids.

Most sunglasses protect the delicate skin around the eyes, which is responsible for 5-10% of skin cancers. Moreover, sunglasses can reduce dry eyes by shielding them from wind and dust and providing a barrier against allergens which can cause itching.

Quality sunglasses will block 100% of both UVA and UVB rays. Sometimes you may see them labeled UV400, which means they block all wavelengths of UV light up to 400 nanometers, which ensures they block the harmful UV rays. In addition to UV protection, sunglasses reduce glare, which can cause eye strain and discomfort.

Polarized lenses offer additional benefits by minimizing glare from reflective surfaces like water, snow and roads, enhancing visual clarity and comfort. Wearing high-quality sunglasses is vital for preserving eye health for both adults and children. Investing in a good pair of sunglasses is a simple yet effective measure to ensure eye health. By incorporating sunglasses into your daily routine, you can enjoy the outdoors safely while safeguarding your vision. ■



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

RESEARCH shows chiropractic care is safe and effective

Numerous studies have shown that chiropractic treatment is both safe and effective.

For acute and chronic pain

"Patients with chronic low-back pain treated by chiropractors showed greater improvement and satisfaction at one month than patients treated by family physicians. Satisfaction scores were higher for chiropractic patients. A higher proportion of chiropractic patients (56% vs. 13%) reported that their low-back pain was better or much better, whereas nearly one-third of medical patients reported their low-back pain was worse or much worse." — *Nyiendo et al (2000), Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics*

In a randomized, controlled trial, 183 patients with neck pain were randomly allocated to manual therapy (spinal mobilization), physiotherapy (mainly exercise), or general-practitioner care (counseling, education and drugs) in a 52-week study. The clinical outcome measures showed that manual therapy resulted in faster recovery than physiotherapy and general practitioner care. Moreover, total costs of the manual therapy-treated patients were about one-third of the costs of physiotherapy or general practitioner care. — *Korthals-de Bos et al (2003), British Medical Journal*

In comparison to other treatment alternatives

"Acute and chronic chiropractic patients experienced better outcomes in pain, functional disability and patient satisfaction; clinically important differences in pain and disability improvement were found for chronic patients." — *Haas et al (2005), Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics*

"In our randomized, controlled trial, we compared the effectiveness of manual therapy, physical therapy, and continued care by a general practitioner in patients with nonspecific neck pain. The success rate at seven weeks was twice as high for the manual-therapy group (68.3%) as for the continued-care group (general practitioner). Manual therapy scored better than physical therapy on all outcome measures. Patients receiving manual therapy had fewer absences from work than patients receiving physical therapy or continued care, and manual therapy and physical therapy each resulted in statistically significant less analgesic use than continued care." — *Hoving et al (2002), Annals of Internal Medicine*

For headaches

"Cervical-spine manipulation was associated with significant improvement in headache outcomes in trials involving patients with neck pain and/or neck dysfunction and headache." — *Duke Evidence Report, McCrory, Penzlen, Hasselblad, Gray (2001)*

"The results of this study show that spinal manipulative is an effective treatment for tension headaches... Four weeks after cessation of treatment... the patients who received spinal manipulation experienced a sustained therapeutic benefit in all major outcomes in contrast to the patients that received amitriptyline therapy, who reverted to baseline values." — *Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics, Boline et al. (1995)* ■

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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EVENTS are all about making connections

Ankeny Chamber SummerFest weekend has come and gone, but the memories made will last a lifetime. It is so fulfilling to see connections being made with old and new friends, businesses being seen for the first time by the community and the enjoyment of the young people at Family Fun Night. That is what Ankeny Chamber SummerFest is all about. The Ankeny Chamber is built on making connections and showing off our business community.



Ankeny is a supportive community, and I need to thank the people who made Ankeny Chamber SummerFest happen. I first want to thank all our sponsors. Thank you to Karl Chevrolet, our presenting sponsor, and our platinum sponsor, City of Ankeny. Our sponsors made this three-day festival possible, from working at a booth, volunteering or providing financial support for our event. Next, we have our volunteers and, to say we couldn't do this event without our volunteers, is an understatement. They worked countless hours placing wristbands, serving beer, filling water stations, and all the "other duties as assigned." We appreciate everything they do for our event. Now, for the biggest thank you. This goes to the Ankeny Chamber staff. I want to thank each of them for the countless hours they put in to make this event successful. The blood, sweat and tears (laughter, too) they put in was amazing, and I am so proud of each one of them.

Making connections is exactly what our August events are all about. On Aug. 6, we will be hosting our annual Mentoring for Women event, with eight fabulous women who will share their stories in a roundtable setting. Our featured speaker is Amanda Goodman from Faith & Four-Letter Words. Get your tickets now before we sell out.

On Aug. 29, the Minority Owned Business Summit will be held at the FFA Enrichment Center starting at 8 a.m. Our theme this year is Supercharging Growth and Opportunity in Your Business. Together, let's build a stronger, more inclusive business community.

Don't forget our Corks & Caps: Ankeny's Wine, Craft Beer & Spirits Festival happening in Uptown Ankeny at the Ankeny Market & Pavilion on Sunday, Sept. 15; our infamous Witches Night Out on Thursday, Oct. 24; and, to end our year, we invite you to join us on Thursday, Nov. 7 at the FFA Enrichment Center for the return of Discover Ankeny. Enjoy food and beverage sampling, giveaways, discounts and family-friendly activities from a variety of local Ankeny Chamber businesses. Feel free to tune in each week for a new episode of Chamber Chat with Melisa, a podcast featuring our members while listening to their experiences of living, working and playing in Ankeny.

For more information about Ankeny Chamber events, visit our website at Ankeny.org. ■

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

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OUT & ABOUT

GROUND Breaking

The groundbreaking for Hyper Energy Bar, 1101 S. Ankeny Blvd., was held July 2.



The groundbreaking for Hyper Energy Bar, 1101 S. Ankeny Blvd., was held July 2.



Brent Lindquist and James Van Diest



Lanna Finch and Crystal Wright



Jamie Anderson and Aaron Burns



Allie Mains, Nicole Strom and Jessica Hance



Mark Holm and Cat Wood



Izzy Lichtenberger, Brynn Miracle and Juliana Keaty



Jeff Daniel and Joe Bethel



Eric Shiver, Cat Wood, Andrezza Eslick (in the window), Chis Whalen, Izabella Whalen, Izzy Lichtenberger, Jessica Hance and Juliana Keaty.

OUT & ABOUT



A ribbon cutting was held for Realty ONE Group Impact, 617 S.W. Third St., No. 101, in Uptown Ankeny on May 13.



Megan Mack and Megan Churchill at the ribbon cutting for Realty ONE Group Impact on May 13.



Tammy Sparks and Dane Eischeid at the ribbon cutting for Realty ONE Group Impact on May 13.



Ann Wright and Laura Murphy at the ribbon cutting for Realty ONE Group Impact on May 13.



Jeff and Angela Erickson and Robb Spearman at the ribbon cutting for Realty ONE Group Impact on May 13.



Sierra McGinnis and Josh Craighead at Lattes and Leads at On With Life, Inc. on June 25.



Colin Panzi, Deborah Green, Melisa Cox and Michael Hidder at Lattes and Leads at On With Life, Inc. on June 25.



Andrea Coles, Wendy Wilson-Rice and Nicole Strom at Lattes and Leads at On With Life, Inc. on June 25.



Abby Bogaards and Madison Rollefson at Lattes and Leads at On With Life, Inc. on June 25.



Karen Roa, Kayla Deighan and Joanne Friedman at Lattes and Leads at On With Life, Inc. on June 25.



Sara Wilson, Sarah Bacehowski, Tom Friedman, Jean Shelton and Pat Stilwill at Lattes and Leads at On With Life, Inc. on June 25.



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A man with a beard and short hair, wearing a pink t-shirt and blue jeans, is focused on measuring a wooden beam with a green tape measure. He is in a construction site with wooden framing visible in the background. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

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