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801 Chop House, the brainchild of restaurateur Jimmy Lynch, is still the one.

## HOBBIES

Kali Spaulding's strict diet and workout schedule provided discipline for natural bodybuilding.

## BUSINESS FEATURE

Local businesses work to provide customer service through new technology.

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JULY 2024

# CITYVIEW


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CITYVIEW'S  
2024 EAST VILLAGE  
Summer STIR

JULY 26  
5-9 P.M.

DES MOINES' HISTORIC EAST VILLAGE



A veritable hall of fame for people and food institutions that give our city and state a singular quality and identity

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# FROM THE PUBLISHER

## Iowa's venerable, living food pioneers

We ask for opinions from you, our readers, quite frequently. We do so with our one and only Best of Des Moines poll, our Ultimate Places surveys and our favorite drinks questionnaires. And you vote in numbers that continue to astonish us. We appreciate your loyalties to your beloved establishments, people, events and brands.

We are also not shy about expressing our own opinions, and we do so each month in some capacity. This month, we proudly share our choices for our 2024 CHOICE awards, which was created originally to recognize Iowa's venerable, living food pioneers. Our food critic, Jim Duncan, chooses the honorees, and we induct them into our hall of fame for people and institutions that bestow a singular quality and identity on our city and our state. Look to the feature story to learn who this year's honorees are.

## Comedy, action and romance

If you haven't been to a movie theater in a while, now is the time. Our film critic, David Rowley, says Richard Linklater's "Hit Man" is a must-watch for fans of quirky, well-written comedies. That defines me and, likely, many of you. Rowley says the film transitions seamlessly between comedy and drama, with an unexpected twist halfway through that revitalizes the plot and will keep us engaged. Be sure to check out his review in this issue.

## Elk and bison

Elk and bison are not exactly pets. In fact, they are not pets at all. But they are fascinating animals, and you can see a herd of them at Jester Park near Granger. If you have not visited the Elk and Bison Educational Plaza, then you should make the trip. If you have visited, you should make another trip. Jackie Wilson shares her experience in this month's People and Pets.

## Play ball!

How many youth sports complexes does one area need? Or, maybe more importantly, how many can survive? Those involved in the development of these complexes paint a rosy picture, and, so far, so good. Cyote Williams delves into the subject and provides insight into the future of youth sports complexes in the metro.

## Customer service and technology

With all the talk about AI, one has to wonder how many jobs will potentially be impacted and how soon small businesses will jump on the technology bandwagon. Colson Thayer shares what he learned by talking with several central Iowa business owners and operators who are using technology to provide customer service while simultaneously cutting costs. See the story in this month's business feature.

As always, I thank you for reading. ■

**Shane Goodman**  
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PHOTOS BY SARAH RIPPERGER



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Second row: Ryan Hammel, Henry Kauffman, Chris Pruisner, Maverick Pruisner, Ricky Hathaway, Chance Hoelting, Charlie Fuller, Tanner Saltzman, Ron Macken, Derek Mills, Alia Hendricks, Violet Schimmels, Galen Thornburg

Not pictured: Kendall McKay, Gigi Benitez, Mercury Fuhs, Gabrielle Stump

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CITYVIEW

JULY 2024



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Ask CITYVIEW anything by emailing [editor@dmcityview.com](mailto:editor@dmcityview.com).

**Q. What is the cable and pulley system at the 63rd Street and Grand Avenue intersection used for?**

**A.** CITYVIEW reached out to the city of Des Moines for an explanation and received this response from Communications Specialist Devin Perry.

"63rd Street is the dividing road (give or take a bit of land along the corridor) between the cities of Des Moines and West Des Moines. The 'cables and pulley structures' are maintained and operated by West Des Moines," Perry said. "This is a flood protection system for the river that goes through the area. It raises and lowers barriers if needed when the river levels rise to flood stages. Rarely are they used, and they underwent routine maintenance and repairs last summer, which the city of Des Moines and West Des Moines coordinated on."

**Q. What is the construction at the Des Moines International Airport?**

**A.** There has been much talk about construction plans at the Des Moines International Airport, which broke ground last October to build a new terminal. While, yes, there is the seemingly never-ending construction occurring on Fleur Drive in front of the airport, there are more projects going on once you turn into the airport.

Kayla Kovarna, deputy director of communications and air service development, told us, "The Des Moines Airport Authority has multiple construction projects that are ongoing here at the airport. The only one that currently impacts the passenger is the parking garage; however, the roadway is open to the terminal, and there is a temporary entrance into the parking garage. The parking garage is expected to open in March 2025."

As for the other construction projects that are happening at the airport that have not affected passengers?

"A few projects have already been completed this spring, including relocating several jet bridges to keep them operational during the construction of the new terminal. Passengers will notice that, during peak times, the holdrooms/gate areas will feel more crowded. That is because several airlines have upgraded aircraft, meaning more seats are flying out simultaneously. With more seats, it really challenges the existing terminal, which was built for a lower volume of individuals. So, for the next couple of years, passengers will likely feel the capacity constraints impacting DSM," Kovarna said.

For more information about the new terminal or parking garage, Kovarna suggests visiting [www.liftdsm.com](http://www.liftdsm.com).

**Q. Which industry creates the most revenue for Des Moines?**

**A.** The Des Moines Partnership's website lists several industries as key to Des Moines' revenue including manufacturing, ag innovation, data centers, logistics and technology. A quick look at [datadsmusa.com](http://datadsmusa.com) shows the largest employers by industry in the Des Moines metro as of 2023 are trade, transportation and utilities with 77,066 jobs; financial activities with 53,587 jobs; and professional and business services with 53,529 jobs. ■

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Letters are edited for space, spelling and clarity.

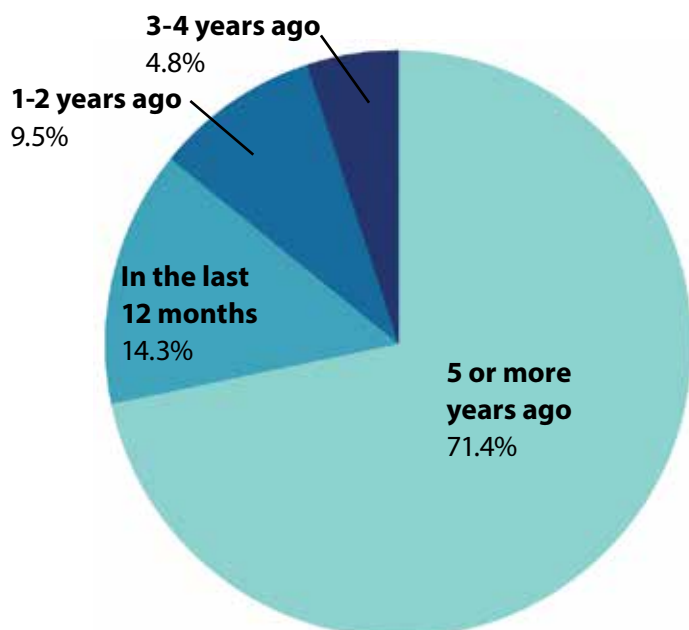
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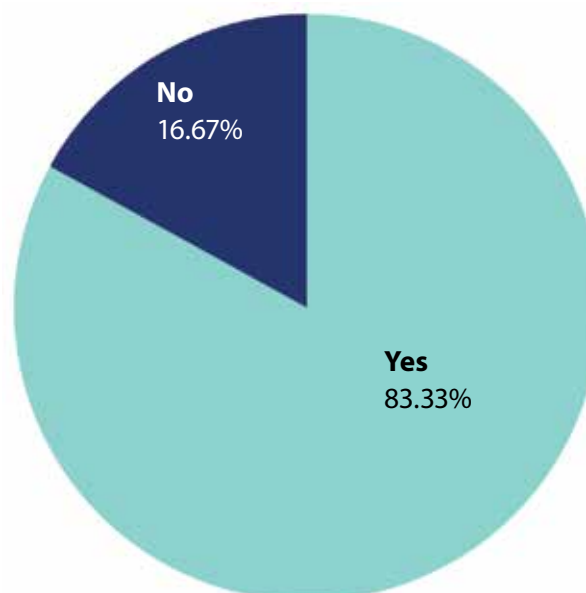
## POLL POSITION

Results from last month's polls at [www.dmcityview.com](http://www.dmcityview.com)

### When was the last time you went fishing?



### Have you ever personally seen a tornado funnel cloud?



## FACEBOOK COMMENTS



cityview magazine  
(comments unedited)

### CITYVIEW magazine: Where did you hang out as a teenager?

- Andy Winegar:** Downtown, scooping the loop, or various parking lots in the area
- Ray G Lakers:** Greenwood Park
- Cory Clevenger:** Around the keg?
- Tammy Stoll Schmitz:** Loop, MHM, Saylorville and Porky's
- Cherie Cole:** MacRae Park and the Lost Planet
- Ann Martineau Breier:** Teachout pool, Friskies, the loop
- Shelley Statler:** Southridge mall, friends houses, scooping loop, amazing times
- Stephanie Cleaver:** Skate East.
- Amy Wg:** Pinball wizard
- Jason Corbin:** Farley's Family Fun when it was on Euclid on the North side.
- Kim Huch Hanson:** Lucky Lady/Temptations/The Castle
- Maggie Montavon Brodeur:** The loop or Clearwater Beach or the mall, Saylorville
- Michelle Myers Caldwell:** In the look outs at Ewing Park.
- Gary Kuhlenbeck:** Frostop Drive-In.
- Codi Herrera:** Loco Joes, Lazer X, Merle Hay Mall, Pumpers
- Angie Hashman:** Frank's House of Rock
- Tony Munoz:** Badger creek
- Diane Nalani Gibb Lahodny:** Swanzy Park
- Ann Smith Williams:** Peggy's

### CITYVIEW magazine: What is the scariest movie you have ever seen?

- The Abandoned Iowa Project:** The Blair Witch Project. It hasn't aged well but at the time of it's release I, and many adults, believed there was truth to it.
- Mary Cee:** Original Texas chainsaw massacre in the 70's. The next day, someone was using a chainsaw next door. Not good for a kid!
- David Poppema:** The Exorcist. Ghost Story. The first Nightmare on Elm Street
- Beth Feilmeier:** The Ring! No way will I watch that again.
- Kristina Botts:** Hereditary or Sinister
- Brett Trout:** Audition
- Damon Alvarez:** My friends wedding video
- Brittanie Landsgard:** Hostel
- Ashley Fetters:** The grudge. Haven't seen a scary movie since.
- Susie Rider:** Dementia 13 from 1963. I was young when I saw it, and it scared the poopie out of me!
- Julie Luepke:** The Apparition
- Talbott Chris:** drag me to hell
- Rebecca Imus Cady:** Dead Calm
- Kevin Slimp:** The Others
- Joey Dursky:** The descent
- Kevin D. Hyberger:** Duel. It scared me to sleep.
- Ty Breese:** Deliverance.

## RETWEETS



(comments unedited)

- @mcdadstuff:** Apparently there is a bird fight club who holds their meetings outside my window at about 5am
- @RiotGrErin:** give it to me straight doc what can i do to be healthier besides changing my entire lifestyle.
- @alexlumaga:** please do not read the flags my wife flies over our house. they are full of lies, or at least lack important context
- @AlexShaneMoore:** Oh really? We'll see what the same 6 people who always agree with me think about that
- @ronnuu\_:** Snacks are like- Suggested Serving Size: 1/2 Fleeting Thought of Cookie Aroma
- @tom\_on\_here:** What's a random act of kindness you've done for a stranger recently? I helped a bunch of teens buy alcohol and cigarettes the other day
- @KimmyMonte:** me, drunk, into the remote: alexa, how do i charge my milk when it's at 2%?
- @AbbyHiggs:** Plants are like "I'll have a light lunch."
- @katefeetie:** entitled millennials are "quiet nourishing" – taking 20, even 30 minutes out of the middle of the work day to eat food. we interviewed 87 corporate bosses who hate it
- @benboven1:** "Don't you people have jobs?" — Me yelling at everyone for driving around on a Tuesday afternoon while I'm driving around on a Tuesday afternoon.
- @copymama:** My husband saw a rabbit in our yard eating grass and said "That would be like sitting in a field of french fries."
- @36\_chambuhz:** I was introduced to a baby recently by her parents; the mother told me "she doesn't do anything, or know anything" ■



## Live-streaming government meetings should be the norm

The optics of the decision by the Clarion-Goldfield-Dows School Board are terrible.

You don't often hear anyone extol the benefits of the COVID pandemic. But I did a few weeks ago — when I stood before the Storm Lake Kiwanis club and talked about government transparency in Iowa.

I did not wade into the debate over masks, social distancing or vaccinations. It was a polite audience, but I was not silly enough to needlessly venture onto that thin ice.

What I said about the pandemic was this: State and local governments embraced, even if grudgingly, the benefits of live-streaming their board meetings during the pandemic so the public could watch from wherever they were.

When COVID closed government buildings and shut down most in-person gatherings, Iowa's cities, counties, school districts and state government agencies purchased video cameras and other technology to make it possible for them to carry their meetings using Zoom, Facebook, YouTube or similar internet or smart phone applications.

The benefits of these "virtual" meetings were quickly apparent. Many people were worried about their safety as COVID sickened or killed scores of Iowans every week. Although Gov. Kim Reynolds' emergency order directed officials to provide a way for the public to monitor these meetings from afar to protect public health, there was an unintended benefit, too — opening these meetings to more people than might otherwise attend.

The pandemic may be behind us. But live-streaming government board meetings should not be a thing of the past — although an Iowa school board demonstrated misplaced priorities recently when it decided to pull the plug on live-streaming its meetings.

The optics of the decision by the Clarion-Goldfield-Dows School Board are terrible. The shortsighted decision should trouble residents of the district and should lead Iowans elsewhere to pressure their local elected officials to livestream their meetings if they are not already doing so.

The Clarion-Goldfield-Dows decision should also bother members of the Legislature and Gov.

Reynolds, because, at its core, the decision shows school leaders want as few people keeping an eye on the board and school business — whether that involves local property taxes, the school curriculum, the choice of books or any other topic.

For more than 50 years, the public has been able to attend meetings of city councils, school boards and county supervisors. Most people never do. While some may have little interest in the decisions being made, there may be other factors involved. Some people may have a child-care conflict, health problems or a disability that keeps them away. They may lack transportation. They may be at work or be out-of-town when the meetings are held.

Live-streaming and keeping an online archive of past meetings gives more people a ready alternative for keeping tabs on what local boards are discussing and deciding.

Here's an example: Three years ago, the Grundy County Board of Supervisors held a public hearing on a proposed wind turbine ordinance. The governor had lifted her emergency order, and the board decided to stop carrying its meetings online.

But the Grundy Center newspaper stepped in and live-streamed the hearing and posted the full video online afterward. More than 200 people were able to "attend" the hearing that way and listen to comments for and against the ordinance, without needing to drive to the courthouse in Grundy Center.

The Grundy County supervisors offered no good reason for ending their live-streaming — other than saying it was inconvenient and is not required by Iowa law. Making the meetings more accessible to the public meant nothing to the supervisors.

The Clarion-Goldfield-Dows School Board offered similar justification for ending live-streaming of its meetings. It is worth noting, though, the school district will continue to livestream athletic events.

School board members said if people truly want to know what the board is discussing, people can adjust their schedules and attend the meetings in

person. One more detail worth mentioning: The school board's meetings start at 4:30 p.m.

Another school board member said ending the livestream will take away the ability of board critics to record the feed and later edit members' comments to embarrass them or take their statements out of context.

Such logic is troubling. While Iowa's public meetings law does not require government board meetings to be live-streamed, the spirit of the law certainly suggests openness and transparency should be the norm, so people can better understand the basis and rationale for decisions government boards make.

Many of Iowa's 325 public school districts have found themselves under the microscope by parents, taxpayers and Iowa lawmakers. These people believe there has been inadequate transparency by school leaders and their governing boards.

Live-streaming these meetings is not a cost issue. In the Clarion-Goldfield-Dows district, the video camera, microphones and related technology already are in place. No additional employees are needed to run the cameras during meetings.

District administrators are to be commended for making student events available so parents, grandparents and others who are not able to attend the games can watch from home. What they fail to understand is that it sends an embarrassing signal to the tax-paying public when the school district is not equally committed to making it more convenient for people to view school board meetings where important issues get debated and decided.

If the Clarion-Goldfield-Dows board does not reverse itself, and if other hold-out local governments do not begin providing remote access to their meetings, perhaps the Legislature should step in and amend the public meetings law to require government boards to let the public watch remotely without having to be there in person. ■

*Randy Evans can be reached at [DMRevs2810@gmail.com](mailto:DMRevs2810@gmail.com).*



# CIVIC SKINNY

BY CITYVIEW STAFF

## Median home sale price reaches record high. Des Moines parks score well. Iowa education is a concern. Another firearm found at DM airport. Prenuptial agreements.

Des Moines' Parks and Recreation system was ranked among the top 20 in the country, according to the Trust for Public Land's (TPL) 2023 ParkScore, which compares 100 of the largest cities in the United States. Des Moines Parks and Recreation's score improved by three points from 2023 to 2024, from 62.1 to 65.6.

Five subjects are involved in the criteria. Equity compares per capita park space and 10-minute walk park access in communities of color vs. white communities and low-income neighborhoods vs. high-income neighborhoods. Park systems score higher if disparities are low or nonexistent. Access measures the percentage of residents living within a 10-minute walk of a park. Acreage is based on a city's median park size and the percentage of city area dedicated

to parks. Investment measures park spending per resident. Amenities assesses the availability of six popular park features: basketball hoops, off-leash dog parks, playgrounds, splash pads and other water play structures, recreation and senior centers, and restrooms. This increase in score came in part from a renewed and expanded partnership with the Des Moines School District to provide access to the school's park amenities and park grounds in areas of needed park access within Des Moines. ...

A recent study by Preply, an online language learning company, found that Iowa is the sixth most disciplined state with a score of 7.7 out of 10. The study surveyed residents on 16 areas of life related to discipline. For Iowans, they found 83% of residents

say having a structured life is required to be successful, 73% are punctual with work and deadlines, 71% are disciplined with their hygiene, and 55% are disciplined with financial management. Nationally, Preply found that hygiene, work punctuality and deadlines, and financial management were the three most important areas of discipline in U.S. residents' lives. The most disciplined state was Pennsylvania, which scored 9.5, and the state with the lowest score was California with 3.1 ...

Des Moines Public Schools (DMPS) ranked fifth in data breaches affecting educational institutions in 2023, according to CyberNut, a cybersecurity solutions company. The data breach DMPS experienced in 2023 is the main cause of the ranking,

# Inspiring wellness



As longtime Dupaco members, both Stephanie Grutz and Alex Goerdt were good savers. They felt confident that Dupaco would help them succeed when they decided to expand their IV therapy business.

"Knowing that they were taking our best interest into mind is what made us choose them," said Stephanie. "The Health Spa is finally a reality. And thanks to Dupaco we are here, and our dreams are coming true."

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stating that it affected 31,720 students. School officials were unable to determine what type of ransomware was used for the cyber-attack. The school systems ahead of DMPS in the study were the Georgia Institute of Technology, Tucson Unified School District, Jefferson County Schools and Minneapolis Public Schools. CyberNut's website says 1,619 K-12 schools experienced data breaches with 90% originating from faculty or staff clicking on phishing links. ...

Medical tourism, often associated with traveling to Turkey for a hairline transplant or a new set of veneers, has a few new hotspots with Iowa among them. According to a study by Nursa, a nursing staffing company, Iowa is becoming a medical tourism favorite for its focus on "affordability and high-standard healthcare." Iowa's medical institutions are attracting patients for procedures such as knee replacements and preventative screenings, according to the study. As for what might be driving the increase, Nursa cites cost efficiency, quality care, recreational recovery and accessibility. Two other states from the survey that made for unlikely medical tourism destinations

were Montana and Nebraska. ...

According to 2022 Gallup data, Iowans are above the national average in terms of those 15 and older who have been married at least once. That might have something to do with Iowa's nation-leading prenup rate. TurboDebt, a debt consulting company, surveyed thousands of couples and found that 17% of Iowans have a formal prenuptial agreement in place. The national average is 13%. Similarly, the survey found that 32% of unmarried people believe prenups are a "recipe for disaster" for a marriage. ...

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) prevented a handgun from making its way onto an airplane at the Des Moines International Airport on June 5. This is the eighth firearm found at the checkpoint in Des Moines in 2024, already surpassing the total of seven that were detected in Des Moines last year. TSA reported that the firearm was loaded with 14 rounds, none in the chamber. ...

The Des Moines Area Association of Realtors released its information on the Metro area's housing market stats for May of this year. They

reported that home sales in May saw a 19.95% increase from April and a 7.95% increase from May of 2023. Active listings continued to rise this year. DMAAR saw an increase of 5.77% with 3,279 houses listed on the market. This is also an increase from May of last year, with the year-over-year increase at 23.69%. The \$299,500 median sale price was a record high in the Des Moines Metro. This is a 6.02% increase from April and a 3.63% increase from this time last year. ... The Annie E. Casey Foundation released its 2024 Kids Count Data Book showing state trends in children's well-being. Rankings were based on economic well-being, education, health and family and community. The composite score saw Iowa rank seventh in the nation, with New Hampshire first and Arizona last. This is a slight drop from Iowa's sixth-place ranking in the 2023 report. However, the big drop comes in education. In the 2023 report, Iowa ranked ninth in education. For 2024, Iowa dropped four spots to 13th and found that 67% of fourth graders are not proficient in reading and 72% of eighth graders are not proficient in math. ■



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# GUEST COLUMN

BY MIKE WELLMAN

## A casual ballhawk

I've become a side hustler. Maybe you're one, too.

We live in a cozy brick ranch on the west side of Des Moines that was built in 1954, the same year I was put together. From the street, you'd never suspect it's big enough to include a ballroom. But it does. Some might call it a mancave, but I detest that term. Or an office, but the desk is so cluttered that whenever I have something to do on my laptop, like pay bills or this, I bring it to the dining room table. No, I call this former bedroom a ballroom because it brims with balls. Baseballs and golf balls mostly. I used to gather them pointlessly, compulsively. But now they're my stock in trade. You see, I've become a side hustler. Maybe you're one, too.

According to CivicScience, 26% of U.S. adults in the workforce have a side hustle in 2024. Self Financial reports that 45% of working Americans have a side hustle, and Marketwatch says more than half of Americans have taken on a side hustle in the last year to supplement their primary income.

Here comes our daughter now, who swells her cash flow by dog-sitting. Besides extra moolah, it scratches the itch she's had since leaving a job she loved at a vet's office to work for a Fortune 500 company so she could get some tangible fringe benefits.

There's a former and (gulp) potential POTUS who's a renowned side hustler. Steaks, Bibles, golden sneakers, vanity trading cards, possibly state secrets; you name it, he peddles it to pad his primary income, which derives from political campaigning, i.e. panhandling. If he's king of nothing else (please, God), he may go down as King of the Side Hustlers. While the overall birth rate in America is down, it appears to have risen substantially from the baseline of one per minute in at least one subgroup: suckers.

Speaking of kings, how about Pete (Hit King) Rose? After earning the nickname Charlie Hustle during his baseball career by routinely busting his ass on the field, he was banned from the Hall of Fame in Cooperstown for betting on games. So, he sets up an autograph booth there every summer when others are being inducted. It's a lucrative side hustle for Charlie, er Pete, who sort of turns lemons into a lemonade stand.

As for my baseball sideline, it's just getting off the ground. For many years, I've been what I would describe as a casual ballhawk — someone who chases foul balls and homeruns at ballgames. It started when I saw the Wrigley Field ballhawks in action on the street outside that hallowed ballpark. They're the subject of the documentary "Ballhawks" (narrated by Bill Murray), which I got to see the Chicago premiere of years ago. I've only ever snagged a few batting practice homers at the corner of Waveland and Kenmore in Chicago, but I began ballhawking in earnest locally at Iowa Cubs games when I retired a few years ago. Like one of Pavlov's dogs (a retriever of some sort, apparently), I am conditioned to give chase when a baseball passes by. It's the name of the game, after all, literally the very object of it. I'd accumulated many hundreds of them by the time I stumbled upon the realization that there's a market for used baseballs owing to the proliferation of semi-pro youth teams that barnstorm regional tournament circuits long after their Little League and/or school seasons have ended. They play so many games and practice so much that they need lots of balls. And new ones are costly in quantity. So, I sifted through my I-Cubs batting practice models (all of which are official Major League Baseball specimens) and culled the most experienced ones. They practically sell themselves.

And the golf balls? Early every morning, I go for long walks. The routes used to vary. Occasionally, they'd shortcut across the golf course near our home. If I



occasionally found a ball or two, I'd bring them home. Some I stashed for my own use. Others I tossed into a bucket for donation to First Tee, an organization that introduces underprivileged kids to the game. Then I discovered Facebook Marketplace, where I sometimes browse like a virtual garage sale. I test listed a couple batches of "used like new" balls, and they were snapped up. Now, my daily walks always include the golf course, and I bring bread bags along for the berries I pick. My forearms are bloodstained from scratches sustained foraging in the rough, but, so far, no broken bones or sprains from falls on the creek bed rocks or brushes with poison ivy in the woods. Golf's not a cheap sport to play. Greens fees, clubs AND balls are expensive. Depending on a golfer's preference, new balls can retail for more than \$5 apiece. And many get lost before they ever complete a round. Those are where I come in. Finders/sellers. Let's make a deal.

The ball biz requires no startup capital. All I had to invest was time and effort to acquire inventory and turn a hobby and my exercise into an enterprise that puts a little walking around loot in my pocket and gas in my car. Plus, it's seasonal. I take the winters off. But wait! Might there be an untapped demand for snowballs?

Finally, and best of all, there's this. The occasional freelance gig yields my favorite kind of cash. I've written and self-published four books, the most recent of which, "A Scavenger's Digest," was inspired by my penchant for wandering about in search of, well, whatever's to be found. But that was nickel and dime stuff: cans/bottles, petty cash, etc. (I logged my findings in that category over the course of a full year. They came to \$49.90.) The monetization since then has been dramatic. Maybe it's time for a sequel. Except I haven't got the time. I'm too busy harvesting and curating batches of merchandise for which the demand is greater than it was for the original volume.

Who remembers the heyday of Steve Martin's standup career? It was way back in the mid-70s, when "The Hustle" topped the charts and was all the rage in American discos. I wasn't doin' it then, but I am now.

Yeah, this is kinda like that. ■

## Iowa combat veteran, former ag official 'ready to serve' again — this time in Congress

Lanon Baccam was a corporal in the Guard during a 2004-2005 deployment that lasted 366 days.

After the rains, or in the routines of daily life, in one of the more war-ravaged reaches of the globe, residents would spot the signs of unexploded munitions, mortars and other devices of death.

The Army National Guard's combat engineers would scout and remove rocket rounds and similar weapons for force protection in and around Kandahar, Afghanistan. This was now-Iowa congressional candidate Lanon Baccam's role as a corporal in the Guard during a 2004-2005 deployment that lasted 366 days.

"People would identify and say, 'Hey, it rained earlier this week. We can see some tail fins of an old Russian mortar sticking out of the ground that had been buried for 25 years,'" Baccam said in a wide-ranging interview with Political Mercury. "We'd go. We'd dig them out. We would load them up into literally the trailer behind my truck, and we'd collect these over a week or two."

His team, attached to the U.S. Army's 25th Infantry Division, would regularly collect hundreds of pounds of the exposed and deadly munitions and then take them out in the hills.

The work for this Mount Pleasant native, a son of immigrants, brought daily dangers.

"It was more stressful thinking about my boss, because my boss (a sergeant and squad leader) was older than I was," Baccam said. "He had young children back home. I was more worried about his life than mine. I was the young guy."

Baccam spent eight years in the Army National Guard, having joined at age 17.

"I wanted to give back and protect the freedom and liberties that we have," Baccam said. "As a young soldier, you grew up quick. I deployed in my early 20s, and you are given a lot of responsibilities. The most important one is having the lives of your battle buddies in your hands. We built a brotherhood. We defended this country at a time of war, and I know it's possible to bring folks back together to focus on our communities again because of that experience."

He added, "I am ready right now to serve again."

Baccam, now living in Des Moines, captured the June Democratic primary for the 3rd Congressional District. He faces Republican Congressman Zach Nunn, a military veteran himself, in the November general election.

Growing up in Mount Pleasant, Baccam said Iowans should be proud of their legacy. Baccam's parents

immigrated to Mount Pleasant in 1980, part of the waves of refugees resettled in Iowa under former Gov. Robert Ray's leadership.

Natives of Laos, his parents, Tai Dam refugees, worked at the Mackay envelope factory. They still live in Mount Pleasant.

"My family was sponsored by a Swedish Lutheran family that had come to the United States like 40 or 50 years earlier," Baccam said. "They were first-generation immigrants themselves. They were farmers in the small town of Swedesburg, north of Mount Pleasant. It was a tiny little town."

Baccam credited Republican Ray with the foresight and courage on the resettlement of his family.

"This is to me like an incredible legacy we should be proud of," Baccam said. "People need to be reminded of it. Iowa has had this incredible progressive legacy of actually standing up for people around the world when they need it."

Today, Baccam lives two blocks from where his wife grew up in Des Moines. His daughter attends Hubbell Elementary School.

"It's amazing that my daughter runs up and down these same steps, these super-worn marble steps that my wife did," Baccam said. "Generations of people have worn down these steps and added to the character of this incredible school, and it's really quite special to me."

Baccam attended Drake University on the GI Bill and went on to earn a role as an under secretary in the U.S. Department of Agriculture under Secretary Tom Vilsack, a former Iowa governor. Among other duties, Baccam served as a liaison for the department with military veterans.

Rural economic development will play a central role in his congressional service, Baccam said, noting that the U.S. Department of Agriculture has community-lifting programs for water and wastewater upgrades, high-speed Internet, and a modern program for rural-electrification efforts — all of which Baccam says he has the expertise, the working knowledge, to help his constituents access.

For Iowans living in rural areas, often there is a premium for certain groceries, so increasing access to local food is essential, he said.

"If we can, for example, in the food space, emphasize and support local and regional food systems where we can grow and raise the things we eat on the table closer to where we are, perhaps that helps create new revenue



Lanon Baccam is a Democratic candidate for Congress in Iowa's Third District.

streams for folks in our rural communities, helps people who want to get into farming and ranching," he said.

Baccam, who is pro-choice on abortion, sees abortion rights as a defining issue in the general election.

"People sense this attack on their freedoms and their rights," Baccam said. "Women should have the right to make their own health-care decisions. That's not a place for a politician to be."

Baccam said the restrictions on abortion in Iowa alone are going to prevent physicians from moving to the state.

"I mean, if you're going to be held criminally liable for even the training that you would do in medical school, or the services you would provide, that's not going to entice people to come back to the state," Baccam said.

On immigration, Baccam said he sees the issue for the nation from a variety of perspectives, as both a son of refugees and a military professional who knows personally how vital it was to secure the perimeter of a military base in Afghanistan.

He's frustrated that bipartisan immigration reform is not getting through Congress.

"No one is going to get everything they want, and if you are waiting for something perfect, you are never going to have it," Baccam said. "You have to find a way to come back to the middle." ■

*Douglas Burns of Carroll is fourth-generation journalist and founder of Mercury Boost, a marketing and public relations company.*





## THE FACE OF LOCAL GIFT SHOPS

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Bing's opened in June 2017 in Valley Junction. Owner Val Veiock, alongside her mom, Victoria, continues to grow a loyal customer base through impeccable service and a unique combination of one-of-a-kind merchandise. Named after Val's childhood nickname, Bing, short for Bingham, the store has won Best Valley Junction Store and Best Gift Store in Des Moines for six years running. Visitors are greeted by friendly staff and shop pup Penny.

Bing's offers a perfect gift for everyone, including garden art poles, puzzles, greeting cards, games, funny socks, locally-made art and books. The store

has sections for specific occasions and interests, such as retirement, teachers, nurses, children, pet lovers, pickleballers and fans of icons like Taylor Swift, Dolly Parton, The Golden Girls and Prince.

Val says: "I love listening to customers laugh their way through the store. One of my favorite things is when people tell me their day is better because they have stopped in." Val's best business decision is her choice of merchandise, including sassy and snarky items you can't find elsewhere.

Visit Bing's in Historic Valley Junction or online at [bingsdsm.com](http://bingsdsm.com).



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Hassan Atarmal and Jeni Betts are the faces of Mediterranean cuisine in the Des Moines metro, proudly owning Fresh Mediterranean Express in Waukee. For the past 10 years, this locally owned and operated eatery has delivered the rich flavors of the Mediterranean to the community, earning a loyal following. The award-winning cafe is known for its mouth-watering Greek salads, hummus, kabobs, flavorful gyros, falafel, and hearty wraps. The Fresh platters are a particular highlight, offering a delightful assortment of Mediterranean favorites. The cafe also offers

catering services, delivered throughout the metro.

Hassan and Jeni's commitment to quality shines through in every dish, making Fresh Mediterranean Express a beloved local spot. Their welcoming and knowledgeable staff are always ready to help you navigate the menu. Whether you're a long-time fan or a first-time visitor, you're sure to find something to love at this local gem in Waukee. Come and experience the delicious, fresh flavors that have made Fresh Mediterranean Express a staple in the Des Moines metro.



## THE FACE OF SOCIAL GOOD

### Many Hands Thrift Market

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 Melissa Tafta - Merle Hay Store Manager  
 Crystal Peace - Clive Store Manager  
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 Jeff Andrews - Operations Manager

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At Many Hands Thrift Market, generosity isn't just a mindset - it's a catalyst for change. With the help of kind-hearted donors, dedicated volunteers, and savvy shoppers like you, they are transforming lives locally and globally.

Since opening their doors in Grimes in 2016, they've quickly become a go-to thrift store in Iowa. In fact, they've been voted DSM's Best Local Thrift Store for three years in a row. And with their fourth metro location recently opening in Indianola, they're only getting bigger and better.

So, what can you expect when you step

into Many Hands Thrift Market? Well, for starters, a treasure trove of new and gently used items, from stylish clothing to quirky home decor. And not only will your purchases help support our mission of creating global resources for those in need, but they have also donated \$75,000 (and counting!) to local nonprofits in Iowa.

Ready to join their movement of generosity? Visit and discover the joy of giving back. Whether you're shopping, donating, or volunteering, you'll be part of a community transforming lives by being love in action.





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Windsor Clock & Watch Co. is a family-owned business with over 35 years of experience, led by certified clockmaker Jeff Goemann. As a member of the American Watchmakers Institute and the National Association for Watchmaking and Clockmaking Collectors, Jeff ensures that our team cares for your timepieces with the utmost precision and passion.

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technicians capable of undertaking such meticulous tasks, ensuring that every piece receives the expert care it deserves.

At Windsor Clock & Watch, we aim to be your go-to destination for all your timepiece needs. Visit our beautiful showroom, featuring a wide range of timepieces from small desk clocks to grandfather clocks, everyday work watches, and high-end luxury brands. Our business philosophy is simple: We stick with what we know and excel at it.

# COMING UP

SUBMIT ENTRIES AND PHOTOS TO [EDITOR@DMCITYVIEW.COM](mailto:EDITOR@DMCITYVIEW.COM)

**NOTE:** The following events and attractions are subject to cancellation or last-minute changes. Before attending, be sure to check with each event individually to verify its status, start times, offerings and other details.

THINGS TO DO



"Bluebeard's Castle" at the DMMO captures the beauty of their performances. Photo by Duane Tinkey

## DES MOINES METRO OPERA

Pote Theatre, 513 N. D St., Indianola

[www.desmoinesmetroopera.org](http://www.desmoinesmetroopera.org)

- July 7, 13, 19: "Salome"
- July 6, 12, 17, 21: "Pelléas & Mélisande"
- July 13, 18, 19: "American Apollo"



Photo by Kyle Edwards

## DES MOINES MENACE

Valley Stadium, 4440 Mills Civic Parkway, West Des Moines

[www.menacesoccer.com](http://www.menacesoccer.com)

One of the nation's best semi-professional soccer organizations, the Menace celebrates its 30th season this year.

- July 13 at 7 p.m. vs. Chicago Dutch Lions



80/35 at its previous location, Western Gateway Park. Photo by Eric Hermann

## 80/35

Water Works Park, 2201 George Flagg Parkway, Des Moines

[www.80-35.com](http://www.80-35.com)

July 12-13

80/35 is moving out of downtown and into Water Works Park. The new location allows the festival to include camping for the first time.

Headliners: Killer Mike and OK go.

## IOWA BARNSTORMERS

Wells Fargo Arena, 730 Third St., Des Moines

[www.theiowabarnstormers.com](http://www.theiowabarnstormers.com)

Iowa's professional indoor football team, led by Head Coach Dave Mogensen, plays its home games at "The Well." Home games in July:

- July 6 at 7:05 p.m. vs. Jacksonville Sharks
- July 13 at 7:05 p.m. vs. Sioux Falls Storm

## MOONLIGHT CLASSIC

Starting at The Iowa Taproom, 215 E. Third St., Suite 100, Des Moines

[www.orchardplace.org/moonlight-classic](http://www.orchardplace.org/moonlight-classic)

July 13

Cruise the streets of downtown Des Moines and nearby trails while raising awareness for children's mental health programs at Orchard Place.

## IOWA CUBS

Principal Park, 1 Line Drive, Des Moines

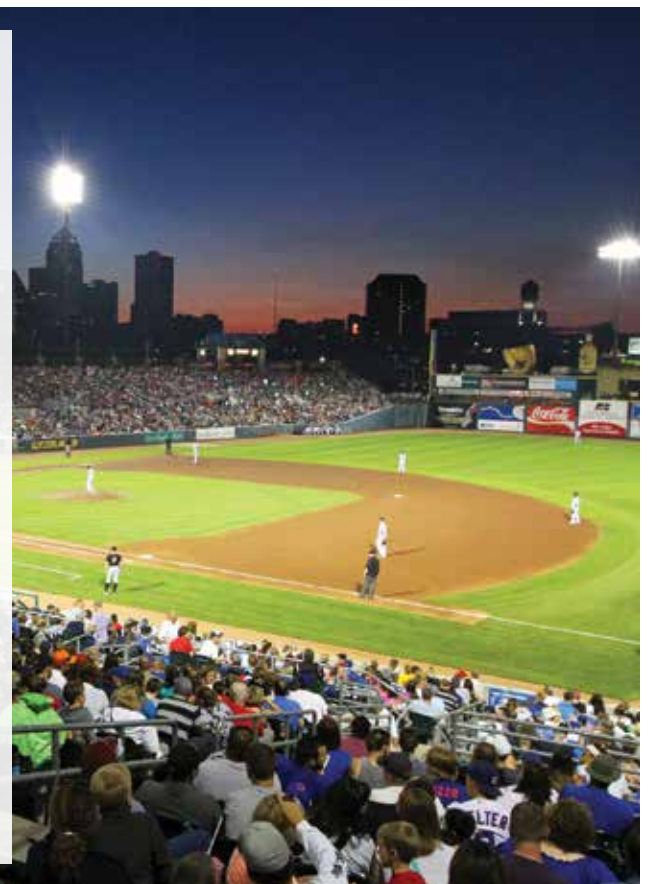
[www.iowacubs.com](http://www.iowacubs.com)

Affiliated with the MLB's Chicago Cubs, our very own minor league baseball team has been around since 1969, originally known as the Iowa Oaks. Cheer on the Cubs all summer through September, with fireworks at Friday home games and the Fourth of July.

Home games in July:

- July 4 at 7:08 p.m. vs. Omaha
- July 5 at 7:08 p.m. vs. Omaha
- July 6 at 6:08 p.m. vs. Omaha
- July 23 at 6:38 p.m. vs. Indianapolis
- July 24 at 12:08 p.m. vs. Indianapolis
- July 25 at 6:38 p.m. vs. Indianapolis
- July 26 at 7:08 p.m. vs. Indianapolis
- July 27 at 6:08 p.m. vs. Indianapolis
- July 28 at 1:08 p.m. vs. Indianapolis
- July 30 at 6:38 p.m. vs. St. Paul
- July 31 at 12:08 p.m. vs. St. Paul

With some of the best young talent in baseball in the Cubs farm system, there will be plenty of chances to see the game's next stars at Principal Park. Photo submitted



# COMING UP

SUBMIT ENTRIES AND PHOTOS TO [EDITOR@DMCITYVIEW.COM](mailto:EDITOR@DMCITYVIEW.COM)

## GOODGUYS 33RD SPEEDWAY MOTORS HEARTLAND NATIONALS

Iowa State Fairgrounds, 3000 E.  
Grand Ave., Des Moines  
[www.good-guys.com](http://www.good-guys.com)

July 5-7

Three days and more than 5,000 of the Midwest's finest 1999 and older hot rods, trucks, customs, muscle cars and classics. The weekend-long event is sure to have almost everything car enthusiasts will be looking for.



Photo submitted

## NATIONAL BALLOON CLASSIC

Memorial Balloon Field, 1136 150th  
Ave., Indianola

[www.nationalballoonclassic.com](http://www.nationalballoonclassic.com)

JULY 26 - AUG. 3

Just look up. Beautifully colored hot air balloons adorn the skies of Indianola. The National Balloon Classic has been dropping jaws of Iowans and travelers with its wondrous display for more than 50 years.

## TRUBANK DES MOINES CHALLENGE

Picard Disc Golf Course,  
2205 E. Second Ave., Indianola  
[www.desmoineschallenge.com](http://www.desmoineschallenge.com)  
July 5-7

The Disc Golf Pro Tour returns to Des Moines for its 2024 TruBank Des Moines Challenge. The tournament will feature some of the best names in professional disc golf along with a fan challenge, celebrity steak battle and charity kickball.



## WAUKEE ARTS FESTIVAL

Centennial Park, Waukee  
[www.waukeeartsfestival.org](http://www.waukeeartsfestival.org)  
July 19-20

Centennial Park in Waukee will host plenty of eye-catching local art from some of the area's best artists over the two-day festival. Live music and food trucks will be available to enjoy alongside the artwork.



Photo courtesy of Ankeny Chamber of Commerce

## COUNTY FAIRS

- **JULY 9-13:** Dallas County Fair in Adel. [www.dallascountyfair.com](http://www.dallascountyfair.com)
- **JULY 12-18:** Marion County Fair in Knoxville. [www.marioncofair.com](http://www.marioncofair.com)
- **JULY 17-21:** Madison County Fair in Winterset. [www.madisoncountyfair.net](http://www.madisoncountyfair.net)
- **JULY 17-21:** Story County Fair in Nevada. [www.sc-fair.weebly.com](http://www.sc-fair.weebly.com)
- **JULY 18-21:** Boone County Fair in Boone. [www.boonecountyfairia.com](http://www.boonecountyfairia.com)
- **JULY 19-25:** Jasper County Fair in Colfax. [www.jaspercofair.com](http://www.jaspercofair.com)
- **JULY 24-29:** Warren County Fair in Indianola. [www.warrencofair.com](http://www.warrencofair.com)
- **JULY 25-28:** Polk County Fair at the Iowa State Fairgrounds in Des Moines. [www.polkcountyfairiowa.com](http://www.polkcountyfairiowa.com)

## XTREAM CHRISTMAS IN JULY

July 27

1400 Forest Ave., Des Moines

[www.centralusa.salvationarmy.org/desmoines](http://www.centralusa.salvationarmy.org/desmoines)

From 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., attendees can enjoy an early Christmas

celebration. The free outdoor event will have fun activities ranging from a visit with Santa, Iowa Wild street hockey, face painting, mini golf course and plenty more. There will also be plenty of vendors on display.



## ANKENY SUMMERFEST

The District at Prairie Trail, 1500  
S.W. Main St., Ankeny

[www.ankenysummerfest.com](http://www.ankenysummerfest.com)

July 12-14

Over the course of this three-day event, 24 food vendors will set up shop to serve hungry attendees, 13 musical acts will be performing throughout the weekend for listening pleasure, and plenty of family-friendly activities like a parade and carnival will be in the area as well. ■



A veritable hall of fame for people and food institutions that give our city and state a singular quality and identity

By Jim Duncan

Inspired by Japan's Living National Treasures, the idea for CITYVIEW's CHOICE awards originated 10 years ago. The Japanese program honors "preservers of important intangible cultural properties." In the years after World War II, anxiety arose in Japan that their unique cultural traditions — noh, kabuki, origami, kumi, sumo, teapot ceramics, noodle making — might be swamped by the conquering Western culture. By honoring revered exemplars of those arts, they preserved them and made them important to a new generation.

Our intention at CITYVIEW was to do something similar for Iowa's venerable, living food

pioneers. That evolved into a hall of fame for people and institutions that bestow a singular quality and identity on our city and state. CITYVIEW's Hall of Iowa Culinary Excellence (CHOICE) awards began when locals rued the passing of two of the most memorable food icons in Iowa history. The Younkers Tea Room was lost in a fire, and Dahl's stores were sold or closed.

For the charter edition of the awards, we focused on venerability — enduring traditions and pioneers. The Japanese word "sabi" refers to a kind of beauty that is attained by aging, when an object's elegance is evidenced by a changing patina. The word

is most often applied to antique tea pots whose glaze has been changed by centuries of having tea intentionally poured over the top to drip down and alter the pot.

In that spirit, our charter members in 2015 all had histories dating back to at least the mid-20th century. Several topped more than a century of service to Iowa. The following year's class of honorable food pioneers was younger, but all blazed new trails that influenced the culinary scene of Iowa in unique ways. Since then, we have expanded upon both categories of excellence. Here is the master class of 2024.

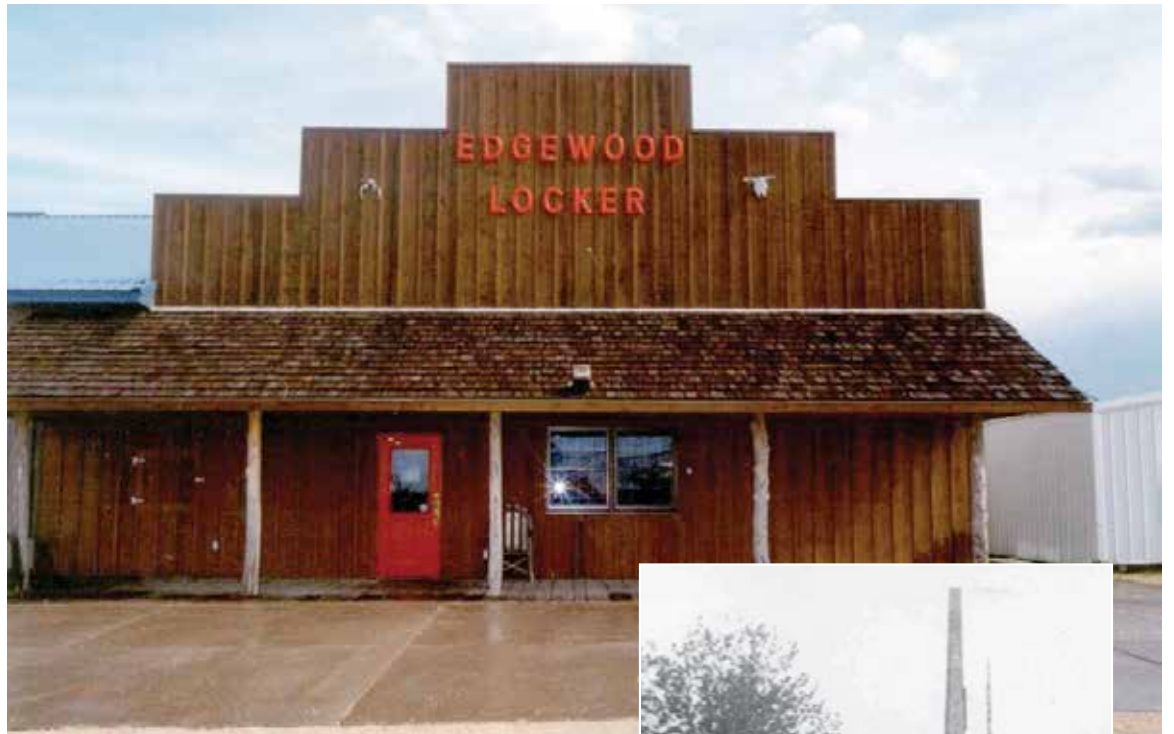
# Iowa meat lockers

When all meat was procured via hunting, it was roasted over open fires and consumed before rotting. After humans settled down, livestock was bred and raised for food. Preservation became a necessary element of survival. Salting was the preferred method during the Greek, Roman, Mauryan, Xian and Egyptian empires. Soldiers were paid in salt; sal in Latin, is the origin of our word salary.

In America, barbecue developed south of the ice line because smoking was the tastiest way to preserve meat without refrigeration. Iowa produced plentiful ice, so locker culture developed here years before its official origins in 1923. Cap Anson, a baseball Hall of Famer, spiteful racist and first white child born in Marshall County, noted locker precursors in his autobiography. So did pioneers before him.

Meat lockers earned their name by providing cold storage to hunters and farmers who produced more meat than could be consumed over open fire or salted. Ice houses were prototypic lockers. The Ice House Museum in Cedar Falls dates its history to 1858. The structure that serves now as a museum thrived from 1921 till it was lost as a business in the Great Depression. In its hey days, 8,000 tons of ice were stored.

Today's Iowa lockers provide butchering, processing and smoking services as well as preservation. The name "locker" derived from the individual ice rooms that were



Edgewood Locker in its first and third incarnations.

rented by hunters and farmers and protected by lock and key.

Some Iowa lockers are only open during hunting season. Others have become the largest businesses in their towns. They contribute to one of our state's most



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celebrated tourism niches and are a main reason Saudi sheiks and rock stars flock here for autumn's bountiful game seasons. Pheasants, quail, deer and even elk can be butchered, dressed and frozen overnight before flying away on private jets.

Established in 1973, Webster City Custom Meats (WCCM) operates a 70,500-square-foot main plant, a 35,000-square-foot warehouse, and a 9,000-square-foot truck garage. WCCM specializes in wholesale custom meat processing of smoked ham, smoked bacon, fresh sausage products and smoked pork loins. They offer nine flavor choices from maple, hickory and apple tree woods to honey jalapeno plus bacon thicknesses from seven to 22 slices per pound.

Atlantic has two lockers. Henningsen's Processing Plant of 1978 is west of town, and Atlantic Locker is in the northwest part. Gress Locker in Hancock dates to 1961. Kitt's in Dedham is home of Dedham bologna, which dates to 1914. Ventura Locker began in 1938. Brighton Meat Locker has the pledge of allegiance painted on its building.

Skoglund's in West Bend specializes in venison. Ruzicka's Meat Processing & Catering in Solon is famous for its jaternice. Celebrity chef Andrew Zimmern sought out the jaternice at Polashek's in Protovin. Hamburg Locker is operated by a third generation of the same family. Guthrie County Quality Meats evolved from the free ranging Cloverleaf Dairy. Their retail display case now rivals those of supermarkets and includes beef, pork, poultry and lamb.

Since 1966, the Kerns family has grown Edgewood Locker from two employees to 50 full-time, plus 40 part-time. More than 100 additional stores retail Edgewood Locker products throughout Iowa. In 2018, they processed 3,766 hogs and 1,594 cattle. In the 2021-2022 deer season, hunters brought in 3,717 whole deer carcasses and more than 182,000 pounds of boneless deer to be made into Edgewood's award-winning sausage. That created 485,000 pounds of homemade deer products. Edgewood won the National Cured Meat Championship's Jerky Grand Champion award in 1987.

## Don Lamberti

### CASEY'S GENERAL STORE

The nation's third largest, and the largest wholly American-owned, convenience store chain started in 1959 when Don Lamberti leased property from his parents at East 14th and Broadway in Des Moines. He was 22 at the time.

"Dad was buying gas from Kurvin C. Fish, nickname K.C., at the time, and K.C. thought Dad's idea of selling general store products in a gas station had legs," explained Jeff Lamberti, Don's son.

"They bought four gas stations and bulk oil businesses and converted an old building in Boone into the first Casey's General Store, in 1968 officially," Jeff explained.

Casey's grew from the heart of one community to the next, time after time. Don built another successful store in Creston and decided to open a store from scratch in the even smaller town of Waukee, population 1,500 at the time. The Waukee store proved to be the most successful of the three, so Lamberti decided to purchase and open more stores, concentrating on towns of less than 5,000 population, a variation on the tactic used in the early days of Walmart.

By the late 1970s, when Casey's opened its first warehouse, the chain had 118 stores, including the original store operated by Don's parents. In 1982, Casey's opened its first distribution center in Urbandale. Today, the \$12 billion business serves communities in 16 states and more than 2,400 store locations. In 1983, it became publicly traded.

In 1984, it began making pizza. Today, Casey's is the fifth largest pizza retailer in America, selling 63 million slices and 30 million whole pies a year. Lots of gas stations sell pizza, but Casey's makes its dough from scratch on premises daily. They make taco pizza, which probably originated in Iowa at Happy Joe's, and breakfast



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### JULY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 7:05 OMA	2 7:05 OMA	3 7:05 OMA	4 7:08 OMA	5 7:08 OMA	6 6:08 OMA
7	8	9 6:35 NAS	10 6:35 NAS	11 6:35 NAS	12 6:35 NAS	13 6:35 NAS
14 1:05 NAS	15	16	17	18	19 7:05 MEM	20 6:35 MEM
21 1:05 MEM	22	23 6:38 IND	24 12:08 IND	25 6:38 IND	26 7:08 IND	27 6:08 IND
28 1:08 IND	29	30 6:38 STP	31 12:08 STP			

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### AUGUST

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1 6:38 STP	2 7:08 STP	3 6:08 STP
4 1:08 STP	5	6 7:05 OMA	7 7:05 OMA	8 7:05 OMA	9 7:05 OMA	10 6:05 OMA
11 5:05 OMA	12	13 6:38 COL	14 12:08 COL	15 6:38 COL	16 7:08 COL	17 6:08 COL
18 1:08 COL	19	20 5:35 TOL	21 5:35 TOL	22 5:35 TOL	23 6:05 TOL	24 6:05 TOL
25 1:05 TOL	26	27 6:38 MEM	28 12:08 MEM	29 6:38 MEM	30 7:08 MEM	31 6:08 MEM



Casey's store

pizza, called “bizza” in Iowa, according to Casey’s website.

Casey’s is also the fourth-largest holder of liquor licenses in the U.S., making it a one-stop-shop for “dinner and a 6-pack.” In 2023, Casey’s received trademark status as “The Official Pizza and Beer Headquarters.”

Headquartered in Ankeny since 1994, Casey’s opened its 1,000th store in 1996 and 2,500th last year in Lebanon, Indiana. Don slipped out of the corporate world and entered the philanthropic realm. With his wife, Charlene, they founded Bridges of Iowa to help those struggling with substance and alcohol addiction. That was urged by son Anthony, a victim. Bridges of Iowa has saved thousands of lives with a long-term program that helps clients “get clean, tackle their demons, improve emotional and physical health, repair broken relationships with families and friends, secure employment, and lead productive lives.”

Don, Charlene and Jeff are currently spearheading the development of the Italian American Cultural Center of Iowa, which will include state-of-the-art kitchen and event center properties.

## Mike Wedeking FLYING MANGO

Flying Mango has been around more than a quarter-century, 21 years at its present location in Beverdale and five before that at farmers markets and as a catering service. Its name came because owner Mike Wedeking has been a licensed pilot since he was 18, and mango is his favorite fruit.

Wedeking runs things the old-fashioned way, greeting customers personally and making sure service trumps everything else. No other restaurant in Iowa has a personality like the Mango. If the restaurant was a singer-songwriter, it would be Jimmy Buffet. Wedeking and many of his customers often dress like they are going to a concert, on a boat. The vibes are not just casual; they define the word laidback.

The Mango doubles as a concert venue. Though it only seats 50 for music, it attracts a lot of seriously cool national talent. Jon Justice, Stephen Kellogg, Ryan Montbleau, Lipbone Redding, Jonah Smith, Carrie Rodriguez, Honey Island Swamp Band, and California Honey Drops are among the acts to have played Mango in between stops on national tours. They all have returned for encores.

Guy Fieri, the most laidback of celebrity chefs, has visited more than once, too, with cameras, to feature Mango on his show “Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives.” Wedeking is so laidback that, when the show first came to Mango, he had no idea



Mike Wedeking

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what it was. He never watches television. Never.

When Mango began, Des Moines had just two barbecues — Big Daddy’s and Battles. BBQ had not yet been fast tracked with gas-driven smokers and wood pellets. It was purely fueled by hard wood. Mango’s oven was designed for portability.

“I am licensed to officiate weddings. I can perform a marriage if I am retained to cater the reception. I tow my smoker and a couple grills, mostly to Kentucky. I have catered weddings at Woodford Reserve distillery (Kentucky Derby sponsor). I am a serious advocate for bourbon. That has led to many happy connections.”

Because Wedeking came from Ocala and loves New Orleans, much of the non Q is Southern, Cajun and Creole. Red beans and rice are meaty. Shrimp are served with grits or dirty rice. Yellowtail is grilled and served with mango salsa, chicken Creole with cornbread. Collard greens and roasted apples are options with all dishes.

Invention is represented by catfish cakes. They are, of course, smoked and then molded into cakes that are fried. White chocolate bread pudding, with mango sauce, stars on the dessert menu, with chocolate cake, Grandma Irene’s red hot, and cinnamon apple pie. Bellinis are made with mango nectar and margaritas can be, too.

Wedeking poured his heart out on Facebook while attending his sister’s death bed in Florida. Six months later, Jonah Smith turned that into his song “Ocala.” That made the front page of the Washington Post, as an extraordinary Christmas present. Now, it’s being covered by famous singers. Bonnie Raitt even called Jonah when she heard the song and asked for the back story.



Flying Mango

FEATURE STORY

Smith called Wedeking recently from Georgia.

“He had just played a concert in a loud bar. One customer thanked him and apologized for the crowd. He told Jonah that he heard about a guy in Des Moines who threatens to throw people out if they talk during a performance. Jonah says, ‘His name is Mike, and his place is Flying Mango. If you get a chance, go there.’”

Wedeking appreciates the attention but does not take it for granted.

“I am so humbled by the number of great relationships my little barbecue has fostered,” he said.



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# Roberta Green and Howard Ahmanson

## HOTEL PATTEE

The Hotel Pattee held its grand opening May 29, 1913, with a banquet for 375 guests. Proudfoot, Bird and Rawson added the hotel to an architectural resume that included much of early 20th century Des Moines' most magnificent buildings. Carnegie steel was imported from Pittsburgh, and an Italian marble staircase was installed. That staircase is the only original furnishing still in play today.

At the time, the hotel fronted a railroad station on one side and a barn, livestock stable and blacksmith shop on the other. Saturday night dances in the ballroom were the main attraction to the Perry community. In 1930, the hotel hired Aunt Rachel Carpenter to operate a café in the hotel with the same fine service as her locally famous Waffle House café.

In 1935, the hotel reopened after a renovation with sugar-glazed jelly omelettes and baked "milk fed chickens." Five ownership changes and six remodels later, the hotel was purchased by Howard and Roberta Green Ahmanson in 1993. Roberta was a Perry native. They closed it for the first time in 82 years and began a complete renovation.

Two years later, it reopened in resplendent detail. Each room was unique and themed — an Iowa variation on London's legendary Savoy Hotel. Museum level art was installed. Top Iowa artists and craftspeople designed rooms, a library, conference hall, ballroom, lobby, restaurant, bar, fireplaces and a bowling alley. I was told at that time that the imported mahogany panels alone cost more than the original hotel. After exploding their budget, the Ahmansons closed the hotel on New Years Eve 2006.

Five additional ownership changes later, Perry Industries, Inc. and Perry Economic Development, Inc. purchased the Hotel Pattee in partnership with the



Hotel Pattee host Lopso, a survivor of stupid human violence, embodies the spirit of Perry and the hotel.

City of Perry. Today, it is a magnet, drawing visitors to Perry's exemplary small town America living history.

One volunteer lobby host, Lopso, greets visitors with the spirit of Perry. Despite losing a leg to senseless human violence, Lopso carries on with indomitable sweetness. ■

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George the Chili King  
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In't Veld's Meat Market, Pella bologna  
Maytag Blue Cheese  
The Iowa State Fair  
Anderson Erickson Dairy  
B&B Grocery, Meat & Deli

## ADDITIONAL PAST HONOREES

- Lighthouse Inn, Cedar Rapids
- Archie's Waeside, Lemars
- Chuck's, and their pizza oven
- Practical Farmers of Iowa
- Seed Savers Exchange, Diana Ott Whealy
- Fareway
- Loose meat sandwiches
- Robert Anderson
- Pam and Harry Bookey
- Scott Carlson
- Larry Cleverley
- Don and Simon Cotran
- Kathy and Herb Eckhouse
- George Formaro
- Lisa and Mike LaValle
- Ralph Compiano
- Tasty Tacos
- Mrs. Clark's
- Full Court Press
- Bruce Gerleman
- Shad Kirton
- Darren Warth
- Moe Cason
- Eric Ziebold
- Wayne, Hing and Mei Wong
- Better Homes and Gardens New Cookbook
- Pioneer Hi Bred
- The Acorn and Sibley squashes
- The Talerico-Compiano steak de Burgo
- Jerry Talerico
- Mama Lacona's
- Bianchi's Hilltop Restaurant
- Dave Stark, Barbara's Champagne Cake
- Paul Willis
- Centro
- World Food Prize
- Steve and Joe Logsdon
- Christopher's
- Dive bars of Des Moines
- Ted's and Jim's Coney Island
- Hy-Vee
- Ron Pearson
- Baratta's
- Marie Hainline
- Susie Q, Mason City
- Northwestern Steak House, Mason City
- Canteen Lunch in the Alley, Ottumwa
- Hamburg Inn #2, Iowa City
- Miles Inn, Sioux City
- Jaarsma Bakery, Pella
- Archie's Waeside, Lemars
- Jaarsma Bakery, Pella
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Back Row: Tesse Lester, Cheryl Malone, Shawn Kinnison, Alex McGregor, Marti McMahan, Geoff Counasse, Jjuan Hakeem, Casey Stephens, Susan Miller, Leah Bugos, Miranda Burns, Rebecca Ziller, Sarah Rokey, Kenzi Clements, Heather Reich, Stacey Brand

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These are some of the faces of our Edencrest senior living communities in Des Moines. Edencrest communities offer a range of personalized care options designed to enhance independence through wellness, camaraderie and active lifestyles. With locations including Beaverdale, Green Meadows, Riverwoods, Siena Hills, and The Legacy, Edencrest provides Independent, assisted, memory care apartments, along with respite stay services. Each community features comfortable, home-like environments with amenities such as

spacious communal dining and engaging social activities. The dedicated teams at each Edencrest community focus on delivering personalized customer service to individuals, fostering a sense of community and belonging. Residents benefit from wellness programs and 24-hour support, ensuring peace of mind for both residents and their families. Edencrest is committed to promoting an active and fulfilling lifestyle, making it the preferred choice for senior living in the Des Moines area.

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OF (515)



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of Central Iowa's mission to make purposeful employment possible for all. Your contribution helps fund transformative programs that build confidence, strengthen abilities and redefine inclusion in the workplace. Not only can you score outstanding deals on diverse, high-quality items but you are also contributing to a worthy cause — helping Central Iowans gain greater independence through meaningful employment. Enjoy the thrill of the auction and the satisfaction of supporting a mission that transforms lives right in your community.



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Austin Blythe, Nicole Drottz, Kassidi Stumpf, Amber Cooper,  
Kaitlin Wegner, Vicki Allbaugh, Windy Bennett  
Not Pictured: Loren Parks, Kelsey Gillum, Matt Cooper, Weslyn  
Caldwell, Te-Aria Mahaney, Alisa Romick, Kim Gipple, Holly  
DeGoey, Jessi Nelson, Patrick Christianson, Misty Zobel

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Lower level, left to right: Paul Cartwright, Rain, Jessica Van Essen, Jordan Bles, Lee Ann Bakros, Katy McCaull, Robin Spahr, David Kilpatrick;  
Upper level, left to right: Nate Weber, Derek Phelps.

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Each season, more than 700 volunteers work alongside 14 staff to create Broadway musicals, comedies, dramas and family shows for the community. The Playhouse's educational programming

is among the most comprehensive in the country, offering classes for pre-K through senior adult year-round.

The Playhouse is at the close of a campaign to renovate the building's lower level: expanded classrooms, more space for dressing rooms, and additional production support spaces.

Visit The Playhouse today and find out how you can become part of extraordinary theatre as an audience member, donor, volunteer or student!

# BUSINESS JOURNAL



## Customer service through **TECHNOLOGY**

Cutting costs may mean cutting down on human interaction.

By Colson Thayer

When business owners want to increase profits, one of the first places they often look to is decreasing costs. One of the biggest expenses for any business is payroll. As technology advances, companies are looking for opportunities to reduce that cost. And, sometimes, it means replacing a human with technology.

However, with the rising controversy over the use of artificial intelligence (AI), consumers are becoming increasingly skeptical of new technology. That's why listening to customers and shifting focus may be the best route for reducing costs — even if that means changing the business model or implementing new tools.

Golden Rule customer service representatives like Ann Mattiussi save time with the online scheduling tool used by the business. However, they still need to follow up with each booking. Photo by Colson Thayer



## FEATURE

## Introducing ghost kitchens

Darren Warth, owner of Smokey D's BBQ in Des Moines, is a lover of all things food. When he is not running one of his restaurants, he is traveling the country, researching and eating all kinds of food. In 2020, an opportunity presented itself to try something new. When the catering business next door to Warth's sauce warehouse shut down, the landlord asked him if he wanted to take over the kitchen. And he did. But it sat empty for nine months until Warth got the idea of bringing locally owned and operated ghost kitchens to the metro.

Ghost kitchens, a.k.a. virtual kitchens, are a new business model in the restaurant industry. Rather than a traditional dine-in experience, ghost kitchens focus on online orders through both curbside pickups and deliveries. There is no wait staff, no tables, not even any plates. Everything is served to go.

"I started researching what the most popular food items for food delivery were," Warth said. "Wings was the No. 1 delivery food that was the biggest shortage... Well, if you're going to have a wing concept, we might as well have other chicken items."

Hence, The Ornerly Chicken at 121 S.E. Shurfine Drive, Suite 6 in Ankeny was hatched. Because Warth did not have to employ any front-of-house staff or purchase any dine-in equipment, he was able to focus entirely on the food. He developed a crispy chicken sandwich recipe that keeps its crunch even after sitting in a to-go container for 30 minutes.

Warth could run the ghost kitchen on a busy commercial street but, instead, saves money on rent by operating in an industrial part of town. And, he only needs two to four people to work in his kitchen. This all means he can sell customers a chicken sandwich and fries for only \$9.99.

"You can't go anywhere else in town and get a chicken sandwich that big and a side for under \$15," Warth said.

"Our biggest challenge is people that are scared to order something online. It's the older generation," Warth said.

It's a double-edged sword. He could use a large marquee to advertise his restaurant from the outside, but then he runs the risk of confused customers walking in. Instead, Warth does his best to educate the public.

"You're really just dealing with a kitchen and electronics, and we're fully electronic," Warth said.



Darren Warth opened The Ornerly Chicken, a ghost kitchen, that provides pickup and delivery only. With no in-house dining, costs are greatly reduced. Photo by Colson Thayer

## Using an AI Chatbot

A visit to Golden Rule Plumbing, Heating and Cooling's website reveals a small red button on the bottom right-hand side. It reads "Chat with Us" with two chat bubbles. Is there an actual person on the other end? No. Rather, it is a new AI chatbot meant to increase efficiency.

Golden Rule, 904 N.E. Main St., Grimes, implemented this tool less than a year ago. The bot is there to help customers schedule service appointments with the company. Meant to streamline the customer experience, there are some challenges with this new technology.

"The theory is that AI-driven databases and chat features and bots get smarter over time," Jesse Peters, sales and marketing director, said. "But, initially, they're pretty dumb, which is a frustrating customer experience."

Peters and Golden Rule opted to use a closed AI model. This means that the data and information



The Ornerly Chicken has a sign outside emphasizing that dine-in service is not available. Photo by Colson Thayer

their chatbot uses is private and only available to their company. The downside is a much slower learning process. If they had gone with an open AI model, like the popular ChatGPT, the tool would have access to a lot more data and learn much more quickly. However, their information might be used to help competitors.

Only time will tell if this investment will pay off in the end for Golden Rule. They can use information like booking rates to track its effectiveness, but humans are the ones who bring in the business.

“Is it less expensive than a person who has a personality, who has health insurance, who has all these things attached to them? Yes,” Peters said. “But the trade-off with booking rate just absolutely isn’t there yet. By the way, I teach that robot with human interactions that I get from a person.”

## Other new technology

A chatbot is not the only online technology tool used by Golden Rule. Another is an online appointment scheduler. Simply filling out a form on their website gets customers into their system. But even that can be a barrier to getting customers booked.

“What I’m seeing is about 60% of the people who engage with one of those online systems choose to abandon it because we have too many hurdles,” Peters said.

Their form used to be much longer than it is now. There was even an option to upload photos of whatever issue the customer had, but nobody was doing it. So, Peters took an intentional loss of efficiency.

He adopted a mindset of asking as few questions as possible to get customers scheduled as quickly as possible. After a customer submits an online form, a human must go through each entry and follow up with the customer for more information. They’ll call and even offer an earlier appointment if available. While it may seem tedious, the call center team agreed it is a time saver.

Another tool the company uses on the dispatching side is Buck AI. The tool helps assign technicians to the right call at the right time. Rather than sending a technician out to Ankeny and then responding to an afternoon call in Indianola, why not have the technician in West Des Moines run that call instead?

Golden Rule has more success with tools like Buck AI because it is not customer-facing. Tools that try to imitate humans tend to fall flat on their face, according to Peters.

“I think, if done correctly, (technology) should actually require and help us to hire more employees,” Peters said. “How do we not create a hurdle for our customers but allow our capacity to increase is a really healthy way to look at it.”

## Changing a business model

Co-owners of The Side Garage, Ashleigh and Elena Leon, tried a brick-and-mortar retail store. They sold their line of branded apparel; however, the customer-service side of their business outgrew



Ashleigh Leon, co-owner of The Side Garage, says the cost of a retail business was too high, so the focus of the business changed to fulfilling online orders.

their retail. So, they decided to put their focus where demand was.

In addition to its online branded apparel, The Side Garage offers a variety of services including custom screen-printed apparel, live event printing and creative design services. Their change of business model allowed them to cut some costs.

“If we were to get a retail space this size, it would probably be three times the rent,” Ashleigh Leon said. “In an ideal situation, we’d love to be back in a neighborhood with that kind of scenario, but it just didn’t make sense for our next step as a business.”

In 2023, The Side Garage moved out of its Valley Junction location into a former mechanic’s garage nearby at 1848 Fuller Road, Suite 3 in West Des Moines. With the new and bigger location, they were able to save on rent. They also no longer have to attend to foot traffic coming in and out of their store. Instead, they meet with customers by appointment only, and customers can only pick up online orders at designated times.

“The nice thing about having it be more of a print shop versus an actual brick and mortar retail is we have a lot of flexibility in setting our hours around our workloads,” Leon said. “We can take off at 4 on a Friday if we don’t have any pickups.”

To further cut costs, the company uses an online tool called Printavo. This software automates the print shop’s workflow, creating online quotes, invoices and calculating prices.

However, maintaining relationships with customers is still an important aspect of a business. The Side Garage keeps a presence in the community by making appearances at the Downtown Farmers Market, hosting “garage sales” around the holidays and remaining visible on social media.

“It’s worked out for us to be a little bit more diversified, and it’s been a little bit more enjoyable because we tap into the communities that we wouldn’t be exposed to if we just focused on our brand,” Leon said. “You’re never married to one direction. You can try a few different things and see what works best for you.” ■

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COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE

COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS IN POLK COUNTY FROM APRIL 15, 2024 TO MAY 3, 2024

**1454 30TH ST., SUITE 109, WEST DES MOINES**  
 SALE DATE: 2024-04-15  
 SALE PRICE: \$170,000  
 SELLER: JACKIE'S LLC  
 BUYER: YING ADDINGTON PROPERTIES LLC  
 ACRES: 0.248  
 SQUARE FEET: 2,933

**5408 N.W. 88TH ST., JOHNSTON**  
 SALE DATE: 2024-04-16  
 SALE PRICE: \$1,400,000  
 SELLER: LAINSON PROPERTIES 1031 LLC  
 BUYER: WALNUT RIDGE PROPERTIES LLC  
 ACRES: 0.684  
 SQUARE FEET: 7,986

**2805 COTTAGE GROVE AVE., DES MOINES**  
 SALE DATE: 2024-04-16  
 SALE PRICE: \$280,500  
 SELLER: BORN, HENRIK  
 BUYER: JAMESON HOLDINGS LLC  
 ACRES: 0.229  
 SQUARE FEET: 3,099

**NO ADDRESS LISTED**  
 SALE DATE: 2024-04-17  
 SALE PRICE: \$222,800  
 SELLER: KAMPS, RONALD G  
 BUYER: POLK COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD  
 ACRES: 5.430  
 SQUARE FEET: 0

**885 S. 51ST ST., WEST DES MOINES**  
 SALE DATE: 2024-04-17  
 SALE PRICE: \$4,820,000  
 SELLER: INDIANOLA HOTEL LLC  
 BUYER: WEST DES MOINES HOSPITALITY LLC  
 ACRES: 1.900  
 SQUARE FEET: 35,463

**1600 N.W. 114TH ST., CLIVE**  
 SALE DATE: 2024-04-17  
 SALE PRICE: \$3,500,000  
 SELLER: SHREE LAXMI NARAYAN INC  
 BUYER: MIDWEST IA HOTELS LLC  
 ACRES: 2.600  
 SQUARE FEET: 44,248

**6500 UNIVERSITY AVE., WINDSOR HEIGHTS**  
 SALE DATE: 2024-04-23  
 SALE PRICE: \$2,800,000  
 SELLER: JKOESTER PROPERTIES LLC  
 BUYER: WHTC LLC  
 ACRES: 1.243  
 SQUARE FEET: 38,035

**6580 UNIVERSITY AVE., WINDSOR HEIGHTS**  
 SALE DATE: 2024-04-23  
 SALE PRICE: \$225,000  
 SELLER: JKOESTER PROPERTIES LLC  
 BUYER: NDC INVESTMENTS LLC  
 ACRES: 0.715  
 SQUARE FEET: 0



**595 N.E. 66TH AVE., DES MOINES**  
 SALE DATE: 2024-04-24  
 SALE PRICE: \$1,319,128  
 SELLER: HUBBELL PROPERTIES II LC (SERIES J)  
 BUYER: WOODLAND HILLS RE HOLDINGS LLC  
 ACRES: 36.206  
 SQUARE FEET: 1,800

**620 N.E. 66TH AVE., DES MOINES**  
 SALE DATE: 2024-04-24  
 SALE PRICE: \$1,660,913  
 SELLER: HUBBELL REALTY COMPANY  
 BUYER: WOODLAND HILLS RE HOLDINGS LLC  
 ACRES: 93.569  
 SQUARE FEET: 2,548

**1111 E. ARMY POST ROAD, DES MOINES**  
 SALE DATE: 2024-04-24  
 SALE PRICE: \$1,430,000  
 SELLER: MACERICH SOUTHRIDGE MALL LLC  
 BUYER: NATIVE REAL ESTATE LLC  
 ACRES: 5.649  
 SQUARE FEET: 100,566

**808 DES MOINES ST., DES MOINES**  
 SALE DATE: 2024-04-24  
 SALE PRICE: \$518,000  
 SELLER: EAST VILLAGE ENTREPRENEURS LLC  
 BUYER: NELSON, JONATHAN  
 ACRES: 0.221  
 SQUARE FEET: 3,876

**1101 S. ANKENY BLVD., ANKENY**  
 SALE DATE: 2024-04-24  
 SALE PRICE: \$768,000  
 SELLER: ANKENY JJ LLC  
 BUYER: HYPER ENERGY BAR LLC  
 ACRES: 1.366  
 SQUARE FEET: 0

**3400 E. 25TH ST., DES MOINES**  
 SALE DATE: 2024-04-25  
 SALE PRICE: \$450,000  
 SELLER: WELLS FARGO BANK NA  
 BUYER: CHRISTIAN CHURCH HOMES IOWA INC  
 ACRES: 1.696  
 SQUARE FEET: 1,018

**NO ADDRESS LISTED**  
 SALE DATE: 2024-04-25  
 SALE PRICE: \$220,000  
 SELLER: ETERNITY CHURCH  
 BUYER: BARKER FINANCIAL LLC  
 ACRES: 0.748  
 SQUARE FEET: 0

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## COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE

### 13577 N.W. 42ND AVE., GRIMES

SALE DATE: 2024-04-26  
SALE PRICE: \$3,416,650  
SELLER: DAY, MARY BETH  
BUYER: DES MOINES CHRISTIAN SCHOOL ASSOCIATION  
ACRES: 51.417  
SQUARE FEET: 2,856



### 1217 FOREST AVE., DES MOINES

SALE DATE: 2024-04-26  
SALE PRICE: \$400,000  
SELLER: PENUEL INVESTMENTS LLC  
BUYER: KATEMBO, ASUMANI PRIMO  
ACRES: 0.152  
SQUARE FEET: 3,097

### 1215 FOREST AVE., DES MOINES

SALE DATE: 2024-04-26  
SALE PRICE: \$340,000  
SELLER: THE BRIGHT TUMY LLC  
BUYER: PENUEL INVESTMENTS LLC  
ACRES: 0.455  
SQUARE FEET: 4,885

### NO ADDRESS LISTED

SALE DATE: 2024-04-26  
SALE PRICE: \$219,200  
SELLER: KAMPS, STEVEN R  
BUYER: POLK COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD  
ACRES: 5.267  
SQUARE FEET: 0

### 1136 26TH ST., DES MOINES

SALE DATE: 2024-04-29  
SALE PRICE: \$270,000  
SELLER: HECHT-GAHMAN, DIANA J  
BUYER: Q ENTERPRISES LLC  
ACRES: 0.132  
SQUARE FEET: 3,145

### 4415 DOUGLAS AVE., DES MOINES

SALE DATE: 2024-04-30  
SALE PRICE: \$4,150,000  
SELLER: CARDINAL GREEN INVESTMENTS LLC  
BUYER: CALICO COMMERCIAL LLC  
ACRES: 2.271  
SQUARE FEET: 17,900

### 3633 70TH ST., URBAN DALE

SALE DATE: 2024-04-30  
SALE PRICE: \$350,000  
SELLER: HOLCOMB, CHARLES K  
BUYER: TIMELAPSE ENTERPRISES LLC  
ACRES: 0.370  
SQUARE FEET: 1,344

### 2619 S.W. NINTH ST., DES MOINES

SALE DATE: 2024-04-30  
SALE PRICE: \$685,000  
SELLER: NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT CORP  
BUYER: JW ROCK FALLS LLC  
ACRES: 0.424  
SQUARE FEET: 4,480

### 532 31ST ST., DES MOINES

SALE DATE: 2024-05-01  
SALE PRICE: \$500,000  
SELLER: KVH INVESTMENTS LLC  
BUYER: GIROD LLC  
ACRES: 0.651  
SQUARE FEET: 0



### 7901 DOUGLAS AVE., URBAN DALE

SALE DATE: 2024-05-01  
SALE PRICE: \$475,000  
SELLER: BMKAR LLC  
BUYER: URBAN DALE FOOD PANTRY  
ACRES: 0.889  
SQUARE FEET: 7,200

### 1701 E. COURT AVE., DES MOINES

SALE DATE: 2024-05-02  
SALE PRICE: \$35,000  
SELLER: SOUTHEAST 23RD STREET PROPERTY LLC  
BUYER: 20 E 18TH DES MOINES LLC  
ACRES: 0.484  
SQUARE FEET: 0

### NO ADDRESS LISTED

SALE DATE: 2024-05-02  
SALE PRICE: \$3,416,650  
SELLER: DAY, WAYNE E  
BUYER: DES MOINES CHRISTIAN SCHOOL ASSOCIATION  
ACRES: 51.398  
SQUARE FEET: 0

### 3311 ADVENTURELAND DRIVE, ALTOONA

SALE DATE: 2024-05-03  
SALE PRICE: \$4,200,000  
SELLER: O'HALLORAN INTERNATIONAL INC  
BUYER: ATRRH ALTOONA LLC  
ACRES: 11.941  
SQUARE FEET: 45,378

### 2416 ROBINSON AVE. N.E., BONDURANT

SALE DATE: 2024-05-03  
SALE PRICE: \$432,986  
SELLER: BONDURANT BUSINESS PARK LLC  
BUYER: NP PROPERTIES LLC  
ACRES: 1.423  
SQUARE FEET: 0

### 516 28TH ST., DES MOINES

SALE DATE: 2024-05-03  
SALE PRICE: \$650,000  
SELLER: 516 28TH LLC  
BUYER: SPOT 515 LLC  
ACRES: 0.567  
SQUARE FEET: 5,632

### 2100 E. 14TH ST., DES MOINES

SALE DATE: 2024-05-03  
SALE PRICE: \$350,000  
SELLER: MEEK, ALICE L  
BUYER: B&C HOLDINGS LLC  
ACRES: 0.301  
SQUARE FEET: 5,760 ■

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### • Trail Cups:

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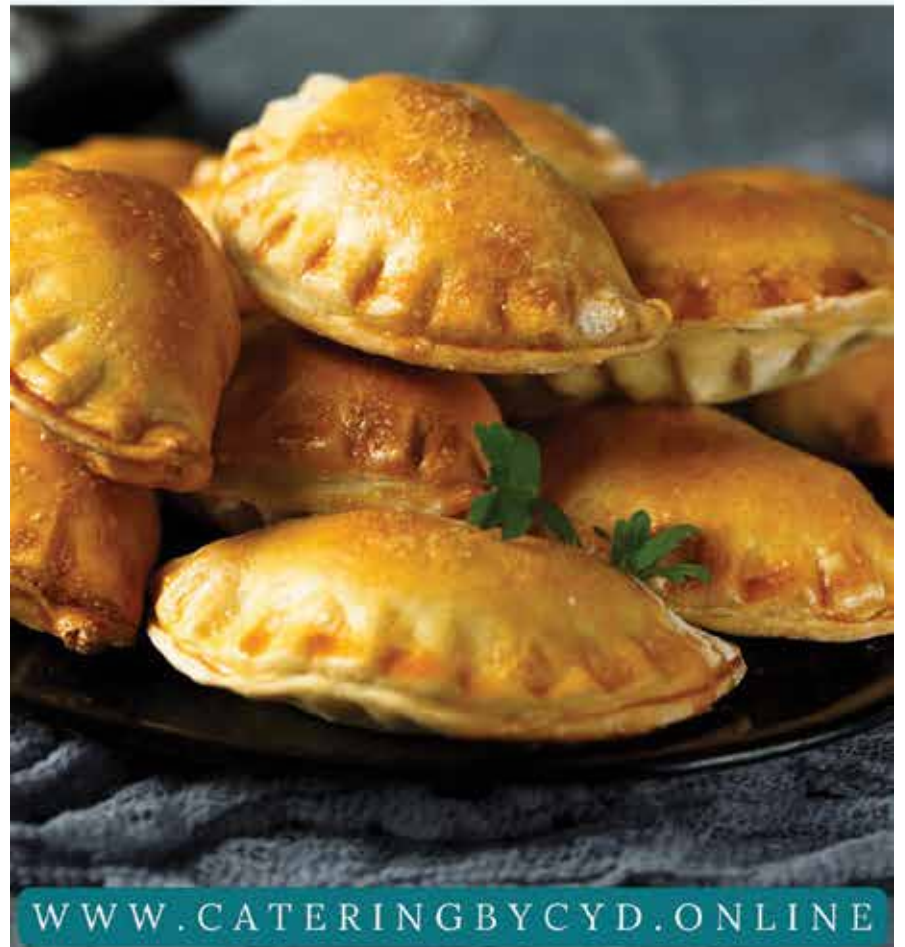
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Padget Technologies, Inc.	Cedar Falls	BLACK HAWK	02	\$420,000	2	10	10	EXISTING	Engineering Services
Atlas Media Solutions LLC	WATERLOO	BLACK HAWK	02	\$50,000	2	6	6	NEW	N/A
ZAIB, INC.	Waterloo	BLACK HAWK	02	\$50,000	0	0	0	NEW	N/A
Darrin Ernest Hartzler	Manson	CALHOUN	04	\$50,000	0	2	2	EXISTING	General Freight Trucking, Local
Sapphire & Sage Salon and Spa, LLC	SPENCER	CLAY	04	\$65,000	1	1	1	NEW	Beauty Salons
CUSTOMIZED HOME SOLUTIONS LLC	ADEL	DALLAS	03	\$13,900	4	4	4	NEW	Other Foundation, Structure, and Building Exterior Contractors
MID-IOWA GENERAL CONTRACTING LLC	DEXTER	DALLAS	03	\$20,000	1	1	1	NEW	Residential Remodelers
Hitters Depot, LLC	MANCHESTER	DELAWARE	02	\$25,000	1	1	1	NEW	Fitness and Recreational Sports Centers
Spa South West, LLC	Dubuque	DUBUQUE	02	\$485,800	0	3	3	NEW	Offices of All Other Miscellaneous Health Practitioners
JW STRIPING LLC	NORA SPRINGS	FLOYD	04	\$15,000	0	1	1	NEW	Highway, Street, and Bridge Construction
VICTOR CHILDCARE	VICTOR	IOWA	01	\$12,000	1	2	1	EXISTING	Child Day Care Services
First Fitness, LLC	WEST POINT	LEE	01	\$57,700	2	2	2	NEW	Fitness and Recreational Sports Centers
FEARLESS ENDEAVORS, INC.	CEDAR RAPIDS	LINN	02	\$150,000	0	0	2	EXISTING	Apparel Accessories and Other Apparel Manufacturing
Hart Family Hotels-Marion LLC	Marion	LINN	01	\$4,569,000	38	0	0	NEW	Hotels (except Casino Hotels) and Motels
JT Bridge LLC	Marion	LINN	02	\$445,800	35	1	1	EXISTING	Full-Service Restaurants
TNM Holdings Inc.	MARION	LINN	02	\$150,000	3	0	8	EXISTING	Landscaping Services
ABRIL'S, LLC	MARION	LINN	02	\$25,000	0	1	0	EXISTING	Glass and Glazing Contractors
JT Bridge LLC	MARION	LINN	02	\$25,000	5	2	34	NEW	Full-Service Restaurants
BP Pollema, LLC	Doon	LYON	04	\$951,000	5	0	25	EXISTING	All Other Miscellaneous Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing
MILLER'S POLEBARN & SUPPLY LLC	LORIMOR	MADISON	03	\$50,000	1	1	1	EXISTING	Site Preparation Contractors
HANLEY ELECTRIC & PUMP INC	SAINT CHARLES	MADISON	03	\$54,700	1	1	1	EXISTING	All Other Specialty Trade Contractors
ELLIS SOLUTIONS LLC	GLENWOOD	MILLS	04	\$260,000	1	1	1	NEW	Parking Lots and Garages
Ada J's Steakhouse, LLC	Ute	MONONA	04	\$120,000	0	15	15	EXISTING	Full-Service Restaurants
KMG Fitness LLC	Ankeny	POLK	03	\$400,000	3	1	1	NEW	Fitness and Recreational Sports Centers
The Good Butcher LLC	Des Moines	POLK	03	\$400,000	3	3	3	NEW	N/A
JJ JASMINE LLC	DES MOINES	POLK	03	\$223,000	0	6	6	EXISTING	Full-Service Restaurants
Stapes Concrete and Grading LLC	DES MOINES	POLK	03	\$150,000	10	10	5	EXISTING	Poured Concrete Foundation and Structure Contractors
Best Heating, Cooling and Electric Incorpo	DES MOINES	POLK	03	\$150,000	0	0	10	EXISTING	Plumbing, Heating, and Air-Conditioning Contractors
Black Toad Apothecary LLC	Des Moines	POLK	03	\$125,000	1	1	1	EXISTING	N/A
ROSALBA CONSTRUCTION LLC	DES MOINES	POLK	03	\$10,000	0	0	5	EXISTING	Roofing Contractors
ROSALBA CONSTRUCTION LLC	DES MOINES	POLK	03	\$10,000	0	0	5	EXISTING	Roofing Contractors
TheChosenOne LLC	URBANDALE	POLK	03	\$841,000	3	2	2	NEW	Fitness and Recreational Sports Centers
TheChosenOne LLC	URBANDALE	POLK	03	\$75,000	3	2	2	NEW	Fitness and Recreational Sports Centers
JUNK B SQUARED AWAY LLC	WEST DES MOINES	POLK	03	\$40,000	2	2	2	NEW	Other Waste Collection
Mora Commercial, LLC	Davenport	SCOTT	01	\$616,000	7	0	3	NEW	Coin-Operated Laundries and Drycleaners
Rocktown Properties, LLC	Davenport	SCOTT	01	\$429,000	4	0	4	EXISTING	Offices of Mental Health Practitioners (except Physicians)
Velvet Oak Salon and Spa, LLC	AMES	STORY	04	\$86,400	5	3	5	NEW	Beauty Salons
COLE DAVIS CARPENTRY	OTTUMWA	WAPELLO	03	\$15,000	1	1	1	EXISTING	Finish Carpentry Contractors
Norwalk Hotel and Associates, LLC	NORWALK	WARREN	01	\$3,577,000	40	0	0	NEW	Hotels (except Casino Hotels) and Motels
Willow Park Properties, LLC	Norwalk	WARREN	01	\$347,000	5	0	12	EXISTING	Child Day Care Services
Willow Park Properties, LLC	Norwalk	WARREN	01	\$112,000	1	0	38	EXISTING	Child Day Care Services
KING CONSTRUCTION & HOME IMPROV	NORWALK	WARREN	01	\$50,000	10	0	10	NEW	Residential Remodelers
Haifley Construction, LLC	AINSWORTH	WASHINGTON	01	\$150,000	4	0	0	NEW	New Single-Family Housing Construction (except Operative Builders)
Golden Eagle Scanning LLC	WASHINGTON	WASHINGTON	01	\$11,900	1	1	0	NEW	Geophysical Surveying and Mapping Services
BPDG17, L.L.C.	MOORLAND	WEBSTER	04	\$250,000	0	0	17	EXISTING	Other Animal Food Manufacturing

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**the daily umbrella**

Brief updates on local news, weather, events, career opportunities and the morning chuckle.

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**SCAN HERE**



## Strategic America earns recognition in global competition

Strategic America (SA), a marketing firm based in West Des Moines, won six awards at the 45th Annual Telly Awards, which recognize excellence in video and television and received more than 13,000 entries from all 50 states and five continents. Winners are selected annually by The Telly Awards Judging Council. Past winners include Adobe, ESPN, NASA and Netflix.

“The caliber of the work this season truly has reflected the theme of going beyond the frame. Our industry is experimenting with new technologies like never before, crafting truly compelling stories to draw attention to some of the world’s most pressing issues,” Telly Awards Managing Director Amanda Needham said. “The Telly Awards is uniquely positioned to meet the industry where it’s actually making work, be that on television or TikTok.”

## Elrick honored by International Association Of Computer Investigative Specialists

Dr. Doug Elrick, professor and co-chair of the DMACC IT-Cybersecurity Digital Forensic Investigation program, was recently honored with the 2024 Spirit of IACIS Award during the International Association of Computer Investigative Specialists (IACIS) organization’s 34th Annual Training Event held April 22 - May 3 in Orlando, Florida. The IACIS is a nonprofit, volunteer organization dedicated to training, certifying and providing membership services to computer forensic professionals around the world. Dr. Elrick is only the second recipient of the Spirit of IACIS Award, which recognizes individuals who embody the organization’s values of integrity, dedication and community. For more than three decades, Dr. Elrick has helped IACIS provide digital forensics training across the globe. He has also volunteered on multiple committees and served on the IACIS Board of Directors, in different stints, for nearly 15 years.



Dr. Elrick, who has taught at DMACC since 2011, previously spent 13 years with the Iowa Division of Criminal Investigation (DCI) Crime Lab and helped start the computer crimes unit for the State of Iowa. He also worked for the private company Digital Intelligence, where he conducted civil investigations and training in more than 20 countries. Additionally, he has led law enforcement forensic training in various parts of the world and testified as an expert witness in federal, state and local court venues.

## The LEGO Group opens new store in West Des Moines

The LEGO Group opened a 2,142 square-foot store at Jordan Creek Town Center in West Des Moines on May 31. The new LEGO Store takes the total in the United States up to 118, including flagship locations in Chicago and New York City.

## Land O'Lakes donates 40,000 pounds of macaroni and cheese to Food Bank of Iowa

Land O'Lakes Inc. donated more than 40,000 pounds of LAND O LAKES Macaroni & Cheese to Food Bank of Iowa through the Land O'Lakes First Run Program. The First Run Program has donated more than 7 million pounds of product since it was established in 2010. The program is committed to donating truckloads of fresh product year-round, made



specifically for food banks to help alleviate hunger across the United States. This includes more than 317,000 pounds of food donated to the state of Iowa.

“As a farmer-owned cooperative, Land O'Lakes Inc. is deeply committed to hunger relief. This effort begins locally in the communities that our members and employees call home, many of them rural,” said Sheilah Stewart, senior vice president and general counsel, Land O'Lakes Inc. “We are honored to help our Feeding America food bank partners get fresh, nutritious food directly to the families who need it most.”

## Brantley named Boys & Girls Clubs Of Central Iowa board president

Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Iowa (BGCCI) announced the appointment of Jerald “Jerry” Brantley as board president. With a profound dedication to community service and an extensive background in Des Moines, Brantley brings a blend of experience and commitment to this role. Born and raised in Des Moines, Brantley has deep roots in the community.



A graduate of Hoover High School and Coe College in Cedar Rapids, Brantley returned to Des Moines to embark on a career with Nationwide, where he served for 20 years. Brantley succeeds Mike Ensley, who has been a part of the Boys & Girls Club Movement for 12 years.

“I am honored to have spent virtually my entire life in Des Moines, witnessing its growth and understanding its needs firsthand,” says Jerry. “My experiences coaching, officiating, and attending public schools in Des Moines have given me valuable insights into the challenges facing our youth and families.” ■

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cemeteries include Chapel Hill Gardens and Sunset Memorial Gardens. We also provide cremation services with The Cremation Society of Iowa, Iowa's oldest cremation society. Local owners are Sara Bering and Blair Overton. Alexander Overton represents the fifth generation of father-to-son Overtons in the funeral industry. The whole team at Iowa Funeral Planning invites you to connect with them today to start your end-of-life planning for peace of mind, to help ensure your wishes are honored, and to ease the burden on your loved ones.

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**FACES**  
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THE FACE OF  
**CELEBRATION**  
Three Sisters Barn

Cheyenne Cover, Glenace Baldner

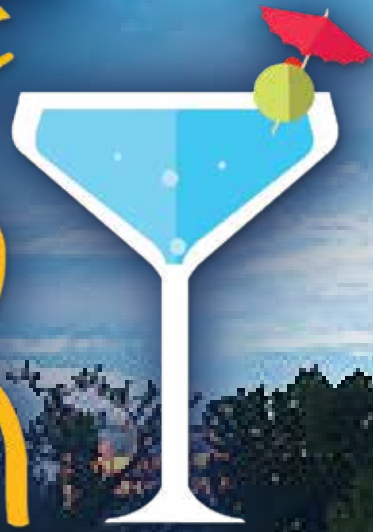
21663 R Avenue, Dallas Center  
(515) 717-0757  
[WWW.3SISTERSBARN.COM](http://WWW.3SISTERSBARN.COM)

Three Sisters Barn was built in 2019 as a venue for gatherings and for promoting the importance of family connections. Owner Glenace Baldner and her manager, Cheyenne Cover, take pride in excellent customer service and attention to detail. They strive to make celebrations as stress-free as possible and to accommodate all special requests. The rental packages are designed to allow for set up and post-event cleanup without rushing to leave.

Three Sisters Barn is unique because it is part of a working century farm. Three Sisters Barn provides a backdrop for the celebration of life and allows families and friends to join together in an atmosphere of relaxation in rural Iowa. The inherent beauty of farm fields and open sky, coupled with the love of family, are at the core from which the Barn is founded and promoted. Come see for yourself. We'd love to host you!

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**2. TRUMAN'S KC PIZZA TAVERN** 400 S.E. Sixth St.

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**4. NIGHTINGALE** 435 E. Grand Ave.

**5. QUINTON'S** 506 E. Grand Ave.

**6. ALLEGED LEE'S** 510 E. Grand Ave.

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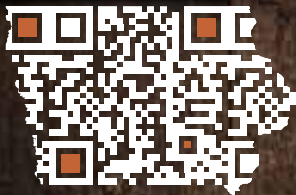
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### IN THE ZONE

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Cocktail

435 East Grand Avenue | Des Moines



321 E. Walnut Ave.



### BLACKBERRY MULE

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400 S.E. Sixth St.



### STRAWBERRY SUNRISE

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### BLACK BERRI TEA

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## Angela Harrington at Panka Peruvian Restaurant

Over pork belly sandwiches, zucchini soup, fried sweet potatoes, arepas and empanadas, we talked about the Iowa hospitality business.

EAT & DRINK

Angela Harrington is a developer, hotelier and civic promoter of the I-80 corridor from Des Moines to Iowa City. We asked her to lunch and met at Panka Peruvian Restaurant, a marvelous, minority- and female-owned café on Ingersoll.

Mariella Maya's restaurant upgraded recently after she closed her rotisserie chicken shop in the Drake neighborhood. Panka now serves a unique brunch six days a week with excellent bargains and rare South American delights.

Maya has been telling me for years that Peruvian cuisine is the world's sleeping giant. It might be waking up now after the international successes of Nobu Matsuhisa and Gastón Acurio plus the stunning news that Mitsuharu Tsumura's Maido in Lima has been named to the top five of the World's 50 Best Restaurants.

Over pork belly sandwiches, zucchini soup, fried sweet potatoes, arepas and empanadas, we talked about the Iowa hospitality business. Harrington built, owns and manages the boutique Hotel Grinnell in a longtime closed former junior high school building. She also revived and owns the 1960s Highlander Hotel and Supper Club in Iowa City. Such ambitious restorations usually are done by nostalgic lifelong locals. Harrington is a Denver gal. **How did she get from there to here?**

"I was a city girl, graduated from Denver East High and Denver University. I met my husband 25 years ago while working in Minneapolis. I planned on scrapping him when I was done there and moving back to Denver. He changed my mind. He's from Iowa, and I quickly loved it here. We live in Grinnell, and I love it."

**Iowa has traditionally been called a great place to grow up, or raise kids, or retire. But what was it like coming to small town Iowa to launch a career?**

"Iowa is a great place to work. Seriously, I can call the city manager, the mayor, the president of the bank, the head of a board of directors, etc. and they take my calls or call back. That does not happen in big cities."

**No one who isn't born into the business ever plans on being a hotelier. How did she?**

"I did work my way through college at the desk of a downtown Denver Holiday Inn. I ran the Chamber of Commerce in Grinnell for 10 years, mostly thinking we needed an events center. Finally, it occurred to me that a hotel was the greater need. I talked to a trustee

at the college, and he agreed to be an investor. Grinnell Mutual Insurance and Priority Plastics got behind it; the whole business community did. Historic tax credits helped, too.

"I loved the old junior high school. It was right on Central Park, positioned to anchor a vital new downtown. I love old buildings because I love stories — telling guests that Mickey Mantle, Joan Baez and Arnold Palmer stayed at the Highlander and Joe Biden stayed at Hotel Grinnell. We converted the school into a deluxe, boutique hotel between 2008 and 2017. I am tenacious if anything. And my husband is a contractor."

**So why move on quickly to a second project?**

"It's a bitch being an independent in a world of chains. You need partnerships and alliances to become more economically viable. That's why I joined Historic Inns of America. The Highlander is a local historic landmark, and Hotel Grinnell is local and state. Without the support systems that a chain has, I realized I had to upgrade my tech. I think I did that because I just heard from Google that my hotel has received three million Google searches.

"The Highlander Inn and Supper Club were built in 1964. When I first saw it in 2019, it was distressed. The Clarion had covered up the sunken bar. The first thing I noticed were its giant windows. Walking through a room with buckets everywhere, I could see ("Mad Men" character) Don Draper with a cigarette and martini.

"I bought it, and then COVID happened. I had to use my entire renovation budget just to stay afloat. Thank God my husband is a contractor. He did almost all the work restoring it."

**Are these hotels more alike or different?**

"The Hotel Grinnell is sexy and chic. Its spirit animal is a sexy librarian. The Highlander Hotel is just crazy. Janis Joplin is its spirit animal — barefoot, carefree, maybe a little drunk. We host weddings there, and some guest rooms come with a free pizza and six pack of local beer. We restored its famous sunken bar — that's very retro — and added a large arcade — not very retro. The pool is huge and the focus for family travelers. A city bus runs downtown and back every half hour from 7 to 7. The Supper Club is an attraction at the Highlander. It's a basic steak and seafood place. Prime rib is by far the most popular dish. I want to enlarge on entertainment, expanding live music.



"At the Hotel Grinnell, the bar is the restaurant with just charcuterie, salads and pizza (including Indian butter chicken, chimichurri steak and mahi mahi). It's called The Periodic Table, because — Grinnell. We want to complement downtown restaurants, galleries, bars and shops rather than compete with them. Great places are within three blocks like Saint's Rest Coffeehouse, Solera Wine Bar, Prairie Canary café, Grin City Bakery, and a nine-hole golf course, plus the college. We have free bicycles for guests so they can visit places like the Faulconer (now Grinnell College Art Museum).

"And I bought a Bon Jovi bus. It looks like it might have transported his band four decades ago. We will take that to the Newton Speedway, to Solon for all its breweries, to football games and concerts — anywhere to tailgate."

**So, what's next?**

"I have a management contract with Jake Christensen's Molo Hotel. (That will rebirth the old Howard Johnson's motel and restaurant in Des Moines.) I can't wait to get going there. Clam strips and 28 flavors of ice cream. That reminds me of childhood trips down the California coast. The Molo is where I see Don Draper as spirit animal now."

**What are Harrington's favorite hotels elsewhere?**

"Hotel Emma in San Antonio. It's amazing, in the old Pearl Brewery. And Iron Horse Hotel in Milwaukee, in a 100-year-old warehouse and in the middle of everything downtown." ■

## 801 Chop House — still the one

The steakhouse was the brainchild of Jimmy Lynch, arguably both the most visionary and the most notorious restaurateur in our town.

A few years back, I was taking a food writers tour of Kansas City with a score of writers, most of them from Texas. My Dallas friends ran into restaurant buddies from home who were in town for a Rangers-Royals series. The Texas friends were raving about “the best steakhouse ever.” When they revealed that they were talking about 801 Chophouse, I smiled proudly.

801 Chophouse began in downtown Des Moines in 1993 just after construction of the state’s tallest building was finished. It was the brainchild of Jimmy Lynch, arguably both the most visionary and the most notorious restaurateur in our town.

Jimmy also opened 8th Street Seafood, Jimmy’s American Café, Pain, Pane, and Cabo San Lucas. All were ahead of their time. Jimmy lost all his restaurants except 801 in a sexual harassment lawsuit of TMZ-level notoriety. Then he expanded 801 to Omaha, Kansas City, Leawood, Minneapolis, Denver, St. Louis and Tysons Corner.

R.W. Apple transformed 801 into legend. Apple, himself a legend, wrote most every front page “news analysis” in the New York Times over four decades. When he died, his frontpage obit in the Times wrote: “With his Dickensian byline, Churchillian brio and Falstaffian appetites, Mr. Apple, who was known as Johnny, was a singular presence at The Times almost from the moment he joined the metropolitan staff in 1963. He remained a colorful figure as new generations of journalists around him grew more pallid, and his encyclopedic knowledge, grace of expression — and above all his expense account — were the envy of his competitors, imitators, and peers.”

Johnny, who informed Bobby Kennedy that MLK had been shot, was the undisputed king of the Iowa caucuses. He paid deep attention to them and to the relatively unknown Jimmy Carter in 1972. Everyone in international media deferred to his wisdom, particularly when it came to restaurants. He proclaimed 801 one of America’s best, and everyone listened.

Jimmy reserved a booth for Johnny every day during caucus season, and Apple would release it if he was somewhere else. To keep Apple on the election beat, the Times gave him a new title — food correspondent at large. He abused it and its expense account.

Greater Des Moines is suddenly awash in high-end steak houses. 801 is still the one the others must use as measure. It exudes Lynch’s genius for detail. The art work, mostly of bulls, is by Pablo Picasso, Frederic Remington, Bud Snidow, Keith Nelson and Frank Champion Murphy. It depicts bovine splendor, from the Iowa State Fair’s grand champion cow of 1902 to a giant bronze bull in the center of the dining room. Leather, wood, glass and bronze exude the aroma of power.

The menu looks much the same as it did in 1993, except for prices. Top chef Brian Dennis has manned the kitchen for a quarter-century as things like lobster mac and cheese, roasted marrow bones, strawberry salad and Kurobuta pork chops have been added to stalwart legacies — lamb chops, red king crab legs, Chilean sea bass, seafood towers and foie gras. To my memory, only veal has been retired.

Steaks, still all USDA prime, have become more specific. Wet aging, dry aging

### 801 CHOPHOUSE

801 Grand Ave., Suite 200,  
Des Moines  
515-288-6000  
Monday–Saturday, 5-10 p.m.;  
Sunday, 5-9 p.m.



801 prime

and A5 wagyu from Japan are options. They can be prepared with bone marrow butter, black truffle butter, red king crab Oscar and cognac cream.

801 is one of a few places where experience is impervious to prices. It can be quite expensive; everything is a la carte including sides, salads and steak preparations. As with the Texans in Kansas City, experience is remembered, not cost.

Super bargains are available, too. Marvelous sour dough from La Brea Bakery in Los Angeles is complimentary. (Its starter is from 1989 with yeast from organic grape skins.) Happy hour offers \$10 martinis or Manhattans, \$7 filet sliders, \$2 oysters on the half shell, and \$4 jumbo shrimp cocktails among other things. Sunday Supper brings three courses with two sides, and a filet, prime rib or salmon for \$62.

Service is class. On my recent visit, the general manager was bussing tables in suit and tie. That exemplifies 801’s expression of Iowa style. ■

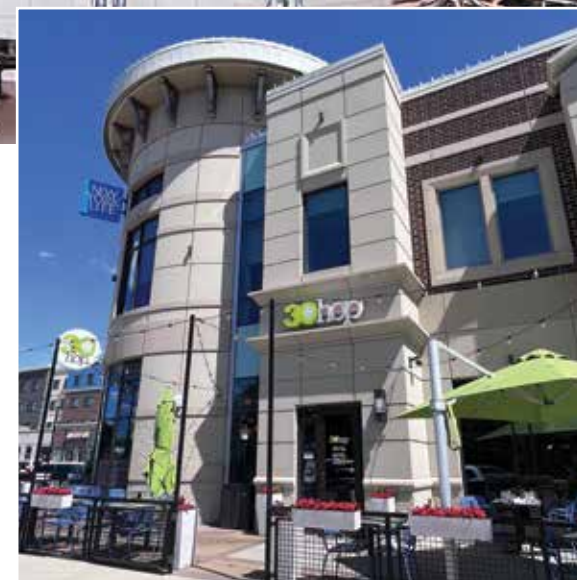
*Jim Duncan is a food writer who has been covering the central Iowa scene for more than five decades.*

# BELLY UP TO:

EAT & DRINK

## 30HOP

1615 S.W. Main St., Suite 105, Ankeny  
515-289-0227  
www.30hop.com  
Monday-Thursday, 11 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.;  
Friday, 11 a.m. to 10:30 p.m.;  
Saturday, 10 a.m. to 10:30 p.m.,  
Sunday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.



## 30hop

Ankeny's District patio shines.

BY JACKIE WILSON

When approaching 30hop at The District at Prairie Trail in Ankeny, the colorful outdoor patio resembles a large downtown metro area. Maybe because, on the second story of the building, is a New York Life sign. Turning the corner, yet another patio provides both sun and shade options. Inside, the AC is cranked. Decisions. Decisions. Where to sit? The outdoor breeze in the shade seems idyllic on a warm Sunday afternoon to sit among vibrant flowers.

30hop is not a brewery with just 30 hops of beer, as some mistakenly believe. It's a full-service bar and restaurant with double the amount of beer and spirits, and then some. 30hop established itself in Coralville 10 years ago, and a second location popped up in Cedar Rapids. The owners moved west with its third location in Ankeny, opening in October 2022.

The colorful vibe, with its flower-lined patio, the lime green awning and blue chairs, provides a welcoming atmosphere. Inside, even more pops of color include green barstools, pale red chairs and unique lighting fixtures. Somehow, this joint doesn't feel like suburbia.

Looks aside, what matters is the food, drink and service, right? Turns out that the food and drinks match the décor with a unique menu. Service is spot on.

We arrived during "30hour," which is 30hop's new happy hour menu. From Sunday through Friday, from 3-6 p.m., patrons get \$30 off appetizers, draft beer, glasses of wine, house cocktails, well and call drinks.

The beer selection includes more than 30 rotating craft beers from local breweries, including Toppling Goliath Radiant Haze — a 16-ounce pour for \$7. With Confluence, Big Grove, Barntown, Gezellig and NoCoast, nearly every Iowa brewery is represented. Eight- to 20-ounce pours cost between \$3.50 and \$9. Cocktails include mules, agave, clear spirited, old fashioned and a spirit-free section. I chose the Strawberry Fields and persisted in humming the Beatles song long after I ordered it. The drink included citrus vodka, pureed strawberry, sour and cranberry for \$8.99. It's on par with regards to price of comparable metro spots' craft cocktails.

Appetizers rang in at 30% off from a list of nine apps, including street corn nachos, pretzel bites, buffalo cauliflower and honey strung brussels sprouts. These crispy brussels sprouts made with honey chili garlic sauce, creamy iso, wonton strips, sesame and scallion were \$12.99 and so flavorful. Who knew veggies could taste this good?

The dynamite shrimp was crispy with chili crunch and yum yum sauce, served on a bed of sushi rice and napa slaw for \$14.99. If you're there before 6 p.m., make sure you order one of these apps.

The main menu includes salads, which come in two sizes. The Very Berry salad, a gluten-friendly option, includes greens, strawberries, blueberries, candied pecan, goat cheese, honey vin with a balsamic glaze. A small cost \$6.99 and a large, \$10.99.

Tacos, burgers, sandos (sandwiches), noodle bowls,

rice bowls, wings and a kids menu round out the menu. A brunch happy hour includes \$1.99 double mimosas on weekends. A Monday night burger special gets you a classic burger for \$5.99.

During the summer, sit outside on the patio for live music on Wednesday nights. Or, stop at 30hop before or after the nearby District's outdoor concerts and other events.

30hop is one of those establishments that does everything right. The ambiance, décor, menu, service and happy hour are excellent reasons to hop over to Ankeny and check the place out. ■

# 2024 PATIO Guide



### BEST PATIO IN TOWN!

- Mon:** Hot Beef Sandwich \$12<sup>99</sup> (lunch only)
- Steak Night** 6 oz sirloin \$13<sup>99</sup> OR 8 oz ribeye \$14<sup>99</sup>
- Tues:** \$10 Any burger and draft beer!
- Wed:** Spaghetti Dinner \$12<sup>99</sup> Add 2 meatballs for \$1<sup>50</sup>.
- Thurs:** LIVE MUSIC! 6 PM • Meatball Subs for lunch
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# COMPLEX CRAZY

Community sports complexes are becoming more popular in Des Moines' suburbs than picket fences and cul de sacs. Is that a good thing?

By Cyote Williams

Since 2021, several Des Moines suburbs have opened massive, multi-million-dollar, multi-use sports complexes. In West Des Moines, development costs for the MidAmerican Energy RecPlex were close to \$60 million in 2021, according to the Business Record. Waukee launched Triumph Park in cooperation with Confluence and received positive shoutouts from Apple CEO Tim Cook in 2022. In 2023, two more suburbs opened their sports complexes. The development costs for GrimesPlex in Grimes, which was initially a private venture that became a public one, and the Gregg Young Sports Campus in Norwalk were both upwards of \$30 million.

Several other communities have either had proposals or groundbreakings of their own. In Johnston, Ignit Sports and Fitness expects to have construction completed by the end of 2025 with an estimated cost of \$55 million. Waukee is expected to gain another complex in addition to Triumph Park. The Kettlestone Central

Sports Complex is part of a \$350-million development, expected to include two 65,000-square-foot buildings with six full-size basketball courts with stadium seating. Urbandale residents, on the other hand, bucked the trend when they voted against the proposed \$43 million Uplex in 2023.

Without mentioning the existing sports complexes in the Des Moines area, that's six multi-use community sports complexes that have been either proposed, broke ground, or built in the last three years — all of which have been, or largely will be, funded by public dollars.

Add in the soccer and baseball complexes like Prairie Ridge, Spring Creek Soccer Complex and Hidden Valley, not to mention local communities' sports fields, and, at a glance, the market seems saturated. Is there a need for more sports complexes, and are they worth the tens of millions of dollars in investment?

The indoor field at the RecPlex has hosted youth sports tournaments ranging from basketball to volleyball, wrestling and more.

# THE DEMAND

City of Grimes Marketing and Communications Manager Whitney Tucker says there certainly is a demand.

“Each of these facilities are starting to have their own niche. We have soccer and baseball here, and they have hockey and basketball over at the RecPlex. So, there’s plenty of demand and plenty of unique opportunities,” Tucker said. “It really is such a big part of the Midwest culture. That demand is there to support multiple facilities. Our tournaments are booked every weekend, and, during the fall, we have practices practically every weeknight.”

Des Moines Parks and Recreation Director Benjamin Page agrees.

“I 100% echo that. We won’t see (more) anytime soon because these things are expensive, and they usually take public money to build,” Page said. “Right now, what you’re seeing is, COVID did what 9/11 did for law enforcement and public safety. It put them on the map and gave them more funding to take on those types of things.”

Shayne Ratcliff, the general manager of the RecPlex, says that there’s more than enough demand to accommodate the growing number of complexes.

“I don’t know that Des Moines will have too many for the market, but I would say we were definitely lacking in terms of recreational and sports facility opportunities,” Ratcliff said. “What appears to be a boom in building is simply a ‘catch-up’ to what other metro areas have had for many years before us. Before new complexes like the RecPlex, many users utilized school and church gymnasiums in order to meet the demand, but that is becoming less and less with the arrival of sports-dedicated complexes.”

Ratcliff says these complexes not only take the burden off schools and churches, but they also lighten the load for existing outdoor complexes.

“The GrimesPlex and Gregg Young are simply large outdoor complexes

that will help to relieve the pressures currently felt on natural grass complexes throughout the metro,” Ratcliff said. “The outdoor synthetic turf market will eventually become saturated as more of these complexes are being considered, but the ability to play year-round indoors with no concern for weather will keep the demand for synthetic outdoor fields high for many years to come.”

Brian Becker, Grimes parks and recreation director, along with Page, Tucker and Ratcliff, agree that the complexes they manage have no problem filling their fields, rinks and courts — and all mentioned that they have had to turn some away.

Biswa Das, PhD., associate professor and extension specialist for the Department of Community and Regional Planning, says there is indeed a demand for sports facilities.

“Central Iowa is growing at a much faster pace compared to the rest of Iowa. Ankeny, Waukee and other cities are experiencing rapid growth. The local demographics also point to the influx of young families with children. Further, the success of existing recreational amenities also points at a growing appetite in the region for more such opportunities,” Das said.

Urbandale residents overwhelmingly voted against the building of the U-Plex in March of 2023. If passed, the bond referendum required to fund the complex would have increased property taxes by roughly 12%. The city said that, for a \$200,000 home, that would be \$119 each year for the next 20 years. The planned location at 152nd Street near Meredith Drive would have placed the complex on the far west side of Urbandale, making it close to existing complexes, and not enough residents were convinced to invest their tax dollars into the project.

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# RECOUPING THE COSTS AND ECONOMIC IMPACT

FEATURE STORY

Each of these recently built complexes was funded to some extent by public dollars. According to the Business Journal, “\$59.8 million, including \$16.5 million in city bonds backed by future local option sales tax revenue, \$16.4 million in city bonds backed by future hotel-motel tax revenue, \$12.4 million in corporate and individual donations and pledges, and a mix of other grants, loans and tax revenue,” went into the development costs for the RecPlex.

“Since opening, the RecPlex has generated over \$40 million in direct economic impact spending in and around the local community, solidifying the return on the public investment in the project,” Ratcliff said.

Ratcliff says the reason the RecPlex



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has been able to have a successful return on investment is its ability to pull from multiple revenue streams.

“Currently, our revenue is comprised of approximately 50% from surface rentals, 20% from programming, 20% from concessions and 10% from advertising, leases and other extras,” Ratcliff said.

The RecPlex has also benefitted the businesses in the surrounding area.

“This past year, we had over 1 million visitors come through the RecPlex doors, and they are visiting the local businesses on a regular basis. We receive calls from the local restaurants regularly asking for our events

schedule so they can staff accordingly, as they are getting flooded with business whenever we have events,” Ratcliff said.

It’s a similar story for the GrimesPlex.

“In terms of economic impact, we had a third-party analysis done, starting from where we made the decision to take over the project. It predicted we’d have an impact of \$11 million a year,” Tucker said.

With the costs of the GrimesPlex estimated at \$31 million, Tucker and Becker agree that the complex will make a positive return on that investment after three to four years of operation.

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“Recreation complexes are not new. They have been around in many places for a long time. There is a renewed sense that these venues are a good investment for communities,” Das said. “Usually, they are done as public-private partnerships, with significant contributions from the private sector, foundations and philanthropists. While sports and recreation are the major goals, these facilities also serve as major contributors to the local economy. Each of the complexes is unique in their scale and scope. As we would expect, the investments also vary widely.”

Das mentioned that the complexes being built are not just a trend for the Des Moines metro. He names the TBK Bank Sports Complex in Bettendorf and the JBS Sports Center in southeast Iowa as other examples.

“Cities usually try to maximize the non-public portion of the funds necessary in an effort to keep the city and county portions smaller. For example, the RecPlex received about \$10 million in donations, thereby restricting the cost to the city. Given that almost all of them (sports complexes) generate varying revenues, the time taken to pay off borrowing varies. The time required to make money could vary with the scale of operations, and it is hard to provide a defined timeline. In conversations with local officials, it is my understanding that it could range anywhere from five to 10 years,” Das said.

Critics of these sports complexes point to the low tax revenue that they



FEATURE STORY

“In addition to competitions, we have hosted special events with several businesses and used it as a training center for local healthcare organizations as well as other City Departments,” Shayne Ratcliff said.

generate. According to The Des Moines Register, property taxes account for 50-60% of Des Moines’ revenue. If these complexes are to be the driving economic forces their managers and directors claim they will be, development needs to continue around them to generate more property taxes for the cities. Otherwise, the burden to pay them off could fall on taxpayers. Metro-area municipalities could end up with the same headache that Westfield, Indiana, is experiencing with its youth sports complex, Grand Park. The complex has succeeded in bringing visitors and exposure to the town, but it continues to struggle in paying back its bond payments. The \$80 million that Westfield owes towers above the totals paid for central Iowa complexes, but the concern remains.



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# WORKING TOGETHER

Previously, Des Moines didn't have the capabilities to support large-scale tournaments. Now that the surrounding communities are building these complexes, working together could see national events come to the area.

"Now, the philosophy we have is, 'Let's just partner together.' In the past, we didn't have a partner in Des Moines, and the suburbs weren't built out like they are now," Page said. With the number of complexes in the area, it is possible to bid for events by packaging them together, he said. "You might have to play in Clive in the morning and Grimes in the afternoon."

Through collaboration, the Des Moines metro could bring in larger tournaments, to the benefit of the complexes they manage, as well as the businesses in those areas, Page said.

"What we would like to do is to work together with everybody, with Catch Des Moines kind of quarterbacking the whole thing and organizing the events. We cross our fingers and, hopefully, we can get some big tournaments coming in," Page said.

Youth sports is a \$19 billion industry in the U.S. according to Youth Athletes United, which is equal to the \$19 billion in revenue the National Football League reported after its 2022 season. While youth sports participation rates are trending down nationally, that's not the case in Iowa. According to a study by usafacts.org, Iowa had the second-highest youth sports participation percentage in the U.S. at 67.8%. If central Iowa is able to capitalize on the multi-billion-dollar industry by being a desirable location for youth sports in the country, the growing number of community sports complexes in the area may be able to pay dividends sooner rather than later.

The RecPlex alone has hosted national sporting events such as the AAU Junior Olympics, NAIA Men's National Volleyball Championships, Major League Quidditch Championship, State Games of America, and the National Golden Age Games. It will also host the National Senior Games in 2025 and another round of the AAU Junior Olympics in 2026.

# OFFERINGS

Each of these complexes offers a range of different programs and activities from summer camps, fields open to the public, courts available to rent with friends, a space for children's games or practices, or a spot for the growing number of adult sports leagues.

The RecPlex has a few amenities that most of these complexes don't offer including its hockey rinks and Esports Center.

"As with any new trend, the Esports Center has taken the longest to grow, but this past year was a huge success. We hosted nearly 100 birthday parties, we were the practice center for two local high schools, we welcomed 10 sold-out weeks of our popular Healthy Esports Camps and capped it all off with Iowa High School Esports Championships," Ratcliff said.

The RecPlex also has an indoor ice arena that seats up to 2,400 people along with an indoor multipurpose turf field, pickleball and basketball courts.

At the GrimesPlex, the 50-acre complex sports double-digit synthetic turf fields, 12 full-size soccer fields, 18 baseball/softball fields and, coming soon, 36 batting cages and 36 bullpens. Becker says the construction is 95% complete.



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What many industries saw during and in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic were losses and shutdowns that many have yet to fully recover from. However, that was not the case with parks and outdoor sports complexes.

“People needed to go somewhere, and, with everything else shut down, parks and recreation didn’t shut down. Then people picked up golf clubs again for the first time or they got their kids involved in soccer, or whatever the sport may be,” Page said. “We’ve seen a huge uptick since COVID in people wanting to do more recreational/competitive sports.”

The ability of these complexes to host adult sports leagues gives them the chance to bring in more than just the local Little League or soccer team. While these leagues once struggled to find space, they no longer have that issue. Giving adult sports leagues the chance to grow creates another possible revenue stream for these complexes.

“People usually support a place to host events, draw people to their communities, and provide the community an opportunity to interact. Sports and recreation contribute significantly to perceptions of quality of life. Thus, local leadership is usually looking to pursue such opportunities,” Das said, noting that improving quality of life isn’t just beneficial to the people living in the area.

“Businesses also tend to prefer places that offer a good quality of life. Sports complexes contribute significantly to a positive perception. While it is hard to measure, positive perceptions can often translate into tangible benefits for a community,” Das said. ■



The GrimesPlex has been able to host a multitude of youth sports camps, leagues and practices thanks to its double-digit amount of synthetic turf fields. Photo courtesy GrimesPlex



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## Not Quite Brothers

Band got its name as the lead singer and guitarist are twins.

“Ain’t looking for nothing, but a good time and it don’t get better than this.”

The lyrics from a Poison song surge from Sam Johnson’s mouth. Jumping up and down to the beat, band members chime in with guitars and drums — mimicking the real band.

A Van Halen song comes next with screaming guitar licks. Live rock music — and not from a boomer musician — is still kicking with the band Not Quite Brothers.

Not Quite Brothers hails from Cedar Falls. Cooper Corcoran, who plays on rhythm guitar for the band, recently chatted with CITYVIEW.

Corcoran and Isaac Johnson, lead guitarist and backup vocals, both attended high school and played in a band together. Isaac’s twin brother, Sam, joined the band as lead vocalist, and the band formed in 2018. Other band members include Ben Schmelzer and Nathan Klein.

Not Quite Brothers got its name as the lead singer and guitarist are twins.

“No, they don’t look alike. When it was the three of us, I was the odd man out. The rest of us aren’t related, which is how we came up with the name,” Cooper Corcoran explains.

The band began playing rock tunes from the 1970s and 1980s that they all “know and love.” They have added new songs from nearly all decades of music to their repertoire, including a few country tunes. Folks often ask how a Generation Z band can play music that they didn’t grow up listening to. He credits listening to his parents’ music as a kid.

“The ongoing joke is that we play music that was released before we were ever born,” he said.

Music by Tom Petty, Aerosmith and KISS frequent their setlist.

“We’ve been compared to older musicians such as

Van Halen or Led Zeppelin. It just comes naturally due to the songs we cover,” he says.

The age of the concert goer varies based on the venue or event.

“We all have a say in the music. Sometimes we’ll listen to a song on the radio and say, ‘We gotta do that song.’ We sometimes choose a different setlist based on the audience.”

However, they recently uncovered an interesting demographic trend.

“Based on our stats, our fanbase tends to be women age 45 to 54. For some reason, we miss out on the folks in their 30s, which means they could be at home raising kids instead of going to concerts,” he explains.

Baby boomers embrace the band as well, plus they found a new demographic of college-age kids. Their rocker parents also embrace their sons’ music careers.

“They’ve been nothing but incredibly supportive. We’ll go out seven hours from here, and our parents are in the crowd.”

Recently, the band performed to sold-out shows in Des Moines and Omaha. They have opened for Tesla, Buckcherry and FireHouse. Corcoran says it was his dream to play the Surf Ballroom in Clear Lake, and it came true. The band played a New Year’s Eve show where they recorded the concert for their social media sites.

“It was definitely one for the books,” he says.

Starting a band as a teenager provides the ability to mature together.

“I think of the band members as a true team. The lighting and sound guys, and the support from the crowd, all work together. I wouldn’t trade that for anything. Lots of cool relationships are formed from playing music. I didn’t expect that as a 16-year-old forming a band,” he reflects.

When fans are screaming and singing along with



their songs, or wearing their T-shirts in the audience, it’s an incredible sight.

“I see the fans from the stage, and I want to thank them. The shows don’t go on without the fans. I consider it a privilege to know them,” he says. “Come out whether it’s your first time or 15th time. We’d love to see you.”

Catch Not Quite Brothers July 13 at Ankeny Summerfest, July 19 at the Waukee Arts Festival, Aug. 1 at Jasper Winery, and Aug. 16 at the Iowa State Fair MidAmerican Energy Stage. ■

## SOUND ADVICE

BY JACKIE WILSON

If you’re an outdoor concert lover, the Des Moines metro has numerous musical options. The Waukee Arts Festival at Centennial Park in Waukee offers free music on the main stage. On July 19, **Brittney Sword**, **Bonne Finken** and **Not Quite Brothers**. On July 20, **Dan Medeiros**, **June Bugs DSM** and **The Pork Tornadoes**.

Hinterland Music Festival is back at the Saints

Amphitheater in St. Charles from Aug. 2-4. Headlining acts include **Hozier**, **Vampire Weekend** and **Noah Kahan**. A total of 30 bands perform on two stages. For more info, visit [www.hinterlandiowa.com](http://www.hinterlandiowa.com).

The Beaverdale Bluegrass Festival takes place July 20 at Tower Park in Des Moines. This free concert includes four different bluegrass bands, **River City**

**Opry**, **Miles Over Mountains**, **Flash in the Pan** and **The Baberhood Bluegrass Band**.

Looking for wild animals and live music? Blank Park Zoo’s Zoo Brew is back on Wednesday evenings. On July 10, **Plastic Apartment**; July 17, **Red Dirt Renegades**; July 24, **Bittersweet Nation**; and July 31, **The Sheet**. Admission \$25 or \$10 for zoo members. ■

## 'Hit Man' is a must-watch for fans of quirky, well-written comedies

The film transitions seamlessly between comedy and drama, with an unexpected twist halfway through that revitalizes the plot and keeps viewers engaged.

"Hit Man" is a surprising gem that blends comedy, action and romance into an unexpectedly delightful package. At the heart of the film is Glen Powell, who delivers a standout performance as Gary Johnson, a mild-mannered college professor moonlighting as a fake hitman for the New Orleans Police Department. Powell co-wrote the screenplay with director Richard Linklater, making this film a personal project that showcases his versatility and range. His role requires him to adopt various personas to trap those looking to hire a hitman, and Powell's ability to seamlessly shift between these identities is truly impressive.

Adria Arjona, who plays Madison, a near-client turned love interest, brings a spontaneous and erratic energy to the film, making their budding romance both charming and unpredictable. In an interview, Linklater noted that casting Madison was crucial, as the character needed to be both sympathetic and captivating — and Arjona delivers on all fronts. Their on-screen chemistry provide a core emotional and comedic balance that keeps the audience engaged from start to finish.

The supporting cast also deserves praise for their contributions. Retta plays Claudette, Gary's police chaperone and supervisor, whose practical insights into crime stories add a layer of authenticity to the film. Sanjay Rao as Phil, Claudette's partner and the tech guy in the van, provides comic relief with his naturalistic performance. Austin Amelio plays Jasper, the dirty cop whose suspension leads to Gary taking the fake hitman job. Amelio's portrayal of Jasper's erratic and unpredictable nature adds tension and intrigue throughout the flick.

Director Richard Linklater, known for his ability to craft engaging narratives, brings his expertise to "Hit Man." The film transitions seamlessly between comedy and drama, with an unexpected twist halfway through that revitalizes the plot and keeps viewers engaged. Linklater's direction ensures that the film's pacing never falters, making each scene compelling and entertaining. His collaboration with Powell, dating back to when Powell was a teen actor in Linklater's "Fast Food Nation," is evident in the film's cohesive storytelling and dynamic character development.

The unpredictability of the storyline is one of its



### "Hit Man"

R | 115 minutes

Director: Richard Linklater

Writers: Richard Linklater, Glen Powell, Skip Hollandsworth

Stars: Glen Powell, Adria Arjona, Austin Amelio

greatest assets. Just when you think you have the plot figured out, "Hit Man" throws a curveball that keeps the narrative fresh and exciting. This unpredictability extends to the film's conclusion, which is both satisfying and leaves room for potential sequels.

Despite initial low expectations, "Hit Man" surpasses them with its smart script, strong performances and thoughtful direction. Linklater and Powell's writing effectively balances humor with heartfelt moments, ensuring that even during slower scenes, the audience remains captivated. The attention to detail in the character development and the intricate plot twists make it a film worth watching multiple times.

Powell's performance is the standout, but the entire cast brings the story to life. The film's comedic elements are perfectly timed, and the life lessons subtly woven into the narrative leave a lasting impact. It's a film that encourages viewers to reflect on their own lives while enjoying the comedic escapades of its characters.

Finally we may be able to return to the days of the R-rated comedy (instead of relying on Ryan Reynolds and "Deadpool") as "Hit Man" is a must-watch for fans of quirky, well-written comedies. It offers a unique blend of humor, action and romance that is rarely seen in today's cinematic landscape. With exceptional performances, especially by Glen Powell, and masterful direction by Richard Linklater, "Hit Man" is a film that will leave you entertained and thinking long after the credits roll. ■

### "The Exorcism"

R | 93 minutes

Director: Joshua John Miller

Writers: M.A. Fortin, Joshua John Miller

Stars: Russell Crowe, Ryan Simpkins, Sam Worthington



To answer the obvious question: Yes, this sounds extremely familiar. Russell Crowe, in a clerical collar, battling a demon — we just saw this in last year's "The Pope's Exorcist," right? Yes, and the background of "The Exorcism" is even stranger. Written and directed by Joshua John Miller — son of Jason Miller, who played Father Damien Karras in 1973's "The Exorcist" — the movie is inspired by his father's stories about the troubled production of "The Exorcist." Miller wrote this film as a semi-autobiographical piece, with Crowe's character, Anthony Miller, potentially inspired by his own father. Russell Crowe stars as Anthony Miller, a troubled actor who begins to unravel while shooting a supernatural horror film. His estranged daughter, Lee (Ryan Simpkins), wonders if he's slipping back into his past addictions or if there's something more sinister at play.

### "Thelma"

PG-13 | 97 minutes

Director/Writer: Josh Margolin

Stars: June Squibb, Fred Hechinger, Richard Roundtree



In "Thelma," June Squibb shines as the spirited titular heroine, embarking on a thrilling quest after falling victim to a scam targeting the elderly. At 94 years old, Squibb effortlessly commands the screen, delivering a performance that blends humor and determination. Alongside Richard Roundtree's Ben, Thelma dives headfirst into a world of high-stakes schemes, reclaiming her dignity with every twist and turn. Supported by a talented cast including Parker Posey and Clark Gregg, "Thelma" promises a rollercoaster of emotions and thrills. As the film unfolds, Thelma's unwavering spirit shines through, leaving audiences inspired by her determination to confront adversity head-on. Director Josh Margolin deftly mixes heart-pounding action reminiscent of "Mission: Impossible" with poignant reflections on aging and independence. Thelma and Ben's journey not only entertains but also explores themes of resilience and pride. As she triumphs over challenges, Thelma reminds viewers of the enduring power of perseverance and the importance of embracing life's adventures, no matter the age.

### "What Remains"

131 minutes

Director: Ran Huang

Writers: Megan Everett-Skarsgard, Ran Huang

Stars: Stellan Skarsgård, Gustaf Skarsgård, Andrea Riseborough



Experience the haunting mystery of "What Remains," Ran Huang's poignant directorial debut. Set against the stark backdrop of Scandinavia's haunting landscapes, the film unfolds as Mads (Gustav Skarsgård), an inmate at a psychiatric institute, confronts his connection to decades-old murders. Supported by therapist Anna (Andrea Riseborough) and police officer Soren (Stellan Skarsgård), Mads grapples with the shadows of his own actions, weaving a web of complex relationships that blur the lines between victim and perpetrator. In Huang's controlled narrative, the austere architecture mirrors the characters' fractured lives, while the performances draw us into a world where moral boundaries dissolve. As Anna's maternal instincts clash with Mads' troubled past and Soren seeks redemption from his own demons, "What Remains" probes the depths of human frailty and resilience. ■

## Sarah Grant's Independence Day party

Seeing the USA in a Chevrolet

Sarah Grant has returned to her camp stake roots. The grand dame of Des Moines' art scene has opened a celebrative new solo show at Moberg Gallery. Grant has always worn her art on her sleeve, and these new works reveal a happy landing for the retired Sticks founder who recruited and gave some 200 artists a reason to live in Des Moines.

"I turn 70 in October. That realization made me think, 'I'm still a child. How to reflect that?'" Grant decided to mix it up and let her mind's eye revisit old places she still remembers. When her inner child mused upon those places, she remembered them most fondly.

"My family believed in seeing the USA in a Chevrolet. If there is any sort of theme in this show, it's a celebration of America. The show runs through the Fourth of July. I love America and want to say that. I think that needs to be said within the current state of affairs."

Her painting "Frontier" replays the massacre that took place on the "Greasy Grass" by the Little Big Horn River just 10 days before America's centennial celebration. George Armstrong Custer had been striving for a quick victory so he could make it back to Washington for the Fourth of July parties.

There have been many paintings of that battle. They were well-known 50 years ago, thanks to Budweiser which gave them to tens of thousands of taverns that sold Bud on tap. Most of those depicted huddles of men and hordes of horse men enveloped in clouds of smoke, blood and dust. Grant turns the slaughter into swirling bloodless colors, chaotic but revealing that, in Yeat's words, "a terrible beauty has been born."

Trying out a quite different style, "Vine, Fig and Cherry Blossom" absorbs a subtle Japanese aesthetic, saying so much with just brushstrokes and simplicity.

"With paper in mind, I wanted lines to show over the washes. I am afraid this painting asks, 'Is she schizophrenic?'"

Other paintings recall a life full of other happy journeys — to Morocco, Cape shores, Italy, Belize and its neighboring cays, high plateaus "during the pink moon," and pollinators as adventurous as



"Frontier" is Grant's reflection on the Battle of Little Big Horn.

swashbuckler bees.

"I tried not to get heavy, but I really lost myself in the Pink Moon. I watched it alone. My husband went fishing, and the power was out."

Food announces itself in brief figurative escapes from her impressionist paper and canvases.

"I consider myself as much a culinary artist as a painter. That's where I am, so that's what I sometimes paint now."

Bon appetite.

### RIP

Morgan Spurlock, the filmmaker who rose to fame for "Super Size Me," died last month. For his best known movie, Spurlock ate only at McDonalds for an entire month, registering his rising blood pressure. He was 53.

### Road trips

The year was 1783. Great Britain officially lost America in the Treaty of Paris. Believing his work was done, George Washington retired to his Mount Vernon spread. The British court consoled itself with naughtiness.

Years before he was George IV, the Prince of Wales

felt compelled to send the widow Maria Fitzherbert a token of his most inappropriate love. That gesture, like its accompanying ardor, was frowned upon by George III and his court. So, the prince commissioned a miniaturist to paint only Maria's eye, supposedly preserving anonymity and decorum. Maria's eye miniature was worn under George IV's lapel.

The couple went through a form of invalid marriage in 1785 and gossip went 18th century viral. "Lovers' eyes" became vogue in the courts and rich homes of England, Russia, France and even America.

"Eternal Love and Loss: Hairwork and Eye Miniatures" are featured in a new show at Kansas City's Nelson-Atkins through next April.

"Talking to Mother Clay: Pueblo Pottery from the GCMoA Collection" plays Grinnell College Museum of Art, formerly known as the Faulconer, through Sept. 8.

### Now playing

b. Robert Moore, Des Moines' most celebrated painter, is featured in a solo version of Des Moines Art Center's Iowa Artist Exhibition - "b. Robert Moore in Loving Memory," through Oct. 20. ■



## Nancy Carlson Expressions

Upcycled window frames offer inspiration.



"Iowa Ride" by Nancy Carlson

When a friend replaced her old windows with newer, modern windows, she gave the weathered window pane frames to Nancy Carlson. Her friend suggested using the old windows to paint on them, requesting an Iowa State Cyclone theme. The cardinal red and yellow piece was a success, and Carlson felt inspired to paint on glass.

However, Nancy knew that she couldn't sell logo work without a license, so she began painting other objects on glass. Before long, a new art career was born. Nancy likes how the color pops on the glass.

"It's like a stained glass piece, but it doesn't reflect color," she explains.

Vibrant colors is Carlson's signature look. "I like a lot of color, and I often come up with my own shades," she says.

As an avid gardener, many of her paintings are inspired by her home garden. She's also a bicyclist and has connections with the biking community. She's painted bicycles on glass, including a RAGBRAI team bus painting. Bike commission pieces are a frequent request. A rolling bicycle scene among cornfields is a favorite.

Each painting is unique, as no two paintings or frames are the same. Folks who purchase art display it on walls or windows where the color is transparent. Carlson likes how the clear glass surrounding the painting takes on a fresh dimension, depending on the color of the wall where it is hung.

"I have a pink wall in my house to match the art."

She often uses upcycled materials. She'll scour thrift stores, secondhand and consignment shops for unique frames. Carlson often discovers a framed art piece and rips out the old art. Frames give her inspiration for her next painting.

"It is the frames that say to me 'I need to have a bird in

me.' The gold frame needs a goldfinch. Often, I sit on a frame for a long time before inspiration comes," she reflects.

She has painted many wine glasses and clear vases. Commissioned work includes numerous bikes and sunflowers, as well as animals for a nursery wall.

"Somebody wanted one of the last supper," she recalls. "I don't do Leonardo. I love the challenge of a commission piece. I never thought I would be do a wedding portrait, but I did."

The most difficult part of her craft is selling outside at art shows.

"It makes me nervous," she admits. "The wind is unpredictable. Most art shows are outside, and there's not a lot of opportunity for artists beyond outdoor events," she explains.

After she retired from her job as a graphic designer, she began painting on glass full-time. The biggest challenge of her craft is a similar sentiment shared by other artists.

"It's a challenge getting enough eyeballs on your piece and finding the right audience," she says.

Once art lovers discover her work on her Facebook page or by word of mouth, she relishes in the satisfaction.

"I love it when people look at my artwork. It puts a smile on their face and on mine," she says.

Find Nancy Carlson's work at the Reiman Gardens Art Fair on July 14 or check her Facebook page at Nancy Carlson Expressions. ■

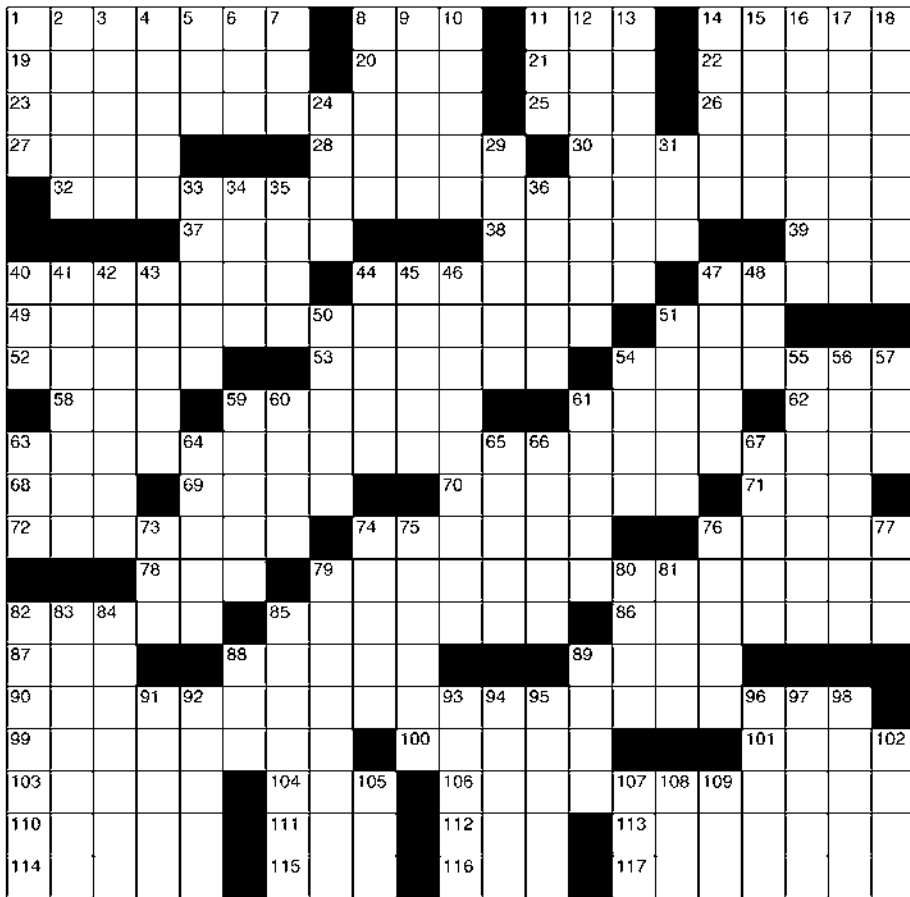


"Three of a Kind" by Nancy Carlson

# PUZZLES

Find answers at [www.dmcityview.com/the-games](http://www.dmcityview.com/the-games)

## SINISTER SQUIRT



- ACROSS**
- 1 Biblical figure slain for being a 69-Across
  - 8 G.P.'s gp.
  - 11 Dangerous snake
  - 14 Detest
  - 19 Actress Bertinelli
  - 20 Throw slowly in a high arc
  - 21 Cola-cooling cubes
  - 22 Novelist Zora -- Hurston
  - 23 Start of a riddle
  - 25 Blemish
  - 26 Gave hints to
  - 27 With 15-Down, no higher than
  - 28 Skating feats
  - 30 "Jolly old" saint
  - 32 Riddle, part 2
  - 37 "Hello, sailor!"
  - 38 58, to Nero
  - 39 Viral gene material
  - 40 Silvery metallic element
  - 44 Moseying
  - 47 TV "dog whisperer" Millan
  - 49 Riddle, part 3
  - 51 Sneaky
  - 52 Knitters' supplies
  - 53 Greek herald of the gods
  - 54 Perilous thing to live on
  - 58 Big antelope
  - 59 Position while batting
  - 61 Bristly swine
  - 62 Always, to bards
  - 63 Riddle, part 4
  - 68 Academic URL ender
  - 69 Person not telling the truth
  - 70 Liam of "Schindler's List"
  - 71 Above, to bards
  - 72 Dangerous snakes
  - 74 Met, as the challenge
  - 76 Jargon
  - 78 Pro vote
  - 79 Riddle, part 5
  - 82 Up one's auction offer
  - 85 Starting charge, as on a utility bill
  - 86 Enters warily
  - 87 Master pilot
  - 88 Former
  - 89 Dark blue dye
  - 90 End of the riddle
  - 99 Completely destroy
  - 100 "Reckless" actor Quinn
  - 101 Above
  - 103 Flaring dress
  - 104 Noise from a beehive
  - 106 Riddle's answer
  - 110 Country east of Fiji
  - 111 Geisha's sash
  - 112 Old sitcom cousin
  - 113 Opening in some helmets
  - 114 Unsettled feeling
  - 115 Hush-hush intel org.
  - 116 Baggage inspection org.
  - 117 32 Beethoven piano pieces
  - DOWN**
  - 1 Brand of sneakers
  - 2 U.S.-Can.-Mex. treaty
  - 3 Choir parts
  - 4 First prime minister of India
  - 5 Fury
  - 6 Breathed-in stuff
  - 7 Catch a glimpse of
  - 8 Soccer Hall of Famer Lolas
  - 9 Prized mushroom
  - 10 Clear as --
  - 11 Intention
  - 12 Reading digitally
  - 13 18th-century powdered hairpiece
  - 14 -- chili (pepper variety)
  - 15 See 27-Across
  - 16 Transporting trucks
  - 17 David Mamet play or film
  - 18 Antares or Arcturus
  - 24 Like some permed hair
  - 29 -- Mae (loan provider)
  - 31 The Windy City, for short
  - 33 Tylenol targets
  - 34 Barak of Israel
  - 35 CD -- (PC inserts)
  - 36 Political columnist Molly
  - 40 "Wahoo!"
  - 41 Awful event
  - 42 Detached roughly
  - 43 Accumulate, as debts
  - 44 "Well, -- you special!"
  - 45 Take part in a parade
  - 46 Via
  - 47 Deaf school co-founder Laurent
  - 48 Body blinker
  - 50 "Why Can't I?" singer Liz Cassidy
  - 51 "Hey Deanie" singer
  - 54 Hurry-scurry
  - 55 Protects
  - 56 18th-century English king
  - 57 Have it wrong
  - 59 French river
  - 60 "-- not to be"
  - 61 Particle in quantum mechanics
  - 63 Lively spirit
  - 64 Sir Andrew -- Webber
  - 65 Irk
  - 66 Knot anew
  - 67 Linen fabric
  - 73 "Bali --" (show tune)
  - 74 Put new turf on
  - 75 Mafia's code of silence
  - 76 Glove thread
  - 77 Have
  - 79 Major train terminals
  - 80 Rowlands of "Hope Floats"
  - 81 Hurt badly
  - 82 Initial input to be processed
  - 83 Level of command
  - 84 Having a big smile
  - 85 Apply with a bristly tool
  - 88 Luau paste
  - 89 Singer Murray
  - 91 Salad bar utensil
  - 92 Gripper on a shoe bottom
  - 93 "Start playing the song!"
  - 94 Revises
  - 95 Crimean resort port
  - 96 Kind of yoga
  - 97 "Some Like --"
  - 98 Cash, informally
  - 102 Corp. honcho
  - 105 Soccer Hall of Famer Hamm
  - 107 Marks, as a ballot box
  - 108 Philosopher -- -tzu
  - 109 Big vase

### SCRAMBLERS

Unscramble the letters within each rectangle to form four ordinary words. Then rearrange the boxed letters to form the mystery word, which will complete the gag!

Design  
**SLYTE**

Doze  
**RUMBLES**

Stage  
**SHAPE**

Refuse  
**SWEAT**

**TODAY'S WORD**

"I'm writing another check for the \_\_\_\_\_ salon— when are they going to finish the job?"

### SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

	7	4		1	3		
5				4			2
		8	3				5
	5				6	8	
9			5				1
		7	2	1			6
	6	5	9				1
8					4		3
	4				2	7	

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

**DIFFICULTY: ♦♦♦**

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging  
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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### SNOWFLAKES

by Japheth Light

There are 13 black hexagons in the puzzle. Place the numbers 1 - 6 around each of them. No number can be repeated in any partial hexagon shape along the border of the puzzle.

**DIFFICULTY: ♦♦♦♦**

♦ Easy ♦♦ Medium ♦♦♦♦ Difficult

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### GO FIGURE!

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

	-		+		= 8			
+		+		+				
	+		+		= 21			
÷		×		+				
	+		+		= 14			
=		=		=				
5		24		23				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

**DIFFICULTY: ★**

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult  
★★★ GO FIGURE!

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# WHAT THE...

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Email to [celeste@dmcityview.com](mailto:celeste@dmcityview.com) — **BE SURE TO INCLUDE YOUR NAME**

Next month's photo:



IMAGE BY SPIKE SUMMERS FROM PIXABAY

## This month's winner

"Lucy's new tennies were really sweet."

— Laura Anspach



PHOTO COURTESY OF GRATISOGRAPHY

## Runners-up

"How I'm crushing Candy Crush."

- Jeni Nosbisch

"All of these sugary sweets go right to my fancy feet."

- Dennis Moore

"Running shoes. Gotta burn those calories."

- Mackenzie Hight

"Maria could not take Fido to the dog park in her gum drop hi tops."

- John Flater

"The Wizard of Oz' meets 'Hansel and Gretel!'"

- Aimee Thode

Send your "What The...?" caption and image entries to [celeste@dmcityview.com](mailto:celeste@dmcityview.com).  
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# JOE'S NEIGHBORHOOD

BY JOE WEEG

## Why a religion major?

What do you want to explore while you're here?

I sat in the back of Macbride Hall for a reason. I wanted to be invisible. I wanted to slink in early unseen and slink out in the crowd unnoticed. As a result, even the last row of this large auditorium was too close to the stage for me. So, I sat in the back of the balcony located at the back of the auditorium. Hundreds of students were a buffer between me and the teacher. Just as I liked. One anonymous face lost in the haystack of 18- and 19-year-old students.

Hiding made sense, of course, because a madman ran the class. Thin, wiry, aggressive. A dangerous man. Equal parts circus master and brilliant teacher. He prowled and shouted and laughed and whispered, trying to engage us. He wanted us to think — about right and wrong, what is a meaningful life, examine our unexamined beliefs, and, of course, how to think about death and dying. It was exhilarating and terrifying. I was mesmerized.

“You pay your money and make your choice,” as he

liked to say. So buckle up.

“Joe, good job.”

Jay Holstein, a religion professor at the University of Iowa, handed me my graded test after I waited in the long line of students at the end of class.

Aargh... busted. Anonymity gone. Nailed. The madman had my number.

So I became a religion major. An unbeliever for sure, but a religion major. I took every course Holstein had to offer and then some he made up. It was heaven. He was heaven. Sure, law school, marriage, children, a career as a prosecutor, and now a writer for CITYVIEW, all followed. But my religion studies with Jay Holstein... that was the beginning.

Now, 50 years later ...

“I am the only tenure-track professor in the Drake religion program. I have been at Drake for 17 years.”

Brad Crowell, weary-eyed from final exams grading, and perhaps weary from fighting to save his job, gives a



small smile.

So, Brad, what's all the hullabaloo about Drake shutting down the religion program?

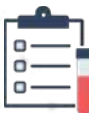
Brad sighs. “For a university to stay afloat, where the

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# JOE'S NEIGHBORHOOD... CONT.



number of students is getting smaller and state funding is diminishing, then the variable that often gets cut is the professors.”

Sure, sure, sure. I get it. Not enough students to justify your job. Not enough bang for the buck. The numbers never lie.

“No, religion didn’t have the numbers.” Brad pauses and then looks me in the eye. “But listen, are

we training people to just get jobs? We also want our students’ world to get really big.”

What do you mean?

“Students are asked today, ‘What do you want to do when you finish?’ I ask students, ‘What do you want to explore while you’re here?’ ”

So what do you do now?

“Well, the program is gone. The minor is going to exist. I’ll be teaching classes that will qualify for the minor out of another department.”

It sounds like a death knell.

“I will run with the minor. Programs can be rebuilt. I think we can make the minor so good, Drake will stay with that. I still want important issues to be highlighted.”

So, there you have it. A man teaching our kids about the big questions.

What big questions, you ask? Let me give you a few examples.

In my role as a prosecutor, I stood outside the two-story house in the dark of the early morning. A young man was dead. The police mulled around doing their police thing. I prepared a search warrant after seeing the body. The young man’s father was at my side. He was in deep anguish. “Why my boy?” he said to me in tears. “Why my boy?”

My new wife looked at me and said we should practice law part-time so that we would have time for family and other priorities. Really? But what about the money? And what about our reputation as lawyers because they say part-time lawyers aren’t real lawyers? And nobody will hire us both part-time, will they? What should we do?

I lay paralyzed in the hospital. Struck by a car while I biked. I had a trach and various other attachments to a body that was no longer mine. Pain was my new friend. And I was informed it was going to be a long rehab with no promises. How do I climb out of this?

Religion courses talk about the big questions. Not biology. Not computer science. And not business. Religion.

“You pay your money and make your choice,” said Jay Holstein, my religion professor those many years ago.

Amen to that. ■

*Joe Weeg spent 31 years bumping around this town as a prosecutor for the Polk County Attorney’s Office. Now retired, he writes about the frequently overlooked people, places and events in Des Moines on his blog: [www.joesneighborhood.com](http://www.joesneighborhood.com).*



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# BOOK REVIEWS

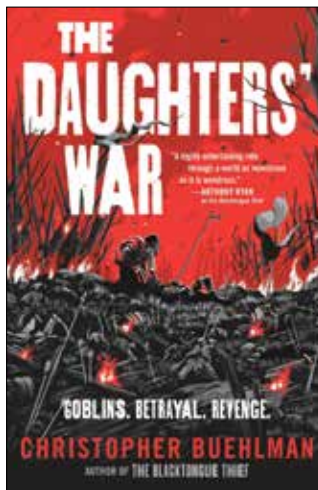
COURTESY OF BEAVERDALE BOOKS

## 'The Daughters' War'

To be perfectly clear before we start, this is a book about grief. It is a story of loss and war and lives cut short in the pursuit of survival. Sure, this is a military fantasy at its most basic level, but, in truth, it is an ode to the beauty of grief, growing up and becoming something extraordinary.

Galva is the youngest daughter of a prominent family, and, instead of staying cloistered in safety, she chooses to train with an experimental army unit that will likely mean her death. Humans are edging toward extinction, and the goblins just keep coming. Brutal, cunning and overwhelming, these goblins want one thing only: to tear down humanity and make them into livestock. Paired with a diverse and fascinating array of comrades, Galva will fight for her people's right to live and lose almost everything along the way.

This is not an easy book to read, but the starkness and gritty horror make the moments of humor and hope that much more powerful. The prose is hypnotic and stunning, like an epic poem, and will linger long after the cover is closed. It is absolutely worth the tears. ■ — *Review by Julie Goodrich*



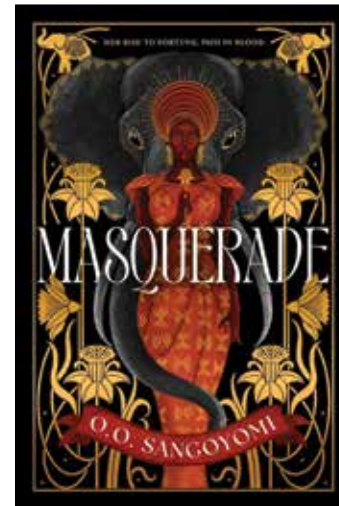
By Christopher Buehlman  
6/25/24  
Tor Books  
416 pages  
\$28.99

## 'Masquerade'

There have been a handful of times in my life when I felt so wildly out of place that I couldn't tell up from down. That kind of upheaval is a powerful motivator for digging deep and finding out what you're made of. Transformation, power and self-discovery weave through this gripping, gorgeous story I fell in love with from the first page.

Òdòdó is a blacksmith in Timbuktu, a city being ground down under the heel of a warrior king. Òdòdó's struggle suddenly changes, however, when she's kidnapped to be the bride of a warrior king who refuses to take no for an answer. Left with little recourse, the story follows Òdòdó as she learns to reclaim her power, navigate the politics of her new city, and embrace the power she finds unexpectedly at her fingertips.

This is a deep, tense and satisfying story that weaves together West African myth with the classic story of Hades and Persephone in a unique and utterly enthralling tale. I love the blending of the familiar and the new. This feels like a classic in the making. ■ — *Review by Julie Goodrich*



By O.O. Sangoyomi  
7/2/24  
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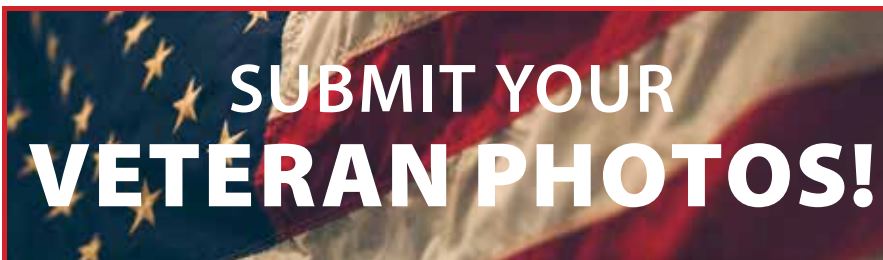
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## The Wiz, a Dream, and a whiz

But wait, there's more.

July brings a variety of stage enticements, from opera to plays to musicals. Free your inner cultural adventurer and explore these immersive performance worlds.

### Wiz

One of the most beloved stories to hit the stage is L. Frank Baum's adaptation of his initial Oz book, "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz," published in 1900. This story was first produced on stage in 1902 and ran on Broadway for 293 stage nights. This story was very different from the version popularized 36 years later in the landmark 1939 MGM cinematic version that shot its star, Judy Garland, to instant fame. Baum was a prolific, if not controversial, writer of his day, creating 14 Oz books and more than 400 other works.

Urbandale Community Theatre (UCT) produces this crowd-pleaser. Board Member Kevin Allemagne shared insight about this company and its 2024 production.

"This will be one of the largest productions we have had in recent years — 35 cast members and 25 orchestra members, plus our crew and creative team. We have multiple family members involved in other creative elements of the show, such as my wife, Julie, and I are both playing in the pit orchestra. UCT promotes opportunities for people with a wide range of skills, experiences, and abilities to participate in putting on a large-scale Broadway production, a true community theatre."

### Dream

The timelessness of Shakespeare's works continues its modern relevance through such regional traditions as Shakespeare on the Lawn. Presented in the bucolic, oak tree surroundings of Salisbury House & Gardens, Iowa Stage Theatre Company produces stellar Shakespeare each summer. This year brings one of the Bard's most popular plays, "A Midsummer Night's Dream."

Presenting Shakespeare through the partnership of Iowa Stage and Salisbury House & Gardens is a wonderful match. Even the grand hall entrance boasts beams from the White Hart Inn, transported from England, purportedly under which William Shakespeare himself performed with his troupe.

Shakespeare's plays, while predominantly presented live on stage, have been cinematic fodder since the early days of motion picture. "Dream" is no exception, first put to film in 1909 with at least nine additional film versions since. The critically acclaimed 1935 version had a star-studded cast that included James Cagney, Olivia de Havilland, Joe E. Brown, Jean Muir and Mickey



Past production of Iowa Stage Theatre Company Shakespeare on the Lawn at Salisbury House & Gardens. This year's offering will be "A Midsummer Night's Dream." Photo credit: Iowa Stage Theatre Company/Salisbury House & Gardens.

Rooney. Written in 1595, this popular play has spanned centuries, presented globally by traveling troupes. The works of Shakespeare was second only to the Bible to books owned by American pioneers.

While Iowa Stage's version of this romantic comedy fantasy may not have the silver screen star power of that 1935 film, the company's track record for producing high-caliber Shakespearean productions has been exceptional. Director Taylor Millar shared some thoughts about this show.

"I'm just a sucker for the language. I feel very lucky to get to do a deep dive on Shakespeare every rehearsal night. Each day a new line pops out to me. And, of course, for these Shakespeare on the Lawn productions, getting to perform at the Salisbury House is incredible. Brad (Dell, producer) calls it 'Shakespeare in Paradise' and it truly feels like that."

### Whiz

Carousel Theatre is the vibrant company located just a few minutes south in Indianola. It continues to embrace the latitude its loyal core audience base allows, sometimes bringing edgy and thought-provoking theatrical fare to their stage. This year's summer musical is "Urinetown: The Musical," the satirical musical comedy that made an eye-opening splash more than 20 years ago on Broadway.

Carousel has, as key member Alex Lindsley stated, "expanded from its previous trend of comedies and musicals to more challenging and diverse shows.

"Last season we wrapped our run of shows with the family classic, 'Disney's The Little Mermaid,' but this season we decided to take a trip off the beaten trail in presenting 'Urinetown,'" Lindsley continued. "An irreverent and, at times, raunchy story that pokes fun at politics, capitalism and musical theatre itself,

### BARE BOARDS CHATTER

#### Pyramid Theatre Company

Through July 7. "The Black Feminist Guide to the Human Body"

#### Des Moines Metro Opera – 2024 Summer Festival

Various shows and dates through July 21. "The Barber of Seville," "Salome," "American Apollo," "Peléas & Mélisande"

#### Des Moines Community Playhouse

July 12-28. "School of Rock"

#### Iowa Stage Theatre Company – Shakespeare on the Lawn (Salisbury House & Gardens)

July 17-19. "A Midsummer Night's Dream"

#### Carousel Theatre – Indianola High School Auditorium

July 19-28. "Urinetown"

#### Des Moines Young Artists' Theatre

July 19-28. "The Prom"

#### CAP Theatre in Haines Park Amphitheatre, Altoona

July 25-28. "Antigone"

#### Urbandale Community Theatre

July 26 - Aug. 4. "The Wizard of Oz"

'Urinetown' is a hilarious show that is sure to leave you laughing all evening long. Carousel has seen significant growth over the last few years, both onstage and in our audiences. We hope that growth continues as we look forward into our next season."

### But wait, there's more

This wonderfully busy month includes several other noteworthy opportunities to experience diverse shows. These include Des Moines Young Artists' Theatre's "The Prom," the Des Moines Playhouse's "School of Rock: The Musical," and CAP (Class Act Productions) Theatre's summer tradition of a classical play, this year "Antigone," in Altoona's Haines Park.

Add the final performances of the nationally recognized Pyramid Theatre Company's "The Black Feminist Guide to the Human Body," and the finishing touches of Des Moines Metro Opera's 2024 Festival Season, and a true bounty awaits the cultural adventurer. ■

John Busbee is a creative project developer, critic, playwright, author, producer and media professional. He has produced his weekly show, *The Culture Buzz*, on KFMG since 2007.





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# CARS IN THE CITY

BY JACKIE WILSON

## Challenger Scat Pack

The Challenger is manufactured for speed.

Challenger Scat Pack. If you think the name sounds catchy and fast, you are right.

The Dodge Challenger R/T Scat Pack, along with its bold, in-your-face lime color, is an iconic muscle car. The car stands out among an over-abundant sea of slow SUVs, all in shades of gray, black and white.

The Challenger is manufactured for speed. With a 392-horsepower, V-8 hemi-MDS engine, it's got power. The TorqueFlite 8-speed automatic allows the engine to better operate at peak efficiency with its lightweight design and better gas mileage. The Challenger averages 18 mpg, if you're doing the speed limit, up to 24 mpg highway.

But who wants to drive the speed limit when this speedometer goes up to 180 mph?

The salesman kept telling me it's fast. It's powerful. So, when we left the dealership, he suggested I floor it.

Barely stepping on the accelerator, it took off, jerking my head back and nearly engaging my seatbelt. The specs say it can do 0 to 60 in 4.9 seconds, and I'm pretty sure I was close to that. OK, it may have taken me 6.5 seconds.

After I yanked on my seatbelt shoulder harness to loosen it, I settled in, listening to the rumble of the engine. Yep, it's one of those loud exhausts you might hear racing past you in traffic. In fact, the decibels of the engine range from 90-110, based on acceleration.

The Challenger has an 8.4-inch touchscreen, comfy bucket seats, a small backseat and a leather-wrapped shift knob. Resting your hand on the center console adds to the race-like feel of the vehicle.

The 20-inch wheels are low gloss granite crystal wheels. The front of the car is low to the ground, and it's not just for looks. An SRT (street and racing technology) front splitter helps to prevent air from forcing its way under the car when traveling at high speeds, giving it better traction. However, if you're traveling up a steep-angled driveway or over a speed bump, slow down or you'll hear that scraping noise of steel meeting concrete — a dreaded sound for any car owner who let their buddy take it for a spin.

The Scat Pack name debuted in 1968. The "scat" refers to "get out of here"



while the pack name came from Frank Sinatra's Rat Pack. Meanwhile, the Dodge Challenger name came about in a 1970 model. The name has come and gone since then in various models.

If you want a Challenger, act soon and buy the 2023 model. According to Dodge website, Challengers are being discontinued in 2023. Earlier this year, Dodge announced the first and only electric muscle car to begin production sometime in 2024. The Dodge Charger Daytona Scat Pack manufacturers say the Charger with its 670-horsepower engine will "retain its title as the world's quickest and most powerful muscle car." ■

# DES MOINES FORGOTTEN

BY KRISTIAN DAY

## Rusty washers, sparklers and 3D glasses

The Midwest is one of the best places to be to celebrate the Fourth of July. No matter what faith you follow or orientation you swing, you can usually come together for our country's Independence Day.

As a kid in the 1990s, I remember my dad picking me up from my mom's house and taking me to Milan, Illinois, where his home was. If you lived in the Quad Cities, Milan was sort of the Council Bluffs of the metro. You didn't pronounce it the romantic Italian way either.

My dad had a tiny, yellow ranch house with a rotting wooden fence around the yard and garage. The backyard was the hangout spot with cheap, white, metal lawn furniture that sat on top of a rock garden. The yard itself was nothing special — green grass with some rose bushes in the corners. Dad had a DIY washer toss game that he made in the backyard that used a tuna fish can as the goal. If you lived in the upper-class neighborhoods, you played bags. If you lived in Milan, you played spray-painted rusty washers. There was also a sand pit area behind the garage that served as a play area for me and a public restroom for the neighborhood cats.

My dad would invite his friends over who had kids that somehow became my default friends. One of his buddies named their son Christopher, who was born three weeks before me. My parents were going to name me that first (and "Buddy" knew that) so they changed it to Christian. But then my dad refused to name me after a religion, so he changed it to Kristian. Anyways, default friend Christopher came over with his older brother, Jimmy, whose favorite pastime was beating us up or breaking our things. We were all sitting on the metal lawn furniture eating hamburgers and pulling out the fireworks we bought for cash at the popup stand along the highway. It wasn't long before Jimmy decided it would be funny to pull the leg of the chair that his younger brother was sitting in, tipping it over and causing Christopher to bite his tongue.

The screams eventually ceased, and we began setting off smaller pyrotechnics in the driveway. Snakes, sparklers and noise-makers were leaving black stains on the cement and, as far I know, were there when my dad eventually sold the house.

As the sky became dark, we packed up our lawn chairs, glow sticks and coolers and started hiking up the hilly street to an open field that was next to the ballfield where Dad's beer league softball team played. Along the journey, we would see cars in the field next to it having a mess of a time trying to park. My dad seemingly always needed to feel like he was smarter than others, and today it was, "Look at all the



idiots trying to park." We lived in the neighborhood and could walk without all the fuss.

We found a spot in the grass to lay our blankets down that wasn't wet from spilled beer. Random voices would yell, "Hey, Phil" to my dad as we set up camp. This is where we would also see some of the rebels we had purchased fireworks from that might have been considered illegal at the time. This was 1993, so fireworks were still off limits to the common man. People would bring used metal coffee cans and light them up from them. My mom would tell me stories about people who lost fingers and burned their faces doing this. "Your dad even burned a hole in his favorite shirt," she would exclaim.

The fireworks would finally be set off. We would spread out flat on the ground, and we would wear 3D glasses to enhance our experience. My dad had his own funny cigarettes to enhance his. There is nothing like hearing a bunch of rednecks in jorts and tank tops howling at a fancy light show. When a design would appear as the American flag spread out across the sky, the crowd would erupt.

And they still do. Happy Fourth of July! ■

*Kristian Day is a filmmaker and writer based in Des Moines. He also hosts the syndicated Iowa Basement Tapes radio program on 98.9 FM KFMG. Instagram: @kristianday | Twitter: @kristianmday*



## IRIS volunteers provide a helping voice

Deanna Schneider and Dennis May are two IRIS volunteers who read newspapers, magazines and more to the visually impaired.

According to the Iowa Department for the Blind, about 54,000 Iowans have experienced visual impairment. One organization, Iowa Reading Radio Information Services (IRIS), aims to aid those with the disability through, of course, reading.

With braille being a difficult skill to learn, and books, newspapers and magazines not being printed with the alternative reading option, a large group of those who are visually impaired turn to audio.

That's where IRIS comes into play. IRIS provides a 24/7, 365-day broadcast of audio programming across several mediums. They provide old-timey radios for free upon request that act as receivers and only play their station. The live stream on their website at [www.iowaradioreading.org](http://www.iowaradioreading.org) is easily accessible, and their broadcasts are in a podcast format on the major platforms. They have a robust schedule where they read several Iowa-based publications such as CITYVIEW, The Des Moines Register, the Quad City Times, the Business Record and more.

Deanna Schneider and Dennis May are two of the volunteers who read for IRIS. Schneider began volunteering for IRIS in 2013, while May started in 2014.

"Everybody's favorite blind lady was Mavis McVeety. She was a dear sweet lady, and she was at First United Methodist Church downtown where I was on staff," Schneider said. "She was in a book study group, and so I would read her the book chapters on a cassette tape recorder that we were going to discuss that week and give her the tape recording so she could come and join in with everybody else."

McVeety then informed Schneider about IRIS and how she should volunteer there. Schneider said she never heard of it but happily began volunteering there soon after. As for how May got his start?

"I worked for Allied Insurance, which was at 701 Fifth Ave., with the Commission for the Blind a block south. We would always see people out walking, learning how to navigate streets with an instructor. I thought about how that was inspiring. I had also heard that they had something where they read to sight-impaired people. Then I found out about this (IRIS), so I came down and auditioned," May said.

May's background in video production and work in audio booths at Allied Insurance made it an easy transition for him to start working with the production equipment inside of IRIS' studios.

"We go back and forth and trade reading stories. Having somebody like Dennis who sits in the control room is nice. I sit in the room where all I have to do is just talk because I know nothing about the buttons," Schneider said.

Schneider and May primarily read The Des Moines Register, sharing everything from local to international news for listeners. They say the obituaries are especially important.

"I hear from listeners who just absolutely love IRIS, and they tune in all the time with that, and it's their connection with the world," Schneider said. "I think a lot of times they're just stuck in their own home, and this is a chance for them to hear things. We are well loved in the sight-impaired community."



May would like to bring more ears and awareness to IRIS.

"I think it's interesting since I started doing this, how many people I've met who are either sight-impaired or have someone who is sight impaired in their family and they know nothing about this," May said.

The pandemic was a critical time for IRIS. Understanding that their listeners already had difficulty getting to the outside world due to their visual impairments, it became important they continue to provide the service during this struggle.

"During the COVID close, Maryfrances (Evans, executive director at IRIS) told us we had to close the studio. So we recorded from home, and that made it easier in some respects. I ended up doing four mornings a week at 4:30 a.m. because we had to have it uploaded by 8 a.m. so they could have it ready for 9 a.m.," May said.

May's background knowledge in video and audio production allowed him to edit his segments, which made it easier on the production team at IRIS.

The volunteering crew ranges in age at IRIS. During the interview, a recent Drake University graduate was live on the air, but Schneider and May mentioned that most of the volunteers lean to the older side.

Schneider and May both encouraged anyone who has the free time and proper reading skills to volunteer their time to IRIS. Learn more at [www.iowaradioreading.org](http://www.iowaradioreading.org). ■



Dennis May and Deanna Schneider have been volunteering at IRIS for nearly 20 combined years.



## Bison, elk roam free

Jester Park is a reminder of Iowa's prairie land.

BY JACKIE WILSON

What was it like in Iowa's prairie land before fast-food joints, strip malls and towering developments began pouring concrete and constructing buildings?

To find out, drive to Granger and take a step back in time to discover a herd of elk and bison at the Jester Park Elk and Bison Educational Plaza.

In the park, eight bison and eight elk can be viewed behind tall fences.

David Weidt, Polk County Conservation Ranger and Jester Park herd manager, explains why Polk County opened the park in the 1970s.

"Elk and bison used to roam Iowa. Wild bison are hard to come by and were nearly extinct. It's a good reminder of how Iowa used to be," he says.

The last time wild elk roamed free was centuries ago. Bison are migratory and often don't stay in one area.

"They won't be around, as Polk County is running out of natural land," he explains.

The bison and elk live in pastures with 24-hour access to food. With three separate 10-acre pastures, the animals rotate while the pastures grow. Most times, the two animals aren't in the same pasture.

"Bison are not good at sharing," he explains. "We have to split them up."

In the winter, they feed on hay, corn and other supplements. Last year's draught prevented a full pasture to graze on.

"We couldn't keep up. They were eating a bale of hay every four days until the pasture grew back."

Jester Park welcomes one million visitors a year. The public can view information at the educational plaza or visit select times for free when staff is feeding the animals.

"When we have babies, it's very busy out here," he explains.

However, when the animals have too many offsprings, they'll trade out males to limit births. The animals will go to other counties in Iowa.

As herd manager, Weidt is familiar with the animals' temperament and behavior. Multiple, double-locked fences prevent the animals from getting out. After he combined herds of bison from a private ranch, they became territorial.

"We hoped it would calm down and had to change our interactions with them. We make sure we have a

vehicle between me and an animal if they charge us. They don't tolerate (humans) being next to them," he says. "We've had numerous trucks dented if we got too close."

Elk are more tolerant of humans, except during mating season; however, they're known to charge the fence as well.

The animals are inspected routinely by both the USDA and by the Iowa Department of Ag Land Stewardship and monitored for chronic wasting disease, a fatal neurological disease affecting hooved animals.

When people visit, park rangers are available to answer questions.

"Younger kids tend to be in awe," he says. "When people see bison up close, they're surprised how agile they are for their size. Bison weigh up to 2,000 pounds."

Weidt has been a park ranger for 15 years with the last seven at Jester. He enjoys outdoor work, and being a herd manager is unique.

"You raise them all year. You feel like a proud papa when babies are born. You want to make sure they're cared for," he reflects. "It's quite exciting." ■



## Natural bodybuilding requires supreme dedication

Kali Spaulding was a gym-goer for years before trying her hands, and mind, at natural bodybuilding.

Those who consider themselves gym rats might want to rethink that self-imposed title. Bodybuilding is not for the faint of heart. The time and dedication to strict diets and workout schedules have broken many wills, but not Kali Spaulding's.

"I've had friends that competed for a while, and I said I was going to compete but never pulled the trigger. Then I found this show, and I found a coach," Spaulding said.

The show was the 30th anniversary North American Natural Bodybuilding Federation event. The coach was Ryan Irwin from Natural Iowa Muscle. He helped Spaulding train and prepare for the NANBF competition that was held on May 4. Spaulding was in two classes, Bikini and Wellness, at the event, where she placed second.

"I didn't go into it expecting places, just for the experience to say, hey, I did it. I held myself accountable. I had the mental discipline it took to do this," Spaulding said.

To get into shape for the competition, Spaulding had to commit to a strict diet and exercise plan.

"It was four months of strict dieting. So there's no added sugars. I was eating around 1,400 or so calories a day. I had to weigh and track everything. I would have low-carb days and high-carb days," Spaulding said. "My lowest carb day was usually eight grams of carbs, which is low. I was dragging on those days. I would work out for five days a week with two days off. It just varied depending on my work schedule."

The poses that the athletes are required to hit are important. Spaulding says she learned some of the poses on YouTube, but Irwin and an opposing coach, Carrie, helped her grasp that side of the competition. She says this aspect was the most difficult part of this experience.

"You eat your meals, you work out, go to work and you come home and be super exhausted and then you've got to spend 30 minutes a day just posing. And it's a lot. You would think, you just go up there and pose. No, everything has to flow. You have to have a whole transition," Spaulding said.

For her diet, since Spaulding was tracking and sticking to a set eating schedule, it was like taking care of a baby according to her. She would have her meals planned three days in advance. Followers of Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson may have seen his legendary "cheat meals," but that was not the case for Spaulding.

"There are some coaches that are different, but Ryan is a very modest coach, which is great. He kind of sets you up for success that way. You're allowed to do anything you want as long as it fits into your macros for the day," Spaulding said. "I guess my treat was rice cakes. Rice cakes got me through prep."

After the competition, Spaulding had Crumble Cookies for the first time. And, the next morning, she treated herself to a stack of pancakes.

The mental aspect is just as important as the physical side when it comes to

"You definitely learn how to be very disciplined."

— Kali Spaulding



Kali Spaulding placed second at the 30th annual NANBF competition that was held on May 4.

natural bodybuilding. By pursuing high standards in order to reach the best results possible, competitors learn a lot about themselves during the process.

"You definitely learn how to be very disciplined. I thought I was a disciplined person before that. I wasn't necessarily as strict as I was before. And I've always tried to just kind of monitor what I eat. You learn so much mental discipline, and you learn how to push yourself. Because there were days where I was like 'Ryan, if you cut my carbs anymore, I'm done. I'm pulling out of this competition,'" Spaulding said.

As for her favorite part of the four-month-long journey?

"I think the whole process. There are parts of it where you're just like, oh my gosh, I'm so ready to quit. But, honestly, the whole process and what it teaches you about yourself, discipline and confidence, I think that's the best part about it. I think anyone that can go up on stage, in front of a crowd, basically naked, because you're in a bikini, in front of all these strangers, you just have to have a lot of fun with it. If you can do that, then I feel like you can do anything," Spaulding said. ■

# WALKS OF LIFE

COMPILED FROM THE IOWA LIVING MAGAZINES

## Curtain call

For many people, public speaking is their worst fear. They recall suffering from butterflies in the stomach or worse before stepping out on the stage for their elementary school programs and the terror of having to speak in front of their peers in high school speech class. For them, the thought of performing before the public in a stage production sounds as appealing as being tarred and feathered. Others actually seek the spotlight, volunteer to memorize lines and create play props, and eagerly await the day the curtains are drawn back and the show begins. Some of these people share their reasons why center stage is the place they want to be.



### Molly Longman

34 productions and counting

Molly Longman, Adel-Desoto-Minburn English teacher and drama director, has overseen theatre for 17 years. She has directed 34 shows on the ADM stage, with two productions each year.

"Theatre brings together so many of my favorite things in one place: storytelling, creativity, visual art forms and collaboration with like-minded people," she says.

She adds theatre can be a transformative experience that can change lives.

"When new individuals start to connect with the passionate theatre community, the rest is usually history," she says.

Longman's favorite moments as a director are hearing from parents that their students never really "found their place" or "found their people" until they got involved in theatre.

"I treasure working where everyone is welcome, valued and can contribute something essential to the final product," she says.

Some of the best parts of a production are the aspects the audience never sees, Longman says.

"I love the collaboration, the risk-taking and bravery, the problem-solving, the mentoring, the communication, and everything else that my students have learned to do alongside learning their lines, lyrics and dance steps," she says.

Source: *Adel Living*, June 2024; by Chantel Boyd

Read the full story here:



### Brent Roske

Theatre buff

Brent Roske's involvement in theatre and film started in elementary school when he began acting. By high school, he was already directing and soon set out to pursue his dreams in Los Angeles, California.

"I made a low-budget movie when I first got to L.A., which got me a job offer from NBC Universal where I was the creative director for the NBC stations group for 10 years."

He's currently producing shows and films for his Flamingo Network on Roku, including the feature film, "Diana In Love," starring Shanti Fiennes as Princess Diana, which was a contender in last year's Golden Globe Awards. Roske wrote and directed the film about the spring of 1997 when Princess Diana found herself in Los Angeles starting a whirlwind romance with an Oscar winning movie producer named Dodi Fayed.

Now, the television and movie producer splits time between Grimes and California, where he still works as needed.

"I'd like to do more Midwest theatre and hoping to find time, and when I'm not in L.A., I live in Grimes and love it here."

Source: *Grimes Living*, June 2024; by Ashley Rullestad

Read the full story here:



### Joel and Deb Hade

A tale of two Hades

"Theatre allows people to explore their creative and artistic side," Joel says. "For those folks not athletically inclined, it provides another group activity that gives a sense of belonging."

Joel and Deb Hade both found their way to theatre arts at different times in their lives. For Joel, it started when he was in high school where he was in multiple plays and competitions. He took a break from theatre during college and his professional schooling but found his way back after moving his family to Indianola in the early 1990s.

Joel and Deb played so many roles over the years that they say there are too many memorable ones to list. They say social media has helped in finding more high-quality performers, but getting good directors and technical people for lights, sound and set design is always a huge need.

"These people are the unsung heroes in staging a show, but it takes a lot of work and skill," Joel says. "Board members step in to help in these capacities a lot, but we'd love to find more people to step into these roles."

Source: *Indianola Living*, June 2024; by Becky Kolosik

Read the full story here:



### Lindsay Amundson

From dance to theatre

Lindsay Amundson of Norwalk participated in theatre at school in the West Des Moines Community School District, the Des Moines Playhouse, and the Des Moines Young Artists' Theatre.

Dancing piqued Amundson's interest in theatre.

"I started dancing when I was 2 and loved the attention. I thought dressing up in the costumes and performing on stage was fun," she says.

Her parents met while participating in a play and were involved in theatre when they were young adults.

"They got both my brother and I interested in the arts," Amundson says. "We both danced, did commercials and school productions and sang in choir."

She was a dancer and choreographer with the University of Northern Iowa Orchestris Dance Company from 2019-2023 and assistant choreographer for "Heathers" with the Des Moines Young Artists' Theatre in 2022. She acted in school productions between 2012-2019.

It's the little things that Amundson says stick out in her memories.

"The inside jokes, silly dances, backstage shenanigans, and bonds with others stay with me as my favorite memories," she says. ■

Source: *Norwalk Living*, June 2024; by Chantel Boyd

Read the full story here:



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