

WAUKEE

JULY 2024

Living

MAGAZINE

YARDS WITH

personality

Residents share how their
landscaping choices
reflect their style.

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OUT AND ABOUT

Cellentani Caprese pasta salad
RECIPE

Ronald McDonald house a home away from home
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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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YARDS WITH

personality

Residents share how their landscaping choices reflect their style.

By Jackie Wilson

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.

Rob Brookhart relaxes at his pond in the backyard of his Waukee home. Photo by Jackie Wilson

FEATURE

Pond, rocks hidden in backyard

When Rob Brookhart wants to cool off on a hot day, he dips his toes in a cool pond. He doesn't need to go far to get there. He simply opens his back patio door, walks about 20 feet to his backyard pond in Waukee and removes his shoes before testing the waters.

The backyard pond was created shortly after Brookhart moved to his new neighborhood in Waukee. He had wanted a place with a pond, and since the yard was void of landscaping, he had room to add one. He found inspiration when he attended a pond tour sponsored by Just Add Water.

Originally, he was going to install the pond in a natural berm in his backyard. However, the water feature experts at Just Add Water persuaded him to change it up.

"They told me if I put it back there, it's for my neighbors to enjoy — and not me," he recalls.

Taking their advice, he put the pond and waterfall feature outside of his bedroom instead.



Two waterfalls accent Rob Brookhart's pond. Photo by Jackie Wilson

"I hear the sound of water at night when I go to sleep," he explains. Part of his pond looks like Mickey Mouse ears. Brookhart is a Mickey Mouse fan, and his home contains memorabilia and souvenirs from multiple visits to Disney World.

"Now, this is my Mickey Mouse pants pond," he laughs.

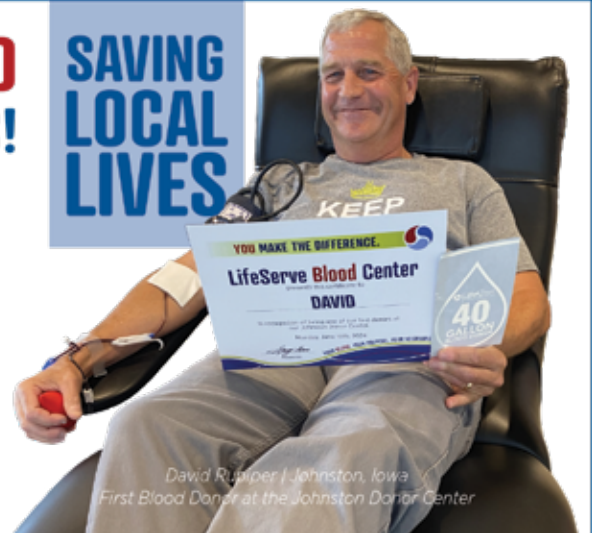
His "must haves" for his pond were steppingstones so he could walk

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across it and a flat surface to sit on to put his feet in the pond.

The pond features water lilies, koi fish and feeder goldfish. When the pond was installed, natural caves were put in for the fish to hide from predators. When they cleaned out the pond, they found fish in the cave. One goldfish is simply named Spot after the orange spot on top of his head.

"I had a goldfish bowl when I was a kid, and I always wanted a pond, but I never got one."

Brookhart was disappointed when a blue heron swooped down and ate his fish. He researched and discovered that birds won't bother the pond if there is another bird there. So, he set up several fake birds and storks to trick the hunting birds.

The backyard and patio area contain whimsical and colorful metal sculptures and décor.

"I really like to buy local art and support artists," he says, pointing out various metal works.

His seating options vary, with two patios overlooking the pond. The upper patio includes a dining set and grill, while the lower level

offers casual seating. Both areas include shade from huge umbrellas in the summer; if he wants a sunny spot, he simply folds up the umbrella.

Rainwater running from his house is captured and used in his waterfall. A filtration system and frequent cleaning rid the pond of scum and debris.

Because of the ecosystem he's created, dragonflies often land on the plants. Birds nest close by.

"Last year, I had 38 monarch caterpillars," he recalls.

In the evening, he can change the color of the lights with an app on his phone. The privacy with his trees and landscape is important.

"I wanted privacy without a fence. One of my neighbors was surprised I had a waterfall as they never saw it," he says.

This summer, his pond will be featured in a pond and water feature tour by Just Add Water for Waukee and West Des Moines homes.

Brookhart frequently hosts parties, where guests tiptoe on pond rocks and hang out next to the calming waterfall.

"It's my happy spot," he reflects.

A thousand-plus plants

Kerri Patton's backyard in Waukee is a colorful oasis of more than 1,000 plants, dozens of outdoor lawn décor and vegetable and fruit beds, all among a winding, gravel park-like path.

When Patton and her husband, Casey, moved into their home in Waukee in 2020, she was eager to get a garden planted. The only plant in their 1.5-acres of grass was a lilac bush.

She's tended a garden since she was a young adult living in Missouri. When she moved to West Des Moines, her garden expanded. Before long, she ran out of room and desired a larger home, as well as a bigger backyard suitable for gardening. She found that in her current home in Waukee.

The following spring, Patton went to work. Casey ripped up 3,500 square feet of sod and the lilac bush. She sketched out a plan, and Casey, an engineer, helped execute it. Then she began planting.

Her favorite signature plants are her rose bushes.

"I'm a big rose gal. My favorite is David Austin roses. They are so pretty and interesting



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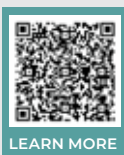
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A path winds through Kerri Patton's Waukee yard. Photo by Jackie Wilson

to look at," she says.

Roses are also the neediest plant in her backyard, requiring much care. One secret is using banana peels soaked in water plus Epsom salts three times a year. She's lost track of how many rose bushes she has.

"Last time I counted, it was 100," she says. "It's probably up to 120."

Her hydrangeas are also a favorite.

"There's so many kinds and varieties — all the way from a black and a red one. They change from green to white to pink," she says.

Patton estimates she's planted more than 1,000 plants in her front and backyard. She's planted various garden and vegetable plants. A shade — or moonlight — garden in the front includes numerous hostas.

The first year, she moved items around frequently, depending on the sun throughout the day. There's a lot of trial and error as to what grows best, she says. As her friends know, she has a huge garden, and she gets frequent questions about what to do with plant problems.

One of her latest backyard additions is a path leading to her large vegetable garden. Casey recently lined the path with pea gravel. A pergola provides a place for vine plants.

Patton is supportive of providing an ecosystem. In her backyard, she views deer, fox and snapping turtles. She has hummingbirds, bees, dragon flies, butterflies and birds.

"I try not to use chemicals. My motto is, 'Build it, and they (the animals and the insects) will come,' " she says. "I don't like to use Round-Up. I pull weeds all the time. Rain barrels collect water runoff."



Kerri Patton's Waukee yard has more than 100 rose bushes and at least 1,000 plants. Photo by Jackie Wilson

Since she is busy with a full-time nursing career, Patton spends many nights and weekends tending the garden.

"This is my exercise. I read about people who live the longest all have gardening in common."

Many statues, bird feeders and lawn ornaments decorate and dot the property. Patton discovered a place in Kansas City and makes the yearly trek to purchase at least one new statue for her backyard.

She cherishes time spent on one of her two patios, listening to music and enjoying nature.

"For me, it's like my therapy. I can work on stuff out here," she reflects.

Patton says gardening mirrors life, teaching valuable lessons.

"Not everything goes your way. Things die. It's unexpected, and you can't control it," she explains. "There's lots of life lessons in the garden." ■

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Participants of all ages can mark off boxes by completing various activities — some even fit into the Summer Challenge theme, "Adventure Begins at Your Library!"

Bingo activities include: read a historical book, visit a city park, go on the Storywalk on the Heart of the Warrior Trail, make a craft and use tutorials on Creativebug, watch an action or adventure movie or TV show, and more.

Remember to take the Library (and Bonus Bingo) on your final summer vacations this August. You'll have access to eBooks, audiobooks, DIY craft videos, language learning and more wherever you are.

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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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Proving a disability claim can be a long process,

and it is not unusual for someone to be denied benefits at several different hearing levels. Once a client is found disabled and receives benefits, however, that is not the end. The case can still be reviewed by the government.

The Social Security Administration (SSA) periodically reviews disability cases to determine if the individual is still disabled. This is called a Continuing Disability Review (CDR). Most cases are reviewed every three years, but the length of time between a finding of disability and a CDR depends on such



factors as the type of medical condition and whether improvement is expected. Because the standards for disability are different for children and adults, a review will also be done when a disabled child turns 18.

The Social Security sends forms asking the benefit recipient to describe the medical condition and submit a list of medical providers. SSA will request medical records from those physicians, therapists and counselors. If there aren't enough records to make a decision, the individual might be ordered to attend a consultative examination with a doctor chosen by Social Security.

SSA will look at whether there has been medical improvement of the impairments, if the improvement is related to the ability to work, and if the individual can now engage in substantial gainful work activity. Factors that will be considered include work or school activity and a showing of improvement

documented in the medical records. Negative factors include no history of receiving medical treatment, the failure to follow a doctor's recommendations or substance abuse.

If Social Security determines that a person is no longer disabled, SSA will send a notice that the benefits will end. The individual will also receive notice of the right to appeal within 60 days. For benefits to continue while appealing the decision, the individual must file an appeal within 15 days from the date of the notice terminating benefits.

An attorney experienced in Social Security Disability law can help navigate the issues and problems presented by a Continuing Disability Review. Your benefits don't have to end. ■

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

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Tasks, such as making meals and traveling to appointments, takes valuable time away from being with loved ones.

The Ronald McDonald House provides a respite for families in these situations. In Des Moines, one Ronald McDonald House is located near Blank Children's Hospital and has 18 rooms. A second location with 17 rooms is on the fourth floor of MercyOne Hospital.

Each room includes two beds, similar to a hotel room. The homes include a play room, laundry, living area and a community kitchen, where meals are served free of charge for families with kids at either hospital.

A variety of volunteers plan, purchase, prepare and serve meals. They also help clean up and operate the house.

Bernadette Dadds of Waukee joined the Ronald McDonald House team as a human services intern and was hired in 2022. Along with



Travis Gaule, Edward Jones, presents the Neighbor Spotlight certificate to Bernadette Dadds, who accepts on behalf of Ronald McDonald House.

administrative duties, she coordinates events and works with volunteers who help in the home.

"I talk with families who check in the house. We want to make their stay as smooth as possible," she says.

Volunteers come in on a regular basis for meal prep and clean up.

"We have many bakers who bake items. We have teenagers who do silver cord events for school," she says.

The Ronald McDonald House requires a referral from either hospital. They provide a home away from home for parents with any kids from newborn to age 21 for any medical issues, including premature babies and kids receiving cancer treatments.

The house is important, as it allows families to stay together.

"Children heal faster knowing mom and dad are just steps away," Dadds says.

Dadds says she is passionate about the organization.

"Our mission keeps families close. We get a lot of appreciation and thanks. It warms your heart," she says. "It's a job, but I'm helping make a huge impact on people's lives."

Dadds encourages volunteers to share their talents for cooking and baking, making door decorations, handyman services, transportation and more. Folks can donate food and funds. She stresses it can be a one-time effort.

"A little goes a long way. Anyone is welcome — whatever works for you," she suggests. "We can't run the home without our volunteers."

For more information on volunteering, visit www.rmhdsmoines.org. ■

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SENIOR

By Jay Heaton

MAINTAINING your health as you age: eating healthy

As we get older, taking care of our bodies through healthy eating becomes incredibly important, especially for those aged 55 and above. Choosing the right foods can have several health benefits. First, it lowers the chances of developing serious health issues like heart disease, diabetes and certain cancers. A balanced diet also helps maintain a healthy weight and keeps our bodies strong, which is essential for avoiding problems related to being overweight and for overall health.



Eating well is crucial for bone health, too. Ensuring enough calcium and vitamin D intake helps keep our bones strong, reducing the risk of osteoporosis and fractures. Additionally, a nutritious diet supports brain health. Nutrients like omega-3 fatty acids and antioxidants help maintain brain function, potentially lowering the risk of dementia.

A healthy diet also boosts our energy levels, keeps our digestive system running smoothly, and strengthens our immune system, making it easier to fight off illnesses.

In conclusion, by making a conscious effort to eat plenty of nutritious foods that meet our needs as we age, we're not just taking care of our health; we're setting ourselves up for a happier, more vibrant life. Eating well is a simple yet powerful way to enhance our quality of life. ■

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

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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With thousands of students heading back to school on August 23, residents, visitors, parents and students should allow extra time for travel as we all adjust to new schedules and traffic patterns. Watch carefully near crossings and entries to parking lots or drop-off points as many students will walk, bike and scooter to school. Take care to avoid blocking intersections if traffic is advancing slowly at peak times.

"Please do not park in the designated drop-off areas or in the roadway. Complete drop-off or pick-up in designated areas or park and walk your child in if that's an option at your

school," said Waukee Police Chief Chad McCluskey. "We run into dangerous back-up and illegal passing problems when people park or linger too long."

Chief McCluskey also notes that it is essential to never block the entrances to school parking lots or crosswalks in roundabouts, even momentarily. Emergency vehicles need to have access to the schools at all times. Thanks for your patience and close attention to your surroundings as you travel through Waukee during the first couple weeks of school.

Wishing you a safe and enjoyable school year!

Sign Up for Emergency Notifications

Waukee is changing from Nixle to Alert Iowa for emergency notifications for things like water main breaks or snow emergency parking bans. In addition, you can get severe weather alerts. Head to [Waukee.org/Connect](https://www.waukee.org/Connect) for the link to sign up for the types of notifications you want.



Dates to Know

Bingo

Friday, August 2, 1 p.m.
Community Center

City Council Meetings

August 5 and 19 at 5:30 p.m.
City Hall and Zoom



Bonus Bingo at the Library

Do you miss the fun of the Summer Challenge? Stop by the Library and get a Bonus Bingo sheet to turn in for an extra prize by August 22. All ages are welcome to participate. While you are there, check out the Waukee Community Tiny Art Show in the gallery room next to the Coal Mine Museum. Seniors are invited to the Senior Tech Class: Introduction to Smartphones on August 8 at 10 a.m. Register at WaukeePublicLibrary.org.



Register for Fall & Winter Programs

Registration for Fall and Winter programs with Waukee Parks & Recreation will open August 30 at 8 a.m. Youth basketball, adult indoor volleyball, art classes, karate, group meal planning and prep parties, and more will entertain and educate people of all ages. Visit Waukee.org/ParksandRec for more details on programs, classes and events.



Save the Date for Public Safety Day

The Waukee Police and Fire Departments will host the annual Public Safety Day on Tuesday, August 6 from 5-7:30 p.m. Come to the Waukee Public Safety Building, 1300 SE L.A. Grant Pkwy., to meet some of our officers, firefighters, paramedics and public safety staff. Explore safety vehicles, enjoy free food, complete a scavenger hunt, jump on inflatables and other fun activities for the whole family.



Odd or Even: Choosing the Right Day to Water

Thanks for being water wise and limiting irrigation this year as we battle high nitrate levels. If you must water your lawn, please follow the odd-even schedule to prevent strain on Waukee's water supply. If you have automated sprinklers, check your settings to make sure they match the recommended schedule and be sure to turn them off on days it rains.



- If your house number ends in an **ODD number**: water on Tuesdays, Thursdays and/or Saturdays
- House numbers ending in **EVEN numbers**: water on Sundays, Wednesdays and/or Fridays

Avoid watering between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., which are the hottest hours of the day. More water will make it to your grass or garden instead of being lost to evaporation.

Thank You for a Great Independence Day Celebration!

Waukee Parks & Recreation thanks the more than 80 businesses, organizations, candidates and City departments that participated in the annual parade and all the community members who came out to enjoy the festive event. In addition, thanks to the partners who helped bring so many games, treats and fun to enjoy during the celebration. See you next year!



Movies in the Park

"Kung Fu Panda 4"
Friday, August 9, 8:45 p.m.
Centennial Park

Waukee Area Seniors and Police (WASP)

Wednesday, August 28, 9 a.m.
Community Center

Waukee Farmers Market

Wednesdays, 4-7 p.m.
Downtown Triangle

WACS earns Charity Navigator recognition

In less than a month, Waukee Area Christian Services (WACS) has received a second national recognition. Charity Navigator has given the Dallas County non-profit organization a Four-Star Rating. This rating designates Waukee Area Christian Services as having an official “Give with Confidence” status, indicating the organization is using its donations effectively based on Charity Navigator’s criteria.

Charity Navigator is America’s largest and most-utilized independent charity evaluator. Since 2001, the organization has been an unbiased and trusted source of information for more than 11 million donors annually.

“We are delighted to provide Waukee Area Christian Services with third-party accreditation that validates their operational excellence,” said Michael Thatcher, president and CEO of Charity Navigator. “The Four-Star Rating is the highest possible rating an organization can achieve. We are eager to see the good work that WACS is able to accomplish in the years ahead.”

Last month, the national Great Nonprofits organization designated Waukee Area Christian Services a top-rated nonprofit.

Waukee Area Christian Services has served Dallas County since

2005. Its mission is to serve people’s immediate needs and create connections that encourage lifelong wellness.

On a typical day, the nonprofit provides:

- 200 individuals with food from the Anytime Rescued Food Room
 - 50 individuals with monthly staples from a food pantry
 - 75 pounds of fresh produce from an onsite garden
 - 130 clothing items for clients’ children

In addition, on a typical day, WACS experiences eight visitors to its Free Medical Clinic and at least two families receive one-on-one support.

On a typical day, it takes 25 volunteers to make all these services available.

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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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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EVENTS IN THE AREA

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

Be sure to check for cancellations.

Farmers Market

Wednesdays through Sept. 25, 4-7 p.m.

Triangle Park, Ashworth Drive and Sixth Street

Enjoy this open-air market that features farm-fresh fruits and vegetables, flowers and plants, prepared foods, crafts and more. Live music is featured each week. You will love the small-town feel you get being able to really get to know the vendors you buy from and build relationships that you can enjoy week to week.

Stories in the Park

Tuesdays, Aug. 6, 13, 20 and 27, 10-10:30 a.m.

Windfield Open Air Shelter, 114 Windfield Parkway, Waukee

Get outside and enjoy around 25 minutes of songs and stories in the park. For kids 0-5 years old and their caregivers. Registration not required.

Fun Day Trip for Seniors

Wauke Park and Recreation has a fun day trip planned for seniors to get together to explore and have some fun. Nothing Compares to the Iowa State Fair Day Trip is 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 Wauke Community Center. Register by Aug. 5 at Wauke.org/Registration.



Bingo

Sundays, 3-6 p.m.

Kenny's Garage, 605 Ashworth Drive, Wauke

Enjoy Bingo Sunday evenings at Kenny's Garage.

Live Music

Wednesdays, 6-9 p.m.

Mickey's Irish Pub, 50 S.E. Laurel St., Wauke

Enjoy live music: July 31 - David Watson; Aug. 7 - Dustin Farrow; Aug. 14 - Sean Sullivan; Aug. 21 - Tony Bohenkamp; Aug. 28 - TBA; Sept. 4 - Spam Band; Sept. 11 - David Watson; Sept. 18 - Kevin Lindgren; Sept. 25 - Brian Allen.

Public Safety Day

Tuesday, Aug. 6, 5-7:30 p.m.

Wauke Public Safety Building, 1300 S.E. L.A. Grant Parkway

Are you looking for a fantastic community event that brings together residents of all ages for an evening of learning and entertainment? Join us at Wauke Public Safety Day. Explore the public safety vehicles, enjoy fun activities for the whole family and eat some delicious free food and sweet treats, courtesy of generous sponsors. Whether you're a long-time resident or new to the area, this event is the perfect opportunity to connect with your fellow community members and celebrate the dedicated individuals who protect and serve us every day.

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EVENTS IN THE AREA

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Be sure to check for cancellations.



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.

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: 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 a.m. 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 - East Village

Friday, July 26, 5-9 p.m.

East Village, E. Locust St., Des Moines

CITYVIEW's traveling cocktail party is back in East Village. 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 summerstirs.dmcityview.com. ■

Hinterland Music Festival

Aug. 2-4

Avenue of the Saints Amphitheatre, 3357 St. Charles Road, St. Charles
www.hinterlandiowa.com

Just a half hour outside of Des Moines is the state's largest music festival that continues to draw nationally renowned names to the small city of St. Charles. More than 20 musical acts will take the main stage and entertain travelers, campers and music lovers alike. Headliners: Aug. 2: Hozier; Aug. 3: Vampire Weekend; Aug. 4: Noah Kahan.



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BARRETT embarks on music and arts tour of Brazil



Luther College Jazz Orchestra

Luther College student Cole Barrett, a graduate of Waukee schools, traveled through Brazil May 20 – June 5 as part of Jazz Orchestra's music tour, where the group performed concerts and participated in workshops in the country with prominent musicians, dancers and artists.

"The trip to Brazil with the Jazz Orchestra was an excellent conclusion to my four years at Luther. I would not have wanted to end my time at Luther with anyone but the Jazz Orchestra," Barrett says.

Jazz Orchestra tours abroad every four years, and this will be the third time the ensemble has traveled through Brazil. The ensemble last toured Brazil in 2016. The international tours are an opportunity for Luther students to experience the diversity of music throughout the world.

"In addition to concerts and service projects, we took classes from prominent Brazilian musicians and dancers, got to know the cities of Salvador, São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, while enjoying their exceptional culinary arts and friendly people," said Tony Guzmán, director of Jazz Orchestra.

During the trip, Jazz Orchestra performed with students at the Tatuí Conservatory of Music in São Paulo, the city's largest music conservatory. As part of a service project in the city, they led a workshop at Santa Marcelina University, another music conservatory.

Before leaving São Paulo, students had the opportunity to take a ballroom dance workshop from professional dancers. In Rio de Janeiro, Luther students took a drumming workshop. The ensemble also performed a concert in the city's botanical gardens.

"Brazil is a country with tremendous diversity in its nature and people, showcasing a strong cultural and economic development. All jazz musicians admire and perform Brazilian music, from samba and bossa nova, to baião and frevo," Guzmán said. "We brought the spirit of Luther College and the United States to share our music cultures with the people of Brazil and, at the same time, learn from their impressive music traditions."

Guzmán received his bachelor's degree in music education in 1990 from Luther and holds a Ph.D. in music education, a certificate in pedagogy of music theory and a master's degree in music education from Florida State University. An active arranger, Guzmán is known for his choral arrangements of Caribbean and Latin American music, some of which are published by Boosey & Hawkes and Oxford University Press. ■

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WELLNESS

By Amanda Kramme

HAVE YOU heard of ozone therapy?

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Information provided by Amanda Kramme, BSN, CFMP, Certified Ozone Specialist, Vivid Wellness Lounge, 1980 N.W. 94th St., Suite E/F, Clive, Livin-Vivid.com 515-415-1550



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HEALTH

By Dr. Jason Brown

GET BACK to fresh breath

Have you ever been self-conscious about having bad breath? There are many factors that can cause halitosis, or bad breath. The good news is, the majority of these factors can be fixed so you can get back to having fresh breath.

Lack of proper oral hygiene is one of the main factors that can lead to having bad breath. Brushing twice a day and flossing regularly keeps teeth clean of food particles and bacteria that leads to sulfur production causing bad odor. Certain medical conditions like gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) or medications that cause dry mouth have led to breath changes. Keeping hydrated is an important way to not only be healthy but prevent odor production in the mouth. Especially during these hot summer months, drinking plenty of water is the best way to keep your body and mouth healthy.

Smoking or using chewing tobacco can lead to bad breath. The nicotine in the products can also stain teeth and leave a film on the surface of the tongue, trapping foul odor. Tongue brushing is an important way to remove bacteria in the deeper grooves of the tongue.

Sometimes adjusting your diet that includes ingredients like garlic and onions can help reduce bad breath. Brushing teeth after meals and chewing sugarless gum can help. Maintain regular dental checkups. If it has been more than six months since your last cleaning or checkup, see your dentist. ■

Information provided by Dr. Jason Brown DDS, Timberline Family Dental, 515-644-2264, 2153 S.E. LA Grant Parkway, Waukees.



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DSM Breakerz

Break dance club performs around metro.

In Waukee, young boys are doing flips, slides, footwork and top rock to a familiar musical beat.

These dance moves are performed by a break dance group, the DSM Breakerz. The group performs and offers classes in Waukee and the Des Moines metro.

Tammra Swartwood of Waukee established DSM Breakerz as a nonprofit in 2022. She had a previous studio in 2020; however, studio costs proved too high.

The classes are low cost and accessible to all students.

"We offer opportunities for kids to participate, especially those who suffer cost barriers to participating in sports," she says. "Many dance clubs or sports have registration fees, uniform and recital fees. That's not what I'm running."

Classes take place at Swartwood's Waukee home, the Valley Junction Community Center in West Des Moines and Hope+Elim near Drake University. Currently about 25 kids participate at all the locations.

Tammra grew up in a dance community and drill team in the Des Moines area. Her son, Micah, is her inspiration for offering the classes. He took dance classes, and Tammra recognized his talent and wanted to nurture his abilities in an encouraging environment.

Seasoned break dance instructors show the moves and mentor young kids. The DSM Breakerz performs locally at events, such as the Iowa State Fair and Valley Junction Farmers Market. They were recently featured on a PBS television special.



Tammra and Micah Swartwood in their home in Waukee. Photo by Jackie Wilson



Micah Swartwood, 10, breakdances at his home studio in Waukee. Photo by Jackie Wilson

Some team members travel to break dance competitions to follow an Olympic path. Break dance is a new sport making its debut in the Paris 2024 Olympics.

"Micah has competed on the Olympic level with Team USA. He's been getting better each time," she says.

The DSM Breakerz allows kids to tap into their own strengths and talents by contributing to the choreography. Breakdancing is made up of four elements: hip hop, DJ, master of ceremony, hype man and graffiti or street art. She says Micah is a hype man with a natural talent and is not afraid of crowds.

"He's the one who gets the group going," she says.

She says inclusivity is vital. She adopted Micah from Taiwan and says it's important to expose him to diversity.

"Building his and the other students' confidence is so rewarding," she says. "We're teaching skills they'll use later in life."

Tammra says breakdancing gets the "party going."

"It's exciting, and it's always a fun atmosphere. You can't help but smile," she says.

Since DSM Breakerz is a nonprofit, the group seeks funds for transportation, training, instructors, competitions and to keep the tuition low. For sponsorship opportunities, lessons or more information, visit www.dsmbreakerz.org. ■



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RECIPE

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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GOLF Outing

The Waukee Chamber of Commerce Annual Golf Outing was June 13 at Beaver Creek Golf Course.



Rob Grove and Brad Deets



Alli Martin and Brandon Martin



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The First Official oven in recorded history was built in 1490, in France and made with brick and tile.



<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=113710725>

Upright Freezers
6 cu ft - 20 cu ft

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