

JANUARY 2026

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WINTER

Arts & Entertainment

GUIDE

Our guide to art, performances, music, sports and most everything in between this winter.

HOBBIES

David Johnston finds a passion for stained glass creations

JOE'S NEIGHBORHOOD

The death of a teacher

NEIGHBORS

Robert Fisher is on a mission to open doors for others



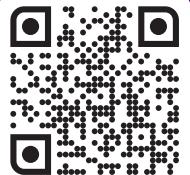
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FROM THE PUBLISHER

Learning together

Admittedly, I'm a slow learner. I have owned CITYVIEW for more than two decades now, and it has taken me a while to truly understand what readers want.

Of course, some people think we should pound you over the head about who you should or shouldn't vote for, tell you whether you should or shouldn't own guns, and editorialize when life begins or doesn't begin. Some editors and publishers of other publications feel it is their civic duty to shove these opinions down your throat. In the early years, you read some of that in this publication, too.

Times have changed, and you don't have to look far today to become flooded with opinions. And, most people now flock to cable TV stations, websites or social media groups that spew the same opinions they currently have. They don't want to change or even be challenged. Right or wrong, that's the way it is.

In recent years, we have focused more of our efforts at CITYVIEW on entertaining our readers rather than irritating them. The word VIEW is still part of our name, and we don't hesitate to offer ideas for you to consider on restaurants to try, movies to watch, concerts to attend, performances to see and books to read. We also have focused more on the personality stories of the many great residents in our coverage area. We will leave the hatred for others to spread.

I am pleased to say that this approach has worked. Rather than alienating readers, we are inviting a growing number to pick up CITYVIEW and learn about all the things our great city has to offer. Today, we have more readers than ever in the history of the publication, as more than 100,000 people turn to the pages of CITYVIEW every issue in our print and digital editions.

This month's cover story brings back one of our most popular subjects, as we compiled a lengthy list of things to do in central Iowa for our Winter Arts & Entertainment Guide. Be sure to check it out, along with all our coverage of food, drinks, music, film, theatre, books and, yes, even a dash of politics.

We keep learning... together.

Thanks for reading. ■

Shane Goodman
Editor and Publisher
CITYVIEW
shane@dmcityview.com
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EDITOR / PUBLISHER

Shane Goodman

ADVERTISING SALES MANAGER

Aaron Burns

ADVERTISING DIRECTOR

Jolene Goodman

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVES

Mary Fowler

STAFF WRITER

Cyote Williams

DESIGN MANAGER

Celeste Tilton

EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTORS

Douglas Burns

John Busbee

Kristian Day

Jim Duncan

Randy Evans

David Rowley

Joe Weeg

Jackie Wilson

ADVERTISING DESIGNERS

Jayde Vogeler

Nick Ruiz

DIGITAL MANAGER

Beckham Miller

BUSINESS OFFICE MANAGER

Brent Antisdel

DISTRIBUTION MANAGER

Jim Jacobsen



Big Green Umbrella Media

8101 Birchwood Court, Suite D, Johnston, Iowa 50131

PHONE: 515-953-4822 **FAX:** 515-953-1394

www.dmcityview.com • editor@dmcityview.com

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ASK CITYVIEW

By CITYVIEW staff

Ask CITYVIEW anything by emailing editor@dmcityview.com.

Q. To what extent has the decision to allow taxpayer dollars to be used to pay for private school education impacted the rosters of these private school football teams?

A. This question was presumably sparked by the recent IHSAA football state championships, in which six classes had a Catholic team, in other words, a private school, playing for the title out of the seven final games (eight-player through Class 5A).

The reader wanted to know if these schools can recruit players and pay for their private school education through "The Students' First Act," introduced by Gov. Kim Reynolds, which grants private schools the ability to access public funds through Education Savings Accounts (ESA).

The Iowa Department of Education recently released its certified enrollment numbers for 2025-26, showing slight declines. The total number of certified enrollments for all Iowa public and accredited nonpublic schools (private) dropped to 515,221 from 520,021 last year. Public school district and public charter school certified enrollment dropped slightly, by 1.53% to 473,329. Certified enrollment at accredited nonpublic schools rose, from 39,356 to 41,892. A decline in public school enrollment, and a rise in private school enrollment, does not directly answer this question, but the numbers are worth noting.

It is not possible to obtain data on students going from public schools to private schools specifically for athletics. Per the IHSAA 2024-2025 Handbook, recruiting, or "undue influence" to persuade a student to join a school for athletics is prohibited and subject to sanctions. If there is evidence or suspicion of wrongdoing, it should be reported to the IHSAA, but as far as public tax dollars directly benefitting students transferring from a public school to a private school for athletics, the answer is unclear.

Q. How much money does Jolly Holiday Lights give to Make-A-Wish from its ticket sales?

A. The reader who submitted this said that of the \$25 charged per car load, only \$1 goes to Make-A-Wish of Iowa. This is confirmed on the website, with Jolly Holiday Lights adding, "In addition, 20% of all sponsorship revenue is donated back to Make-A-Wish Iowa, amplifying the impact of every partnership."

As for where the other \$24 goes, Jolly Holiday Lights did not respond to a request for comment.

Q. Do law enforcement officers have to follow speed limits? If so, how can a citizen report instances of speeding?

A. "Law enforcement officers do have to follow all traffic laws in the state of Iowa just like other motorists. There are times when law enforcement is exempt from these laws during certain situations," Iowa State Patrol Sergeant Alex Dinkla said.

To file a complaint (or compliment) regarding the Iowa Department of Public Safety, go to dps.iowa.gov/divisions/commissioners-office/professional-standards. ■

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters are edited for space, spelling and clarity.

The gift that keeps on giving

"Last year, we were in Australia from Thanksgiving to after Christmas. Maybe that's why I took so much joy in putting up the collection of memories this year. But last year, I don't recall it occurred to me that missing Hullihan was among the joys forfeited by being down there.

So, it made revisiting the classic in CITYVIEW so much more enjoyable and profound with recollection of Bob. Reprinting is the gift that keeps on giving."

— Herb Strentz

Join the conversation!

Do you have a comment or photo you'd like to share with readers of CITYVIEW through this page? Use the hashtag #dmcityview on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter — or email editor@dmcityview.com.

FACEBOOK COMMENTS



cityview magazine
(comments unedited)

CITYVIEW magazine: What was the first job you had that you got a paycheck for?

Tony Munoz: Joe corsos pizza 3.25 an hour

David Ewart: Bagger/ shelf stocking @ prugh's supermarket!

Hannah Hope Harthoorn: Paper route

David Clippert: Henke Hardware in Keokuk

Kirk Antonio Wagner: Casey's

Anthony Garza: Streetside Records - Columbia, MO

Jen Bailey: Dietary aide - Perry Lutheran Home

Grant Wilson: shopper route

Nichole McDowell: Hy-Vee in the kitchen!

Julie Luepke: Working at a movie theater

Dennis Frank: Detasseling corn for Dekalb and Pioneer.

Jody Lane Molnari: Ice cream scooper at Baskin Robbins

Amy Robertson: Busing tables at La Pizza House

Kelli Munoz: Dishwasher at family restaurant

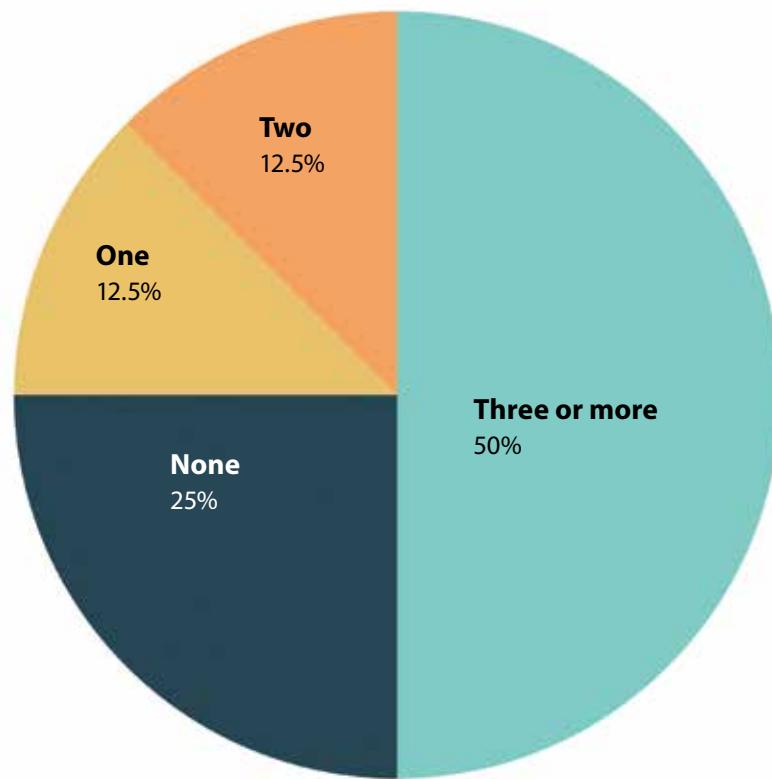
Felicia Marie Kauffman: Hyvee as a cashier and

POLL POSITION



Results from last month's poll at www.dmcityview.com

How many snow shovels do you own?



RETWEETS

(comments unedited)

@missmayn: i don't mind the 6-7 thing because i lived through a full decade of everyone yelling WHASSUUUUUPPP.

@zoebread: i'm sick of being forced to eat micro plastics. I am ready for big plastics now

@ThrillaRilla369: Netflix had enough cash to buy Warner Bros., but cried poor when we shared our passwords with our mom.

@BobGolen: My therapist says I'm paranoid. So they got to her too.

@persianmama111: I love the US. I love having 200 types of coffee creamer at the store and no healthcare

@mattybtweets69: Die Hard is actually German for The Hard

@megansarahj: I've got 50 minutes to make it look like I've been flossing for the last 6 months

@Rainwontmiss: i've started rejecting all cookies instead of accepting them. Idk what it means but i've had enough

@deeore5: whoever salts the fries at McDonald's needs to come do the roads ■

STRAY THOUGHTS

BY RANDY EVANS

There is no room for silencing dissenters

Too many people today stand up for protection of First Amendment freedoms only for those who think, speak or act in conformity with their own views.

What makes freedom of speech so difficult to understand and accept?

That question came up at a recent discussion at the Des Moines Valley Friends Meeting. The Friends invited me to speak at the gathering that coincided with the 50th anniversary of the Dec. 15, 1975, bombing of the Friends meeting house and the adjacent American Friends Service Committee building at 42nd Street and Grand Avenue in Des Moines.

Police never located the bomber, so no criminal charges were filed. Consensus remains that someone planted the explosives who disliked the Quakers' and AFSC's opposition to the Vietnam war, their support of non-violence, and their humanitarian relief efforts in Vietnam after the war.

I reminded the audience of what Mary Autenrieth of Paullina, the chair of the AFSC's regional policy board 50 years ago, told The Des Moines Register then: "I expect in a nation where open disagreement is encouraged, there are some who disagree with us. But I would expect that they would not use violence in answer."

I told the group too many people today stand up for protection of First Amendment freedoms only for those who think, speak or act in conformity with their own views. When someone dares to express an opposing or dissenting view, too many people today do not object to silencing that voice.

Consider the confusion that swirls from Washington, D.C. to Des Moines and beyond over what our First Amendment freedoms truly advance.

Think I am exaggerating?

How else should we view the president's claim the New York Times was guilty of sedition or treason when it reported on his health and reduced public events schedule? Or his decision to ban Associated Press reporters from the White House because the news organization chooses not to use his preferred name for the body of water lapping at the U.S. southern border?

The president is not alone in applying a sliding scale when it comes to protecting First Amendment

freedoms.

For the second consecutive year, Gov. Kim Reynolds' administration stopped the Satanic Temple of Iowa from placing the group's holiday display inside the Iowa Capitol, even though other religious activities have occurred there during the Christmas season. Satanic Temple officials have said they only seek to promote tolerance and acceptance of diverse religious beliefs with their display.

Adam Steen was the director of the Department of Administrative Services who rejected the Satanic Temple's 2024 request. He resigned and began a campaign for the Republican nomination for governor when Reynolds decided against seeking another term.

Steen told his supporters at an Iowa Capitol event last month that the Satanic Temple's desire to have a holiday display is "one of the most divisive issues in the state." He said he is proud to stand up against the group.

"No more marketing to children. No more trying to get them to create Satanic symbols, sing Satanic hymns, partake in Satanic rituals," Steen told his audience.

While Steen and current leaders of the Department of Administrative Services do not like the Satanic Temple or share its views, show me where in the First Amendment that freedom of religion extends only to those faiths acceptable to government officials.

By the time the legal fight over the Satanic Temple's rights and state government's discriminatory treatment winds through the courts, state government well could end up paying a substantial amount to the temple and its lawyers for the deliberate disregard of First Amendment rights.

A different example of free speech was displayed in Ames recently.

During the Cy-Hawk men's basketball game at Hilton Coliseum, the new Iowa State University football coach Jimmy Rogers took center court and fired up fans with some brief remarks. He grabbed everyone's attention when he shouted, "Let's beat the

F***ing Hawks."

While the Cyclone crowd endorsed his viewpoint, other Iowans might dissent, given the Cyclone and Hawkeye split across the state. Yet, few would seek to silence a "Go Clones" or "Go Hawks" cheer because of an allegiance to the opposing team.

Even those upset with Rogers' word choice should take heart that the First Amendment protects such rhetoric.

In a landmark 1971 decision, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the conviction of a California man for wearing a coat with the anti-war message, "F*** the Draft" emblazoned on it. The court majority wrote, "the mere presumed presence of unwitting listeners or viewers does not serve automatically to justify curtailing all speech capable of giving offense."

The majority continued: "The constitutional right of free expression is powerful medicine in a society as diverse and populous as ours. It is designed and intended to remove governmental restraints from the arena of public discussion, putting the decision as to what views shall be voiced largely into the hands of each of us."

The majority also observed: "That the air may at times seem filled with verbal cacophony is, in this sense, not a sign of weakness but of strength. ... So long as the means are peaceful, the communication need not meet standards of acceptability."

Put another way, whether it is Quakers or Jimmy Rogers, dissent is good.

Those wise men who crafted the First Amendment lived under a king. They knew protecting free expression only when those in power endorse what is said stifles a free exchange of ideas and the ability of people to resist, oppose and make change.

That should go without dissent — no matter which team you root for and irrespective of who won the game. ■

Randy Evans can be reached at DMRevans2810@gmail.com.



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CIVIC SKINNY

BY CITYVIEW STAFF

Alcohol sales down. Tax dollars paid to newspapers continue. Reimagining Education progresses. Pet adoptions break record. And holiday drinks confuse?

The Iowa Department of Revenue released its fiscal year 2025 report, which includes the alcohol revenue numbers. Each year, the department details which spirits, from beer to wine, and which brands, from local to national, were the most popular in Iowa.

All in all, total sales were \$434,938,128 and total gallons were 6,023,961. Both of these are massive numbers, but both are decreases from the previous year. Total sales are down just shy of \$10 million, and total gallons are down a little more than 100,000.

Vodka once again topped the charts in both total sales and gallons, with the clear spirit accounting for \$93.8 million in 2025. This number is also down from the year before, which was \$95.2 million. While vodka is at the top, the collective power of whiskey would clear it handily. Domestic whiskey came in second place for sales at \$83.2 million, a slight rise from the year before. Canadian whiskey was third with \$78.3

million, down slightly from \$78.6.

As for Iowa distilleries, the local artisans had \$7 million in sales and sold 134,204 gallons. **Cedar Ridge Bourbon** topped the total sales list with \$1.9 million with **Blue Ox Vodka** in second place with \$1.8 million. Blue Ox Vodka sold, by far, the most gallons with 69,046. Rounding out the top five was **Revelton Mulberry Gin** in third, **Gotcha Vodka** in fourth, and **Prairie Fire** in fifth.

Of the top 50 brands, **Tito's Handmade Vodka** had the most sales with \$31 million. **Fireball** came in second with \$24 million, **Captain Morgan Original Spiced Rum** in third with \$16 million, **Black Velvet Canadian Whiskey** in fourth with \$12 million and **Crown Royal Canadian Whiskey** in fifth with \$10 million. The highest-selling local brand, Cedar Ridge Bourbon, ranked 36th.

The top customer this year was the **Park Avenue**

Hy-Vee at 3221 S.E. 14th St., Des Moines, with \$13.9 million in liquor sales. The grocery giant narrowly beat out Central City 2, or **Central City Liquors** at 1460 Second Ave., Des Moines, which had \$13.3 million in sales. **Another Round**, in DeWitt, an **Iowa City Hy-Vee** and **Benz Distributing** rounded out the top five.

As for top counties by Class "E" liquor sales, **Polk County** led the way with a little more than \$100 million in sales. **Linn County** was a faraway second with \$37 million. **Scott County**, with \$27 million, **Johnson County**, with \$24 million and **Blackhawk County**, with \$21 million, rounded out the top five. ...

Clearly, subscriptions to paid newspapers are down — a lot. Meanwhile, your tax dollars continue to go to those newspapers as counties, school boards and city councils continue to be required to publish their minutes and expenditures in publications of that type. This "legal advertising" — the fine print

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CIVIC SKINNY CONT...

often published in the back pages — can add up. In the past 12 months, The **City of Des Moines** paid \$9,854.27 of taxpayer dollars to the **Business Record** and \$26,883.81 to **The Des Moines Register**. Polk **County** paid \$36,754.86 to the Business Record and \$77,727.24 to the Register. ...

DMPS announced progress on its **Reimagining Education** projects. **Bekah Harris** was named as the lead project manager. An announcement said that, in the future, all DMPS middle schools will include “innovative maker spaces” that will allow students to explore countless career pathways with the use of data, digital and health science labs. The district plans to break ground at Brody, Goodrell and McCombs this summer.

Signature Schools, meant to allow students to immerse themselves in specific topics, are also in development. One of the first two Signature Schools will be at Moulton Elementary and will become a performing and visual arts school for PK through eighth grade. Demolition and construction of the building is expected to begin at the end of this school year with the new site open for the 2028-2029 school year. The other Signature School will be located at Brubaker/Hoyt, which will become a Dual Language Immersion school for PK through eighth grade upon completion of renovations and additions by the start

of the 2028-2029 school year.

Weeks Middle School and Lovejoy and Studebaker elementary schools are getting additions and renovations. The changes at Weeks are currently being designed and are expected to break ground for construction in late spring. Lovejoy and Studebaker have architects selected, with the district hoping to begin construction in late summer or early fall. ...

The **Animal Rescue League of Iowa** broke its record for adoptions in a year in 2025. The previous record of 8,693 was set in 2023. The record-breaking adoption came on Friday, Dec. 12, when a kitten named **Nora Charles** became adoption No. 8,694 of 2025. ...

Did you enjoy a glass of spiked eggnog this holiday season? **Bisnar Chase**, personal injury attorneys, say people confuse festive drinks such as mulled wine, hot toddies and spiked eggnog to be roughly the same strength as beer. On average, more than 21% Iowans believe these holiday drinks are no stronger than low-alcohol beer, which is lower than the national average of 38%. In Iowa, 13% of adults think spiked eggnog packs no more punch than a light beer, while another 38% say the same about mulled wine. And in the Hawkeye State, 13% also mistakenly believe that hot toddies count as low-alcohol cocktails. A surprising, and also concerning, 20% of national respondents

believe holiday cocktails don’t count toward the drink-drive limit. ...

MarketBeat, a financial media company, named **New Pioneer Food Co-Op** as Iowa’s most ethical business. Trust in big business can be difficult to come by these days, but according to this survey, consumers trust these three Iowa companies the most: New Pioneer Food Co-Op, **Pella Corporation** and **Kinze Manufacturing**. Nationwide, New Pioneer Food Co-Op ranked 64th, Pella ranked 78th, and Kinze ranked 118th. Hershey Company is ranked first nationally. ...

Hip-hop star **Ludacris** donated \$100,000 to **ChildServe** as a “Secret Santa.” This is no longer much of a secret, but the gesture was jolly, nonetheless. The six-figure donation will help fund inpatient services throughout the year.

“I’ve been fortunate to have a successful career because of the fans that attend my concerts and support my music,” **Chris Bridges**, aka Ludacris, said. “Because of this I have the privilege to support children’s hospitals and organizations in communities all over the world. I especially enjoy supporting organizations that have an extremely meaningful impact, such as ChildServe. ChildServe meets all the buckets when I’m choosing a nonprofit partner, and I appreciate the good work that you’re doing to put Iowa on the map.” ■



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POLITICAL MERCURY

BY DOUGLAS BURNS

Fox News' Gutfeld, his national panelists, mock small-town Iowa House candidate's weight

They call him 'Benjamin Broken Buttons' amid a barrage of mean-spirited jokes in viral segment.

Fox News host Greg Gutfeld and his orbiting panelists relentlessly mocked the weight of a Dunlap, Iowa, Democrat, a rural middle- and high-school band teacher and candidate for the Iowa Legislature, in a viral three-minute national broadcast recently.

The barbs aimed at Dunlap City Councilman Benjamin Schauer, who is running in Iowa House District 15, were incessant and cruel, and the piece has generated comments in a range of online forums, including The Daily Caller.

"You know something I don't think anyone's touched on is that guy's penis," one of the Fox commentators, Jamie Lissow, said, with another panelist adding that Schauer's weight is so great it would be hard to see his genitals.

"I never expected that part of my body to be discussed on national television, but here we go," Schauer said in an interview.

Lissow also referred to Schauer as "Benjamin Broken Buttons."

"I have a mirror; I'm well aware I'm overweight," Schauer said in the interview.

The Fox Gutfeld segment just kept going and going with comments about Schauer, a largely obscure candidate even in his home state.

"He could be our next Pritzker," host Greg Gutfeld said, referring to the governor of Illinois, JB Pritzker. "I need new blood. I lost that guy in New Jersey." (An apparent reference to former New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie).

The panel made nasty jokes about Schauer being heavy enough to take down an airplane if he boarded.

"The pilot said, 'We're going to be flying in an altitude of 'oops, maybe not.'"

There is much cackling from the panelists after this with plenty of background laughter in the segment from the audience.

The show catalyzed online comments in the thousands. Here is a sampling from the YouTube post of the segment:

His blood type is "Gravy."

I'm glad we got a picture before PETA pushed it back into the ocean.

Get's his clothes at Iowa Tent and Awning.

Give Him a Break! He was Able to Stand for 15 seconds!!

Schauer, 32, is an alum of the University of Iowa, where he earned a bachelor's degree. He later received a master's degree at Drake University where he is now working toward a doctorate. He lives in the western Iowa city of Dunlap, between Missouri Valley and Denison along U.S. Highway 30, a federal highway that runs from New York to California.

He's running in the decidedly Republican western Iowa House District 15. Schauer lost a race in the district, which includes all of Harrison County and a slice of rural Pottawattamie County, in 2024 to State Rep. Matt Windschitl, a Republican, 69 percent to 31 percent. There is a Republican primary for the seat this cycle. Windschitl is seeking the 4th District congressional seat being vacated by U.S. Rep. Randy Feenstra, R-Hull.

For his part, Schauer said that the students he teaches in grades 5 to 12 in the Boyer Valley Community School District have been supportive and kind, as has the broader Harrison County community, as he is held up for online shaming. The posts will likely trail him for the rest of his life as the social media algorithms feed on virality.

"The community has really rallied around behind me," Schauer said. "It's been a wonderful testament of just how much support people have for me, and also just the fact that people don't tolerate that type of behavior. They think it's just awful on both sides of the spectrum. I've gotten so much support from people saying, 'This is



not OK.'"

In short, the national ugliness has been met with what is generally local kindness, as residents of Dunlap, and other small towns near it, who know Schauer as an educator and local government official, see the effects of viral internet toxicity and cruelty on someone they know to be a good person, a man they see around town at local stores and regular school functions, Schauer said.

"It's really opened some people's eyes to how a lot of the media whenever they do these things how they operate and when it impacts someone that they actually know how devastating that can be for some people," Schauer said. "So there's been a lot of good out of it despite the terrible jokes."

Schauer is 6'5" tall. He does not disclose his weight because he said he understands who he is — and sees his overweight status as a work in progress.

"I am comfortable with who I am," Schauer said.

Schauer, who grew up in Oklahoma before moving to Iowa City as a teenager, said many people in his family are overweight.

"We grew up poor," he said. "We know that poverty often leads to obesity."

Schauer said he's looked at measures to cut weight. He went to a medical facility in Omaha, Nebraska, not far from Dunlap, to investigate weight-loss procedures that he learned were not covered by his health insurance.

In fact, Schauer was advocating for improved health care for all Iowans in the video endorsement he received from Iowa Congressional candidate Stephanie Steiner, a Sutherland Democrat, that sparked some of the online banter that led to the Fox News national pickup. Gutfeld led off his segment with a clip from that endorsement video.

Schauer is a long shot to win the western Iowa district where he teaches in even the best of cycles, a wave for Democrats, which reveals the Fox mocking to be an extraordinary act of punching down, a battery of adolescent-level bullying with no likely effect on what is widely viewed as a locked-down, solid Iowa House district for Republicans.

Schauer said Democrats might perform better in the district than political analysts think.

"Honestly, this story, I think, will also impact that race as well because a lot of these folks are seeing that these are the type of people that are uplifting our current administration, that they are the type of people that are basically being the cheerleaders for the current people that are in charge of our state and our country," Schauer said. "And if they're willing to do it to me — for a lot of people that was really an eye-opening thing." ■

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





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COMING UP

SUBMIT ENTRIES AND PHOTOS TO EDITOR@DMCITYVIEW.COM

NOTE: The following events and attractions are subject to cancellation or changes. Before attending, be sure to check with each event individually to verify details.

THINGS TO DO



Photo by Bekah Benoit

DES MOINES PERFORMING ARTS

Des Moines Civic Center, 221 Walnut St., Des Moines
www.dmpa.org

- Jan. 13-18: Six

VIBRANT MUSIC HALL

2938 Grand Prairie Parkway, Waukee
www.vibrantmusichall.com

- Jan. 25: Cheap Trick at 7:30 p.m.

CINCH WORLD'S TOUGHEST RODEO

Casey's Center, 233 Center St., Des Moines
www.iowaeventscenter.com
Jan. 9-10

Action-packed performances featuring some of the nation's most talented rodeo athletes, livestock, and specialty entertainers. The world's toughest cowboys on a mission to become the Pro Rodeo's World Champion.

COMEDIAN CHARLIE BERENS

Des Moines Civic Center,
221 Walnut St., Des Moines
www.desmoinesperformingarts.org
Jan. 24

Charlie Berens brings his Midwest-style comedy to Des Moines, much to the delight of comedy fans in central Iowa.

DES MOINES BUCCANEERS

MidAmerican Energy RecPlex,
6500 Grand Ave., West Des Moines
www.bucshockey.com

Home games:

- Jan. 2 vs. Sioux Falls Stampede at 7:05 p.m.
- Jan. 3 vs. Green Bay Gamblers at 6:35 p.m. | Farmers Appreciation
- Jan. 4 vs. Green Bay Gamblers at 3:05 p.m.
- Jan. 17 vs. Dubuque Fighting Saints at 6:05 p.m.
- Jan. 30 vs. Lincoln Stars at 7:05 p.m.

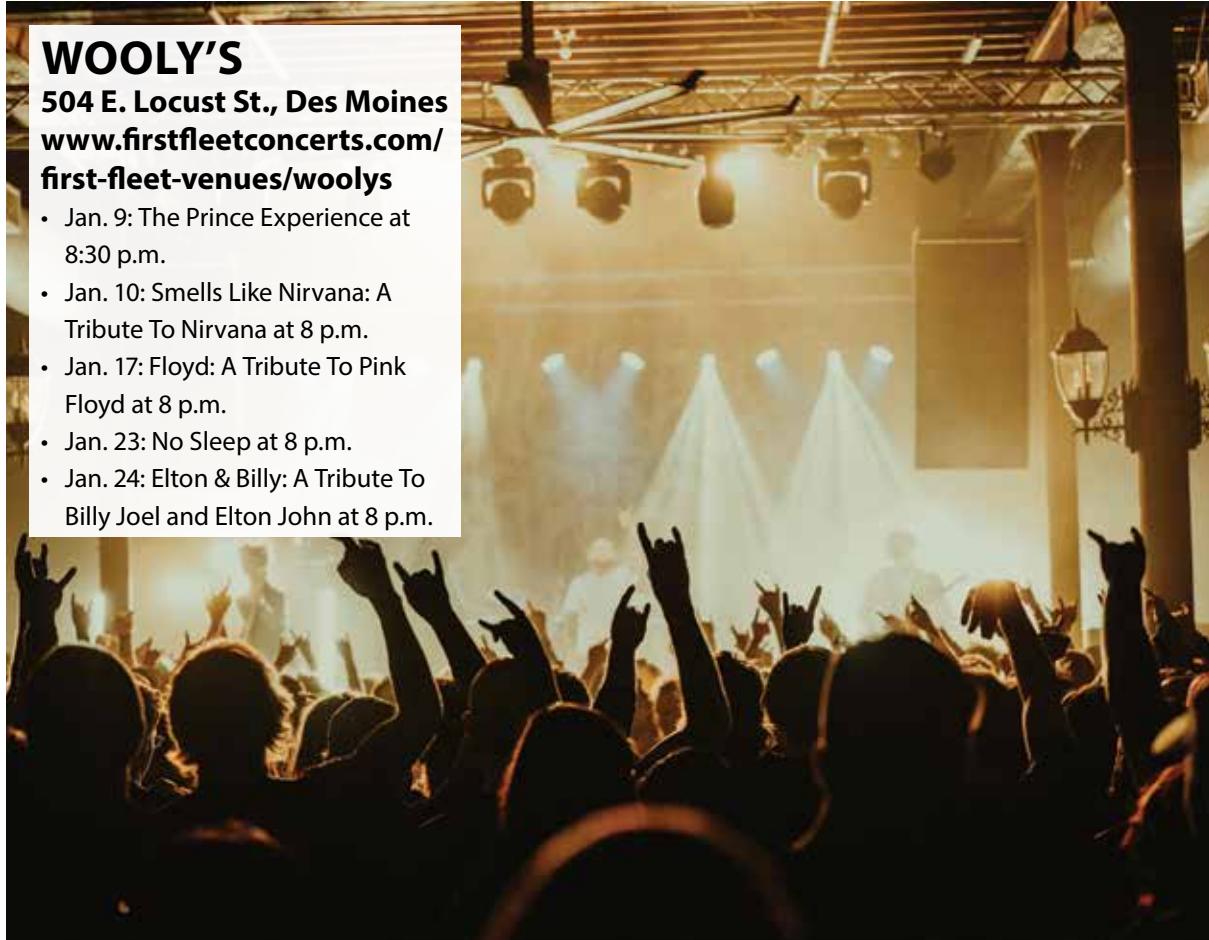
POLK COUNTY HERITAGE GALLERY

Polk County Administration Building,
111 Court Ave., Des Moines
www.polkcountyheritagegallery.org

- Jan. 5 to Feb. 12: Greater Des Moines Exhibited - Annual Juried Show

WOOLY'S
504 E. Locust St., Des Moines
www.firstfleetconcerts.com/first-fleet-venues/woolys

- Jan. 9: The Prince Experience at 8:30 p.m.
- Jan. 10: Smells Like Nirvana: A Tribute To Nirvana at 8 p.m.
- Jan. 17: Floyd: A Tribute To Pink Floyd at 8 p.m.
- Jan. 23: No Sleep at 8 p.m.
- Jan. 24: Elton & Billy: A Tribute To Billy Joel and Elton John at 8 p.m.



A previous performance at Wooly's. Photo by Nathan Schwery

COMING UP

SUBMIT ENTRIES AND PHOTOS TO EDITOR@DMCITYVIEW.COM



Photo courtesy of Jasey Michelle (Picture Iowa)

IOWA WOLVES

Casey's Center, 233 Center St., Des Moines

www.iowa.gleague.nba.com

Home games:

- Jan. 3 at 6:30 p.m. vs. Sioux Falls Skyforce (Miami Heat) | Timberwolves-inspired Jersey
- Jan. 4 at 3 p.m. vs. Sioux Falls Skyforce | Faith and Family Day
- Jan. 18 at 3 p.m. vs. Long Island Nets (Brooklyn Nets) | Alpha's Birthday
- Jan. 19 at 1 p.m. vs. Long Island Nets | MLK Day
- Jan. 24 at 6:30 p.m. vs. Memphis Hustle (Memphis Grizzlies) | Hoops for Hope
- Jan. 26 at 6:30 p.m. vs. Rio Grande Valley Vipers (Houston Rockets)
- Jan. 27 at 6:30 p.m. vs. Mexico City Capitanes

CITYVIEW'S FIRE AND ICE

Historic Valley Junction

fire-and-ice.dmcityview.com

Jan. 24

Fire and Ice is a hockey-themed liquor sampling event that will be sure to warm up your winter blues! With your event ticket, you will receive 10 individual drink tickets to sample some of the BEST winter cocktails from establishments in the Valley Junction area.



IOWA WILD

**Casey's Center,
233 Center St., Des Moines**
www.iowawild.com

Home games:

- Jan. 16 vs. Toronto Marlies at 7 p.m. | Local Heroes Night
- Jan. 17 vs. Toronto Marlies at 6 p.m.
- Jan. 21 vs. Texas Stars at 7 p.m.
- Jan. 23 vs. Milwaukee Admirals at 5 p.m.
- Jan. 30 vs. Milwaukee Admirals at 7 p.m. | Throwback Threads Night
- Jan. 31 vs. Milwaukee Admirals at 6 p.m.

DRAKE BASKETBALL

**Knapp Center
2601 Forest Ave., Des Moines**
www.godrakebulldogs.com

Men's home games

- Jan. 4 vs. Indiana State, time TBD
- Jan. 10 vs. Belmont, time TBD
- Jan. 21 vs. Murray State, time TBD
- Jan. 28 vs. Evansville at 6:30 p.m.
- Jan. 31 vs. Bradley at 5 p.m.

Women's home games

- Jan. 2 vs. Southern Illinois at 6 p.m.
- Jan. 16 vs. Bradley at 6 p.m.
- Jan. 23 vs. Evansville at 6 p.m.
- Jan. 25 vs. Murray State at 2 p.m.

CHEWBOCKA FEST 2026

Confluence Brewing Company, 1235 Thomas Beck Road, Des Moines
www.confluencebrewing.com

Jan. 17

Confluence Brewing Company challenges any and all Star Wars fans to harness their inner Wookiee and get transported into this themed festival at the southside brewery. Practice your roars and get ready for a day full of fun activities.



Photo courtesy of Iowa Diecast Toy Show

14TH IOWA DIECAST TOY SHOW

Iowa State Fairgrounds, 3000 East Grand Ave., Des Moines
www.agfarmtoys.com/events/ia-diecast-show

Jan. 3-4

Toy gathering enthusiasts rejoice, the Iowa Diecast Toy Show is back once again. There will be dealers and an incredibly wide variety of memorabilia at the family-friendly event. ■

A free resource for the central Iowa business community

CITYVIEW'S

BUSINESS JOURNAL



Start with the
LEGAL BASICS
when building a business

From contracts to trademarks to payroll, learning
the basics keeps a company running smoothly.

By Lindsey Giardino

Launching a small business is often fueled by passion and a vision, but nothing replaces the legal foundations that keep a business protected and positioned to grow.

Whether for a solo consultant, a tech startup founder or a brick-and-mortar shop owner, the legal to-do list is longer and more consequential than many expect. Choosing a business structure, securing trademarks, drafting contracts, setting up payroll, navigating sales tax, protecting confidential information and planning for eventual succession are all part of the list. It can be overwhelming, but they are all risk-management tools that shield business owners from financial loss and future headaches.

Many small business owners do not realize how early these needs show up or how quickly they evolve as the business grows.

The contracts a business starts with won't likely be the contracts it will need two years in. Employment laws shift. Tax obligations expand when they go from a sole proprietor to hiring their first contractor or employee. Intellectual property issues become real the moment a brand gains traction. And, without clear agreements — whether for clients, team members or partners — misunderstandings can turn into costly conflicts.

The truth is simple: legal structure and documentation form the backbone of a healthy business. Solid contracts set expectations. Trademarks protect identity. Payroll and sales tax compliance keep state and federal agencies out of the inbox. Confidentiality and employment agreements guard ideas and teams. And succession planning ensures the businesses that owners have poured themselves into can continue — or close — on their terms.

Small business owners don't need to become legal experts, but they do need to recognize that legal decisions aren't optional or "nice to have." They are foundational investments that save time, money and stress down the road.

Get it in writing

Nora Crosthwaite knows a thing or two about being a small business owner. She founded a company that allowed real estate agents or homeowners to take pictures of their homes prior to listing preparation and submit them to a stager, and she still leads a real estate team today: Home Sweet Des Moines, brokered by Realty ONE Group Impact.

It started with the basics. When she first launched a small business, Crosthwaite was surprised by the requirement to set up an EIN for her LLC and use it to open her business checking, savings and credit card accounts.

"My personal banker was a fountain of information here," she says. "However, when I

"I used an attorney who focused on intellectual property for my trademark, and a different attorney who focused on startups to change my corporate structure."

— Nora Crosthwaite

expanded into the Home Sweet Des Moines team, I was taken aback by the requirement to set up a DBA (Doing Business As) with the Iowa Real Estate Commission, not the Iowa Secretary of State."

And then when Crosthwaite hired her first assistant, she brought her on as a W-2 employee.

"Setting up payroll, with the reporting requirements to the state of Iowa, was a hassle," she says. "Since then, my team members are all set up as 1099 contractors, not employees."

Crosthwaite also has contracts with each of her team members that outline job responsibilities, confidentiality requirements, data and privacy practices and more. Each team member must sign this contract before proceeding.

"This also lays out what happens if we terminate our relationship," Crosthwaite says. "I see it as a way to ensure any splits are handled smoothly."

She has learned a lot since becoming a small business owner, but Crosthwaite still leans on others for support when it comes to changing employment laws and legal needs. She has found that networking groups like FemCity Des Moines and the Urbandale Chamber of Commerce do a great job sharing legal updates.

During the period when Crosthwaite also ran the tech startup, she had to set up trademarks, navigate ownership requirements and more. The biggest hassle was changing from an LLC to a C Corp to support her needs. Working with professionals in both areas proved extremely beneficial.

"I used an attorney who focused on intellectual property for my trademark, and a different attorney who focused on startups to change my corporate structure," she shares.

Crosthwaite advises other small business owners to find someone with a similar type of business and ask about things like required structures.

"Lean into your networks to find the right people (attorneys, CPAs) to assist along the way," she says. "The type of business you have will drive your needs."

She also encourages entrepreneurs to invest the time and money to get things right from the start.

"Fixing corporate structure later is a hassle,"



Crosthwaite says. "Ensure every partnership, employee or contractor is covered with a contract. If it's not in writing, it doesn't exist."

Legal clarity is good business

When Bethany Snyder was getting her small business, Snyder Strategies LLC — a consultancy that helps nonprofits and membership-based organizations strengthen their advocacy — off the ground, the legal side of things was not too overwhelming. Her spouse is an attorney, so she was able to launch with a solid, well-drafted contract.

"What DID surprise me was how much those documents evolve over time," she says. "As I worked with more clients and saw how other consultants structured their agreements, I kept refining my own."

For Snyder, the trickiest moments usually come when a client wants to use their contract instead of hers.

"That's when having an attorney on standby is essential — someone who can walk through the language, point out any areas of risk and help negotiate terms that protect me," she says.

A particularly memorable instance was when a client tried to include a strict intellectual property clause that would have given them ownership of part of Snyder's work product.

"That required careful back-and-forth," she says. "We ultimately reached agreement, but I wasn't about to give away my business product just because it was convenient for them."

Administratively, the biggest curveball has been deciding when to move from an LLC to an S-Corp.

"There's no handbook that tells you the exact moment to make that shift, so figuring out the tax



"This isn't something to piece together from the internet. A well-crafted contract protects you, sets expectations, strengthens client relationships and signals that you take your business seriously. Once you invest in it, you can reuse it for years with small adjustments as needed. Mine has been my backbone for nearly a decade."

— Bethany Snyder

and structural implications took more digging than I expected," Snyder says. "And, of course, I relied on my attorney and accountant."

As she has grown Snyder Strategies, her contracts — and equally important, her detailed scope of work — have become the foundation of how she protects her

business. They set crystal-clear expectations, safeguard her time and IP, and ensure everyone understands the parameters before work begins.

"Those documents don't just protect me legally ... they communicate professionalism," Snyder says.

"Clients see them and instantly understand that I run a serious, well-structured consultancy. It sets the tone for the relationship from day one and shows that I know my stuff. A strong contract is a business asset — it's legal protection and a professional asset."

Looking ahead, Snyder plans to add more formal data and privacy language, especially as AI becomes a bigger part of her work.

Given her own experiences, Snyder's biggest piece of advice is to work with an attorney to build a solid contract and scope of work.

"This isn't something to piece together from the internet," she notes. "A well-crafted contract protects you, sets expectations, strengthens client relationships and signals that you take your business seriously. Once you invest in it, you can reuse it for years with small adjustments as needed. Mine has been my backbone for nearly a decade."

Ultimately, she says, legal preparedness is less about being defensive than about setting boundaries and starting every client relationship on strong footing. ■

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SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION LOANS

Borrower Name	City	County	Cong. District	\$ Amount	Jobs Created	Jobs Retained	New Vs. Existing	Business Type
Diamond Star Academy, LLC	WATERLOO	BLACK HAWK	02	\$500,000	10	8	NEW	Elementary and Secondary Schools
Etten Properties, LLC	INDEPENDENCE	BUCHANAN	02	\$166,000	0	4	EXISTING	N/A
NO-BS Holdings, LLC	GREENE	BUTLER	02	\$616,000	4	3	EXISTING	Other Fabricated Wire Product Manufacturing
BRAD BOWER DRYWALL LLC	WEST BRANCH	CEDAR	01	\$22,000	0	0	EXISTING	Drywall and Insulation Contractors
V&M Farms, Inc	Mason City	CERRO GORDO	02	\$240,000	0	14	EXISTING	General Freight Trucking, Long Distance, Truckload
YZ Consulting Inc	OSCEOLA	CLARKE	03	\$100,000	30	30	EXISTING	Administrative Management and General Management Consulting Services
EXO SKIN SPA & HAIR STUDIO	CLINTON	CLINTON	01	\$14,000	0	1	EXISTING	Beauty Salons
1 ELITE ELECTRIC, LLC	BURLINGTON	DES MOINES	01	\$45,000	0	2	NEW	Electrical Contractors
Precision Electric and Services, LLC	SPIRIT LAKE	DICKINSON	04	\$200,000	2	4	NEW	Electrical Contractors
LUCKY LITTLE GYMS LLC	TIFFIN	JOHNSON	01	\$478,000	8	2	NEW	Fitness and Recreational Sports Centers
LUCKY LITTLE GYMS LLC	TIFFIN	JOHNSON	01	\$50,000	8	2	NEW	Fitness and Recreational Sports Centers
CANINE SOCIAL CLUB LLC	CEDAR RAPIDS	LINN	02	\$30,000	4	3	NEW	Pet Care (except Veterinary) Services
RAPID OWL TOWING LLC	FAIRFAX	LINN	02	\$10,000	1	1	EXISTING	Motor Vehicle Towing
360 Builders INC	Larchwood	LYON	04	\$177,000	4	0	EXISTING	Residential Remodelers
Coleman Automotive Le Mars, LLC	Le Mars	PLYMOUTH	04	\$5,386,000	1	12	NEW	New Car Dealers
H&P Corp LLC	CLIVE	POLK	03	\$3,865,000	50	0	NEW	All Other Amusement and Recreation Industries
FOREVER SUNRISE, INC	DES MOINES	POLK	03	\$1,785,000	1	1	EXISTING	N/A
Apollo Design Build LLC	Des Moines	POLK	03	\$1,146,000	6	0	EXISTING	Brick, Stone, and Related Construction Material Merchant Wholesalers
3330 University Ave LLC	DES MOINES	POLK	03	\$813,000	1	2	NEW	Homes for the Elderly
Ambica 215, LLC	GRIMES	POLK	03	\$2,100,000	7	10	EXISTING	Hotels (except Casino Hotels) and Motels
The Grape Life Wine Lounge and Cellar	DAVENPORT	SCOTT	01	\$137,500	0	2	EXISTING	N/A
Midwest Dental Lab	INDIANOLA	WARREN	01	\$70,000	3	1	EXISTING	Dental Laboratories

TRANSACTIONS FROM OCTOBER 2025

We can stop HIV, Iowa—
by taking a **whole-person**
approach to our sexual health.

Get screened for HIV at least once in your lifetime, **and** request HIV screening anytime you are getting tested for sexually-transmitted infections (STIs).

Talk openly with your provider about your sex life, so they can help you figure out which tests are best for you. There's not a single test for all STIs — each STI has its own test.

STIs can cause long-term health issues when left untreated. They can also increase your chances of acquiring HIV. Getting tested for all sexually-transmitted infections is the best step you can take to protect your own health and help to stop HIV in Iowa!



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stophiviowa.org



COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE

COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS IN POLK COUNTY FROM JULY 25, 2025, TO AUG. 18, 2025



1325 N. ANKENY BLVD., ANKENY
 SALE DATE: 2025-07-25
 SALE PRICE: \$700,000
 SELLER: SPLASH EXPRESS LLC
 BUYER: SPLASH AUTO WASH LLC
 ACRES: 1.907
 SQUARE FEET: 5,848

207 NINTH ST., DES MOINES
 SALE DATE: 2025-07-25
 SALE PRICE: \$10,000,000
 SELLER: DMCRE1 LLC
 BUYER: DMCRE2 LLC
 ACRES: 0.858
 SQUARE FEET: 242,637

NO ADDRESS LISTED
 SALE DATE: 2025-07-25
 SALE PRICE: \$405
 SELLER: JADEE HOLDINGS LLC
 BUYER: CITY OF ANKENY
 ACRES: 0.001
 SQUARE FEET: 0

NO ADDRESS LISTED
 SALE DATE: 2025-07-25
 SALE PRICE: \$16,900
 SELLER: SLEISTER PROPERTIES LLC
 BUYER: CITY OF ANKENY
 ACRES: 0.026
 SQUARE FEET: 0

**1701 22ND ST., UNIT 200,
 WEST DES MOINES**
 SALE DATE: 2025-07-28
 SALE PRICE: \$850,000
 SELLER: BARAZANJI LLC
 BUYER: RE REAL ESTATE LLC
 ACRES: 0.805
 SQUARE FEET: 7,615

106 E. ARMY POST ROAD, DES MOINES
 SALE DATE: 2025-07-28
 SALE PRICE: \$135,000
 SELLER: JR N KALE PROPERTY LLC
 BUYER: 106 E ARMY POST RD LLC
 ACRES: 0.732

801 WALNUT ST., DES MOINES
 SALE DATE: 2025-07-28
 SALE PRICE: \$32,000,000
 SELLER: WELLS FARGO PROPERTIES INC
 BUYER: DMCRE1 LLC
 ACRES: 9.670
 SQUARE FEET: 1,413,252

NO ADDRESS LISTED
 SALE DATE: 2025-07-28
 SALE PRICE: \$5,100
 SELLER: BROWN, BRADLEY ALLEN
 BUYER: CITY OF ANKENY
 ACRES: 0.008
 SQUARE FEET: 0

1419 CAPITOL AVE., DES MOINES
 SALE DATE: 2025-07-29
 SALE PRICE: \$2,399,000
 SELLER: DSM37 LLC
 BUYER: STANBROUGH RESIDENTIAL LLC
 ACRES: 0.785
 SQUARE FEET: 22,806

1607 CENTER ST., DES MOINES
 SALE DATE: 2025-07-30
 SALE PRICE: \$500,000
 SELLER: CENTER STREET INVESTMENTS LLC
 BUYER: THE GAEL LLC
 ACRES: 0.250
 SQUARE FEET: 4,090

3019 KINGMAN BLVD., DES MOINES
 SALE DATE: 2025-07-31
 SALE PRICE: \$257,100
 SELLER: METASTONE PROPERTY SOLUTIONS LLC
 BUYER: BEAR DOWN LLC
 ACRES: 0.172
 SQUARE FEET: 2,773

3019 KINGMAN BLVD., DES MOINES
 SALE DATE: 2025-08-04
 SALE PRICE: \$235,000
 SELLER: SCHWEITZER, GERALD R
 BUYER: METASTONE PROPERTY SOLUTIONS LLC
 ACRES: 0.172
 SQUARE FEET: 2,773



2505 WEDGEWOOD ROAD, DES MOINES
 SALE DATE: 2025-08-04
 SALE PRICE: \$490,000
 SELLER: FLATTERY PROPERTIES LLC
 BUYER: FOLEY BUILDING LLC
 ACRES: 0.715
 SQUARE FEET: 2,640

2625 VINE ST., WEST DES MOINES
 SALE DATE: 2025-08-05
 SALE PRICE: \$10,200,000
 SELLER: FAIRMEADOWS COMMUNITY LLC
 BUYER: FAIRMEADOWS VILLAGE GROUP LLC
 ACRES: 7.025
 SQUARE FEET: 93,921

3323 INGERSOLL AVE., DES MOINES
 SALE DATE: 2025-08-05
 SALE PRICE: \$1,725,000
 SELLER: AHC WOODLAND LLC
 BUYER: 3323 INGERSOLL LLC
 ACRES: 0.273
 SQUARE FEET: 14,640



4941 DOUGLAS AVE., DES MOINES
 SALE DATE: 2025-08-01
 SALE PRICE: \$275,000
 SELLER: CHARLES E KRIGLSTEIN REVOCABLE TRUST
 BUYER: SHRADDHA AUR SABURI LLC
 ACRES: 0.344
 SQUARE FEET: 2,340

709 34TH ST., DES MOINES
 SALE DATE: 2025-08-01
 SALE PRICE: \$245,000
 SELLER: JJ REAL ESTATE HOLDINGS CORP
 BUYER: COSONERO LLC
 ACRES: 0.160
 SQUARE FEET: 1,583

317 S. ANKENY BLVD., ANKENY
 SALE DATE: 2025-08-07
 SALE PRICE: \$360,000
 SELLER: 317 LLC
 BUYER: RAMSEY, PHILLIP
 ACRES: 0.220
 SQUARE FEET: 768

NO ADDRESS LISTED
 SALE DATE: 2025-08-08
 SALE PRICE: \$5,100
 SELLER: TIERNAN PROPERTIES LLC
 BUYER: CITY OF ANKENY
 ACRES: 0.008
 SQUARE FEET: 0

2929 EIGHTH ST. S.W., ALTOONA
 SALE DATE: 2025-08-01
 SALE PRICE: \$3,504,000
 SELLER: WAYSIDE ACRES LLC
 BUYER: AGREE CENTRAL LLC
 ACRES: 1.310
 SQUARE FEET: 3,033



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- ✓ Health



Paul Bouwers, Jason Uhlenhake, Ben Buenzow, Tyler Fromm, Chad Lyons, Taylor Carey. Not pictured: Faith Dorn-Spice, Steve Plym

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 INFO@BUENZOWINSURANCE.COM | 515-270-8870

**3621 BEAVER AVE., DES MOINES**

SALE DATE: 2025-08-12
SALE PRICE: \$1,660,000
SELLER: KNAPP INTERESTS LLC
BUYER: MURRAY GROUP LLC
ACRES: 0.697
SQUARE FEET: 15,782

4704 UNIVERSITY AVE., DES MOINES

SALE DATE: 2025-08-12
SALE PRICE: \$252,000
SELLER: ARRY D STRICKLER TRUST
BUYER: DOUBLE WAVE LLC
ACRES: 0.157
SQUARE FEET: 2,850

**6136 S.E. 14TH ST., DES MOINES**

SALE DATE: 2025-08-14
SALE PRICE: \$1,100,000
SELLER: PARADISE CAC LLC
BUYER: ROGUE EQUITIES LLC
ACRES: 0.631
SQUARE FEET: 3,384

4954 86TH ST., URBANDALE

SALE DATE: 2025-08-12
SALE PRICE: \$3,900,000
SELLER: PARK AVENUE PARTNERS LC
BUYER: R&J WEIS HOLDING COMPANY 14 LLC
ACRES: 1.428
SQUARE FEET: 6,246

23 12TH ST., DES MOINES

SALE DATE: 2025-08-12
SALE PRICE: \$1,312,000
SELLER: WELLS FARGO PROPERTIES INC
BUYER: 1100 CHERRY STREET LLC
ACRES: 1.504
SQUARE FEET: 16,723

2203 GRAND AVE., DES MOINES

SALE DATE: 2025-08-12
SALE PRICE: \$1,250,000
SELLER: REC HOLDING LLC
BUYER: 2203 GRAND LLC
ACRES: 0.389
SQUARE FEET: 7,558

2120 INGERSOLL AVE., DES MOINES

SALE DATE: 2025-08-13
SALE PRICE: \$2,300,000
SELLER: COMMUNITY 1ST CREDIT UNION
BUYER: GRAND CAPITAL LC
ACRES: 0.435
SQUARE FEET: 5,496

NO ADDRESS LISTED

SALE DATE: 2025-08-13
SALE PRICE: \$40,000
SELLER: ALLEMAN, STARLA
BUYER: DHK ENTERPRISES INC
ACRES: 0.200
SQUARE FEET: 560

2011 HULL AVE., DES MOINES

SALE DATE: 2025-08-13
SALE PRICE: \$200,000
SELLER: DELAWARE PROPERTIES LLC
BUYER: BBWB HOLDINGS LLC
ACRES: 1.526
SQUARE FEET: 7,550

4989 N.W. JOHNSTON DRIVE, JOHNSTON

SALE DATE: 2025-08-14
SALE PRICE: \$2,550,000
SELLER: RAPTOR PROPERTIES LLC
BUYER: STONE MONROE PROPERTIES LLC
ACRES: 2.397
SQUARE FEET: 13,700

3301 111TH ST., URBANDALE

SALE DATE: 2025-08-14
SALE PRICE: \$243,000
SELLER: NEXT TEN LLC
BUYER: JAEGER, JOHN J
ACRES: 0.107
SQUARE FEET: 1,500

1910 S.W. WHITE BIRCH CIRCLE, ANKENY

SALE DATE: 2025-08-18
SALE PRICE: \$1,900,000
SELLER: KIRKWOOD PLAZA CORP
BUYER: WHITLOCK, TERRY
ACRES: 1.543
SQUARE FEET: 3,431

9051 SWANSON BLVD., CLIVE

SALE DATE: 2025-08-18
SALE PRICE: \$625,000
SELLER: BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF CENTRAL IOWA INC
BUYER: CALVARY CHAPEL LIVING HOPE
ACRES: 0.672
SQUARE FEET: 4,144

9100 NORTHPARK DRIVE, URBANDALE

SALE DATE: 2025-08-18
SALE PRICE: \$10,500,000
SELLER: MID-AMERICA INVESTMENT COMPANY
BUYER: ATERRA 202 9100 NORTHPARK DR URBANDALE LLC
ACRES: 13.107
SQUARE FEET: 91,985 ■

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Send information on new hires, promotions, expansions, openings and other business news to editor@dmcityview.com.



The Partnership celebrates 2025 Scale DSM graduates

The Greater Des Moines Partnership announced the graduation of the fourth cohort of the Scale DSM Business Accelerator program. This group of entrepreneurs has completed the six-month program, gaining advanced business education, hands-on tools for strategic growth and valuable peer-to-peer learning. Graduates from the 2025 cohort include:

- Magdalena Aravena Gutierrez, Studio Siembra
- Kyle Doyle, Iowa Distilling Company
- Lori Gelhaar, Leverage4
- Justin Gora, Gora's Gym
- Andrew Johnson, 21st Century Trading Company LLC
- Riana LeJeune, Repinned Luxury Upholstery Workroom
- Ana Maceda, Crown Cleaning LLC
- Shayla McCormally, McCormally & Cosgrove, PLLC
- Tim Morris, Maple Creek Construction, Inc
- Jennifer Oredson, Dinner Dispatch
- Matthew Palan, Creative Concepts
- Marilyn Perez Garcia, Modas Marilyn
- Thla Sui, Thla Sui Agency
- LeAnn Thongvanh, Dinner Dispatch
- Brandy Werner, Werner's Elite Auto
- Aniekanabasi White, Sensil Studios
- RaeLynn Whitfield, Whitfield's Lawn and Garden Specialist, LLC
- Ventica Woods, Mama Africa LLC

Loch chosen to help shape the future of nuclear medicine

Robert J. Loch, Ph.D., MBA, CNMT, associate dean of clinical and student affairs in the College of Health Sciences at Des Moines University Medicine and Health Sciences, has been selected to participate in the Society of Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging Technologist Section's Leadership Academy. The two-day program, held in January 2026, brings together emerging leaders for focused development through lectures, team-building exercises and networking opportunities. Its goal is to cultivate future SNMMI-TS leaders who are committed to advancing the profession and the organization.

Marcon named senior vice president of marketing and communications for Iowa Hospital Association

The Iowa Hospital Association announced that Jordan Juhl Marcon has joined the organization's executive team as senior vice president of marketing and communications. In this role, Marcon will oversee IHA's marketing, communications and brand strategy to support member hospitals and advance the organization's mission. Marcon brings nearly two decades of experience in strategic communications, public relations and brand leadership across Iowa's health care, nonprofit and business sectors to this role. Most recently, she served as director of communications and public relations at ChildServe, where she led organizational communications strategy, built and maintained relationships to advance organizational reputation, and supported executive leadership in shaping strategic direction. Marcon previously held communications and advisory roles with Wixted and Company, the Iowa Grocery Industry Association, the National Pork Board and Vermeer Corporation.



Jordan Juhl
Marcon

Miller announces retirement from Silos & Smokestacks National Heritage

After a decade of service to Silos & Smokestacks National Heritage Area (SSNHA), Executive Director Cara Miller has announced she will retire effective Jan. 31. During her tenure, Miller has guided the congressionally designated National Heritage Area, whose mission is to tell and preserve the story of American agriculture, through a period of growth and impact. Under her leadership, SSNHA has expanded to 119 Partner Sites across 37 counties, strengthened public awareness and engagement, and successfully relocated its headquarters to 305 W. Park Ave. in Waterloo. Miller also led the organization through its reauthorization with the federal government through 2037, securing long-term stability for the heritage area.

One of the most recent milestones under Miller's direction was the creation of the Iowa Eats Food & Drink Festival, an annual celebration connecting farmers, producers, and culinary artisans with the public. The festival offers Iowans a dynamic way to learn more about where their food comes from and the people who help bring it to the table.

"It has been a privilege to spend the last 10 years of my career leading such an outstanding organization as Silos & Smokestacks," Miller said. "We are lucky to have this National Heritage Area headquartered here in the Cedar Valley and in our state of Iowa. The impact Silos & Smokestacks has had both economically in the region and on agricultural tourism is profound. I am so proud to have been able to be a part of that." ■

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WINTER *Arts & Entertainment* GUIDE

By Cyote Williams

Each winter, the desire to shut the doors, close the blinds and stay hunkered down while the wind, snow and cold weather creep in grows stronger. We would say we don't blame you, but we do.

When winter comes, instead of staying under the blanket with a warm cup of cocoa, we get to work finding many of the best places, events and performances happening in the colder months. After all, award-winning artists are showcasing their creations consistently throughout the season. Broadway shows are showing at the Des

Moines Performing Arts Center. World-class athletes are putting their skills on display on the ice and on the hardwood. Musical performances are bringing wonderful sounds to the strong variety of musical venues the city has to offer. If that wasn't enough for you, we have a catch-all events section full of reasons to get out of the house and into the city.

Take it from us, your Arts & Entertainment experts, and peruse these pages to find something to do this winter. You won't regret it.

Art



A photo from Polk County Heritage Gallery's Sara Sato's show, "Notes from the Sea." Photo courtesy of PCHG

DES MOINES ART CENTER

4700 Grand Ave., Des Moines | www.desmoinesartcenter.org

- **Through Jan. 11:** Aliza Nisenbaum – "Día de los Muertos"
- **Through Jan. 18:** Manuel Álvarez Bravo – "Collaborations"
- **Through March 29:** Camille Henrot – "Tuesday"
- **Through April 19:** Bill Owens – "Work and Leisure"
- **Jan. 17 to June 17:** Iowa Artists 2026: Henry Payer - Aagakinak Haciwi: "We Live Opposite Each Other"
- **Feb. 14 to May 17:** "Honey, You're a Wonderful Model" - Maria Lassnig's Animated Films

OLSON-LARSEN GALLERIES

542 Fifth St., West Des Moines | www.olsonlarsen.com

- **Through Jan. 31:** "The Animal Show 2025"

ANDERSON GALLERY

Harmon Fine Arts Center, 1310 25th St., Des Moines

www.andersongallery.wp.drake.edu

- **Feb. 5 to March 13:** "Transformative Expressions: Richard Black International Juried Print Exhibition"

MAINFRAME STUDIOS

900 Keosauqua Way, Des Moines | www.mainframestudios.org

Mainframe Studios hosts "First Fridays" every first Friday of the month, featuring a changing theme, with the artist's works on display alongside live music and food.

- **Jan. 2:** Bright Beginnings
- **Feb. 6:** Embodied
- **March 6:** Des Moines Public Schools

MOBERG GALLERY

2411 Grand Ave., Des Moines | www.moberggallery.com

- **Through Jan. 3:** Scott Charles Ross
- **Jan. 9:** Jeff Fleming
- **Feb. 6:** Edgard Camacho curated by Steven Vail
- **March 6:** Chris Vance

POLK COUNTY HERITAGE GALLERY

Polk County Administration Building, 111 Court Ave., Des Moines
www.polkcountyheritagegallery.org

- **Jan. 5 to Feb. 12:** Greater Des Moines Exhibited - Annual Juried Show

ANKENY ART CENTER

1520 S.W. Ordnance Road, Ankeny | www.ankenyartcenter.org

- Through Jan. 14: Members Show



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Stage

DES MOINES PERFORMING ARTS

Des Moines Civic Center, Cowles Commons, Stoner Theater, Temple Theatre, 221 Walnut St., Des Moines | www.dmpa.org

- **Jan. 13-18:** "Six"
- **Feb. 3-8:** "Kimberly Akimbo"
- **Feb. 24-28, March 1:** "The Outsiders"
- **March 20-22:** "Meredith Willson's The Music Man"
- **March 28:** "The Wizard of Oz In Concert"

ACTORS, INC. - AMES

COMMUNITY THEATER

120 Abraham Drive, Ames
www.actorsinc.org

Jan. 29-31, Feb. 6-8: "Making God Laugh"

DES MOINES COMMUNITY PLAYHOUSE

831 42nd St., Des Moines
www.doplayhouse.com

- **Jan 9-25:** "Red Riding Hood, Both Sides of the Story"
- **Feb. 6 to March 1:** "The Mousetrap"
- **March 6-22:** "The Lightning Thief"



Ann Morrison and Marcus Phillips in the national tour of "Kimberly Akimbo." Photo by Joan Marcus

CLASS ACT PRODUCTIONS

201 First Ave. S., Altoona

www.captheatre.org

Feb. 20-22, 27-28, March 1, 6-8: "Oliver! Jr."

DMACC ANKENY THEATRE

2006 S. Ankeny Blvd., Ankeny

www.dmacc.edu/theatre/ankeny/Pages/welcome.aspx

- **March 6-8, 26-29:** "Macbeth"

DES MOINES YOUNG ARTISTS' THEATRE

Munro Building, Des Moines University Campus, 3380 Grand Ave., Des Moines
www.dmyat.org

• Feb. 20 to March 1: "Winnie the Pooh"

IOWA STAGE THEATRE COMPANY

Stoner Theatre, 221 Walnut St., Des Moines

www.iowastage.org

March 13-22: "The Seagull"

TALLGRASS THEATRE COMPANY

2019 Grand Ave., Suite 100, West Des Moines | www.tallgrasstheatre.org

- **Feb. 13 to March 1:** "Disenchanted!"

Live music

DES MOINES SYMPHONY

Des Moines Civic Center, 221 Walnut St., Des Moines
www.dmsymphony.org

- **Feb. 14-15:** "Love – Romeo & Juliet"
- **Feb. 20-21:** "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 1 in Concert"
- **March 14-15:** "Reflection – Smetana & Beethoven"

CASEY'S CENTER

Casey's Center, 223 Center St., Des Moines
www.iowaeventscenter.com
March 15: Winter Jam '26

HOYT SHERMAN PLACE

1501 Woodland Ave., Des Moines

www.hoytsherman.org

- **Jan. 23:** Big Head Todd and the Monsters at 7:30 p.m.
- **Jan. 30:** The Rush Tribute Project at 7:30 p.m.
- **Feb. 4:** An Intimate Evening with JJ Grey & Mofro at 8 p.m.
- **Feb. 21:** The Black Jacket Symphony Presents Pink Floyd's "The Wall" at 7:30 p.m.
- **March 5:** Gaelic Storm at 7:30 p.m.
- **March 9:** Steven Curtis Chapman at 7 p.m.
- **March 10:** Jeff Tweedy with special guest Sima Cunningham at 7:30 p.m.
- **March 11:** An Evening With TOTO at 7:30 p.m.
- **March 13:** Trisha Yearwood: The Mirror Tour at 7:30 p.m.
- **March 27:** Jake Owen at 7:30 p.m.

WOOLY'S

504 E. Locust St., Des Moines

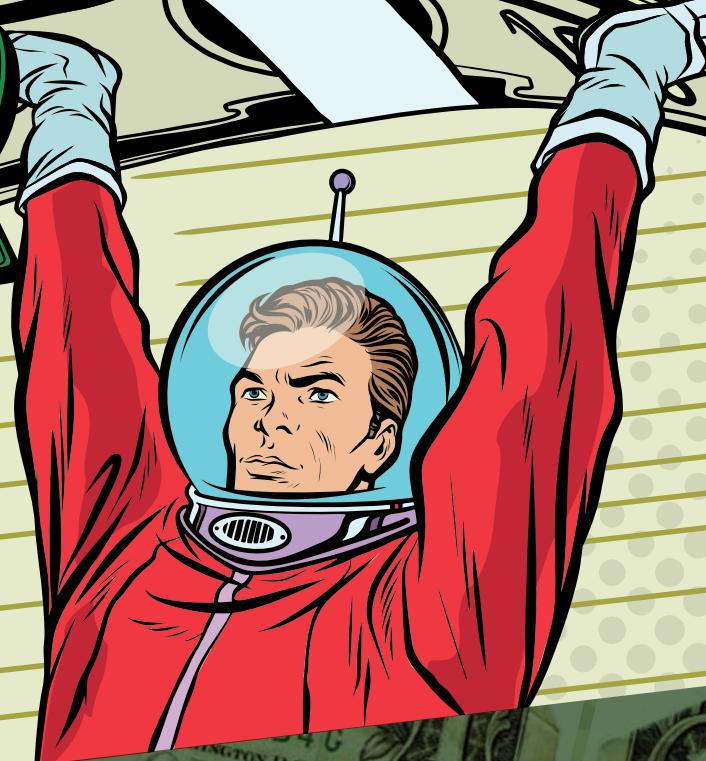
www.firstfleetconcerts.com/first-fleet-venues/woolys

- **Jan. 9:** The Prince Experience at 8:30 p.m.
- **Jan. 10:** Smells Like Nirvana: A Tribute To Nirvana at 8 p.m.
- **Jan. 17:** Floyd: A Tribute To Pink Floyd at 8 p.m.
- **Jan. 23:** No Sleep at 8 p.m.
- **Jan. 24:** Elton & Billy: A Tribute To Billy Joel & Elton John at 8 p.m.
- **Feb. 18:** The Browning at 6:30 p.m.
- **Feb. 20:** Bayker Blankenship at 8 p.m.
- **Feb. 27:** Pecos & The Rooftops at 7 p.m.
- **March 1:** JUMP – America's Van Halen Experience at 8 p.m.

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ANKENY

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ANKENY, IA 50023

- **March 5:** Tyler Farr at 7 p.m.
- **March 9:** The Floozies + Too Many Zooz: Too Many Flooz Tour at 7 p.m.
- **March 11:** Railroad Earth at 7 p.m.
- **March 13:** Wheatus at 7 p.m.
- **March 14:** Merkules at 7 p.m.
- **March 17:** Two Feet at 7 p.m.
- **March 25:** The Summer Set at 7 p.m.
- **March 27:** San Holo at 7 p.m.

XBK Live

1159 24th St., Des Moines
www.xbklive.com

- **Jan. 2:** Beggars' Bargain at 7 p.m.
- **Jan. 2:** Quinn Trilk, Mia Prosperi, Kelsie James at 7 p.m.
- **Jan. 3:** Doc Bullfrog at 7 p.m.
- **Jan. 9:** Blake Jack + South 35 at 7 p.m.
- **Jan. 10:** Bootcamp - Traffic Death - Skinned Alive - Wanderer at 7 p.m.
- **Jan. 13:** Rakuyo - Surfaced - Happy Thoughts - Do you Bleed? At 6 p.m.
- **Jan. 16:** Mr Roof & The Attitude at 7 p.m.
- **Jan. 17:** XOLEX at 7 p.m.
- **Jan. 18:** Andy Juhl & the Bluestem at 5 p.m.
- **Jan. 19:** Mountain Grass Unit at 6 p.m.
- **Jan. 23:** Dead of Winter featuring Winterland and Stringfield at 7 p.m.
- **Jan. 24:** Joe Stamm Band at 7 p.m.
- **Jan. 25:** The Toasters at 6 p.m.
- **Jan. 30:** Rhythm & Pep Presents: The Roaring Twenties - A Variety Show at 7 p.m.
- **Jan. 31:** The Flyover Sessions: Songwriter Round at 7 p.m.
- **Feb. 1:** Big Richard at 6 p.m.
- **Feb. 3:** Wayne "The Train" Hancock at 6 p.m.
- **Feb. 6:** Naughty Nerds Cabaret presents: Nerdstravaganza at 7 p.m.
- **Feb. 7:** Cupid's Lounge at 7:30 p.m.
- **Feb. 12:** Elise Trouw presents: The Diary of Elon Lust Tour at 7 p.m.
- **Feb. 13:** The Last Revel at 7 p.m.
- **Feb. 15:** SosMula at 6 p.m.



A previous performance at XBK Live. Jameson Malone by Joelle Blanchard of Figment Art Photo

- **Feb. 20:** Clay Street Unite and Jason Scott & The High Heat at 7 p.m.
- **Feb. 21:** Jinnouchi Power - Album Release at 6 p.m.
- **Feb. 24:** Camping in Alaska at 6 p.m.
- **Feb. 25:** Wheel at 7 p.m.
- **Feb. 28:** K-Winterland K-POP Dance Party at 7:30 p.m.
- **March 3:** Tinsley Ellis at 6 p.m.
- **March 7:** Chicago Farmer & The Fieldnotes at 7 p.m.
- **March 10:** Hudson Freeman at 6 p.m.
- **March 11:** Tommy Castro & the Painkillers at 6 p.m.
- **March 19:** LaMP at 6 p.m.
- **March 20:** Fust & Merce Lemon at 7 p.m.
- **March 21:** TWEN at 7 p.m.
- **March 22:** Charlie Parr at 6 p.m.
- **March 28:** Coyote Island at 7 p.m.

VIBRANT MUSIC HALL

2938 Grand Prairie Parkway, Waukee
www.vibrantmusichall.com

- **Jan. 25:** Cheap Trick at 7:30 p.m.
- **Feb. 7:** Hairball at 7:30 p.m.
- **Feb. 18:** The Phil Collins Story at 7:30 p.m.
- **Feb. 20:** Nate Jackson: Big Dog Comedy Tour at 7:30 p.m.
- **Feb. 21:** NASH Presents - BRETT YOUNG: 2.0 TOUR at 7:30 p.m.
- **March 2:** Sabaton: Legends on Tour at 7 p.m.
- **March 14:** Sam Barber - The American Route Tour at 7:30 p.m.

MORE LIVE MUSIC VENUES

NOCE

1326 Walnut St. Suite 100,
 Des Moines | www.nocedsm.com

WATERWORKS PARK

Lauridsen Amphitheater,
 Des Moines Water Works Park,
 2251 George Flagg Parkway
dsmwaterworkspark.com

TEMPLE THEATRE

1011 Locust St., Des Moines
www.desmoinesperformingarts.org/venues/temple-theater

HORIZON EVENTS CENTER

2100 N.W. 100th St., Clive
www.horizoneventscenter.com

SHESLOW AUDITORIUM

2507 University Avenue, Des Moines
calendar.drake.edu/sheslow_auditorium

CAPTAIN ROY'S

1900 Saylor Road, Des Moines
www.captainroys.com

GREENWOOD LOUNGE

3707 Ingersoll Ave., Des Moines
 515-277-1219

VAL AIR BALLROOM

301 Ashworth Road, West Des Moines | www.firstfleetconcerts.com/val-air-ballroom

Sports

IOWA WOLVES

Casey's Center, 233 Center St., Des Moines
iowa.gleague.nba.com

Home games:

- **Jan. 3** at 6:30 p.m. vs. Sioux Falls Skyforce (Miami Heat) | Timberwolves-inspired Jersey
- **Jan. 4** at 3 p.m. vs. Sioux Falls Skyforce | Faith and Family Day
- **Jan. 18** at 3 p.m. vs. Long Island Nets (Brooklyn Nets) | Alpha's Birthday
- **Jan. 19** at 1 p.m. vs. Long Island Nets | MLK Day
- **Jan. 24** at 6:30 p.m. vs. Memphis Hustle (Memphis Grizzlies) | Hoops for Hope
- **Jan. 26** at 6:30 p.m. vs. Rio Grande Valley Vipers (Houston Rockets)
- **Jan. 27** at 6:30 p.m. vs. Mexico City Capitanes
- **Feb. 7** at 6:30 p.m. vs. Maine Celtics (Boston Celtics) | Basketball for All
- **Feb. 10** at 10:30 a.m. vs. Austin Spurs (San Antonio Spurs) | Education Day
- **Feb. 11** at 6:30 p.m. vs. Austin Spurs

- **Feb. 22** at 3 p.m. vs. Rio Grande Valley Vipers | State Fair Day / State Fair-inspired Jersey
- **Feb. 27** at 6:30 p.m. vs. Mexico City Capitanes | Get Lucky
- **March 8** at 1 p.m. vs. Memphis Hustle | Women's Empowerment Game / Lynx-inspired Jersey
- **March 16** at 6:30 p.m. vs. Salt Lake City Stars (Utah Jazz)
- **March 18** at 6:30 p.m. vs. Salt Lake City Stars
- **March 26** at 6:30 p.m. vs. Oklahoma City Blue (Oklahoma City Thunder) | Cars-inspired Jersey Weekend
- **March 28** at 6:30 p.m. vs. Oklahoma City Blue | Cars-inspired Jersey Weekend



Crash circles the ice, waving the Iowa Wild Flag. Photo by Tim Garland

IOWA WILD

Casey's Center, 233 Center St., Des Moines
www.iowawild.com

Home games:

- **Jan. 16** vs. Toronto Marlies at 7 p.m. | Local Heroes Night
- **Jan. 17** vs. Toronto Marlies at 6 p.m.
- **Jan. 21** vs. Texas Stars at 7 p.m.
- **Jan. 23** vs. Milwaukee Admirals at 5 p.m.
- **Jan. 30** vs. Milwaukee Admirals at 7 p.m. | Throwback Threads Night
- **Jan. 31** vs. Milwaukee Admirals at 6 p.m.
- **Feb. 13** vs. Springfield Thunderbirds at 7 p.m. | Women In Sports Night
- **Feb. 14** vs. Springfield Thunderbirds at 6 p.m. | Pink In The Rink
- **Feb. 24** vs. Milwaukee Admirals at 7 p.m.
- **March 20** vs. Ontario Reign at 7 p.m. | ALS Awareness Night
- **March 21** vs. Ontario Reign at 5 p.m.
- **March 25** vs. Chicago Wolves at 7 p.m.
- **March 29** vs. Rockford Icehogs at 6 p.m. | Crash's Birthday

IOWA STATE BASKETBALL

Hilton Coliseum, 1705 Center Drive, Ames
www.cyclones.com

Home games:

Men:

- **Jan. 2** vs. West Virginia
- **Jan. 10** vs. Oklahoma State
- **Jan. 20** vs. UCF
- **Jan. 29** vs. Colorado
- **Feb. 7** vs. Baylor
- **Feb. 14** vs. Kansas
- **Feb. 16** vs. Houston
- **Feb. 28** vs. Texas Tech
- **March 7** vs. Arizona State

Women:

- **Jan. 4** vs. Baylor
- **Jan. 11** vs. West Virginia
- **Jan. 21** vs. Cincinnati
- **Jan. 24** vs. Arizona
- **Jan. 31** vs. UCF
- **Feb. 15** vs. Kansas State
- **Feb. 18** vs. Arizona State
- **Feb. 25** vs. Oklahoma State



FEATURE STORY

Iowa's Finest Chefs START AT DMACC

Here, accomplished restaurateur George Formaro, who studied and returned to DMACC as a guest lecturer, shares some of his culinary insights with students in DMACC's working lab classroom. Formaro is behind some of Des Moines' most successful eateries, including Centro, Django, Malo, South Union Bread Café and Zombie Burger, just to name a few.



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FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Jeremy Austin, Culinary Academic Advisor | jcaustin@dmacc.edu | 515-964-6556

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The Drake women's basketball team plays ten home games between Jan. 2 and March 5. Photo courtesy of Drake University

DRAKE BASKETBALL

Knapp Center
2601 Forest Ave., Des Moines
www.godrakebulldogs.com

Men's home games

- **Jan. 4** vs. Indiana State
- **Jan. 10** vs. Belmont
- **Jan. 21** vs. Murray State
- **Jan. 28** vs. Evansville
- **Jan. 31** vs. Bradley
- **Feb. 9** vs. Valparaiso
- **Feb. 12** vs. UIC
- **Feb. 18** vs. Southern Illinois
- **March 1** vs. UNI

Women's home games

- **Jan. 2** vs. Southern Illinois
- **Jan. 16** vs. Bradley
- **Jan. 23** vs. Evansville
- **Jan. 25** vs. Murray State
- **Feb. 1** vs. UNI
- **Feb. 5** vs. Belmont
- **Feb. 14** vs. Indiana State
- **Feb. 19** vs. Valparaiso
- **Feb. 22** vs. UIC
- **March 5** vs. Illinois State

DES MOINES BUCCANEERS

MidAmerican Energy RecPlex,
6500 Grand Ave., West Des Moines
bucshockey.com

Home games:

- **Jan. 2** vs. Sioux Falls Stampede at 7:05 p.m.
- **Jan. 3** vs. Green Bay Gamblers at 6:35 p.m. | Farmers Appreciation
- **Jan. 4** vs. Green Bay Gamblers at 3:05 p.m.
- **Jan. 17** vs. Dubuque Fighting Saints at 6:05 p.m.
- **Jan. 30** vs. Lincoln Stars at 7:05 p.m.
- **Feb. 6** vs. Omaha Lancers at 7:05 p.m.
- **Feb. 13** vs. Cedar Rapids RoughRiders at 7:05 p.m. | Des Moines Barkaneers
- **Feb. 27** vs. Omaha Lancers at 7:05 p.m.
- **Feb. 28** vs. Sioux Falls Stampede at 7:05 p.m. | Guns N Hoses
- **March 1** vs. Waterloo Black Hawks at 2:05 p.m.
- **March 6** vs. Dubuque Fighting Saints at 7:05 p.m.
- **March 7** vs. Sioux City Musketeers at 7:05 p.m.
- **March 17** vs. Cedar Rapids RoughRiders at 6:35 p.m.
- **March 21** vs. Fargo Force at 7:05 p.m.

Events



ChewBOCKa Fest will be held at Confluence Brewing Company on Jan. 17. Photo courtesy of Confluence Brewing Company

JANUARY

- **Jan. 3:** Confluence Brewing Company Chili Cookoff. 1235 Thomas Beck Road, Des Moines; www.confluencebrewing.com
- **Jan. 4 to March 29:** Botanical Blues concerts every Sunday between January and March. Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden, 909 Robert D. Ray Drive, Des Moines; www.cibs.org
- **Jan. 3-4:** 14th annual Iowa Diecast Toy Show. Located at the Iowa State Fairgrounds, 3000 E. Grand Ave., Des Moines; www.agfarmtoys.com
- **Jan. 9:** Family Fun Night Jester Park Nature Center, 12130 N.W. 128th St., Granger; www.jesterparknaturecenter.com
- **Jan. 9-10:** Cinch World's Toughest Rodeo. Action-packed performance featuring some of the nation's most talented rodeo athletes, livestock and specialty entertainers. Casey's Center, 233 Center St., Des Moines; www.iowaeventscenter.com
- **Jan. 10:** Gatsby Gala: A Roaring 20's Dance + Live Music. 1925 High St., Des Moines; www.heartlandswing.com
- **Jan. 10:** Indoor Garage Sale Extravaganza. For both shoppers and sellers looking to get rid of extra items, or turn someone else's trash into treasure. Iowa Events Center, 730 Third St., Des Moines; www.iowaeventscenter.com
- **Jan. 17:** ChewBOCKa Fest. Channel your inner Wookiee and get transported into this themed festival at Confluence Brewing Company, 1235 Thomas Beck Road, Des Moines; www.confluencebrewing.com
- **Jan. 17:** Waukee FamilyFest. Lutheran Church of Hope, 305 N.E. Dartmoor Drove, Waukee; waukee.org/472/FamilyFest



Shiver on the River will be hosted by Captain Roy's on Feb. 14. Photo courtesy of Captain Roy's

- **Jan. 23-24:** Splurge: West End Salvage's Annual Wine, Cheese, Chocolate event. West End Architectural Salvage, 22 Ninth St., Des Moines; www.westendsalvage.com
- **Jan. 24:** CITYVIEW's winter pub crawl, Fire and Ice. Historic Valley Junction, 137 Fifth St., West Des Moines; fire-and-ice.dmcityview.com
- **Jan. 24:** Winterfest Market. An indoor shopping event featuring your favorite local makers, artisans, and small businesses. EMC Expo Center, Iowa Events Center, 730 Third St., Des Moines; www.iowaeventscenter.com/events/detail/winterfest-market
- **Jan. 24:** Comedian Charlie Berens: The Lost & Found Tour. Des Moines Civic Center, 221 Walnut St., Des Moines; www.desmoinesperformingarts.org

FEBRUARY

- **Feb. 3-5:** Iowa Ag Expo. Iowa Events Center, 730 Third St., Des Moines; www.iowaeventscenter.com/wells-fargo-arena
- **Feb. 4-5:** IGHSAU State Wrestling Tournament. Xtream Arena, 200 E. Ninth St., Suite 100, Coralville; www.ighsau.org/sports/wrestling
- **Feb. 14-22:** Iowa Beef Expo. Iowa State Fairgrounds, 3000 E. Grand Ave., Des Moines; www.iowastatefairgrounds.org
- **Feb. 12-15:** Des Moines Home and Garden Show. Iowa Events Center, 730 Third St., Des Moines; www.iowaeventscenter.com
- **Feb. 12:** Harlem Globetrotters. The 100th Year Tour. Casey's Center, 223 Center St., Des Moines; www.iowaeventscenter.com
- **Feb. 13-14:** Winter Blues Fest 2025. Downtown Des Moines Marriott, 700 Grand Ave., Des Moines; www.cibs.org

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FEATURE STORY

JANUARY 2026 | CITYVIEW | 33

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2/6-2/8	Love Along the River: St. Charles & St. Louis	\$620
2/20-2/28	Grand Gulf Getaway - Galveston, TX	\$2300
3/10-3/15	Sky Dancers of the Platte: Sandhill Cranes	\$1800
APRIL TBA	Spring Mystery Tour	COMING SOON!
4/14-4/19	Thunder Over Louisville	\$2150
4/15-4/25	Drums of Liberty - Virginia	\$3500
4/22-4/29	Springtime in Washington D.C.	\$2225
4/30-5/1	Fireside Dinner Theatre: Hairspray	\$475
MAY TBA	Eureka Springs, AR	COMING SOON!
5/3-5/9	Amish Country: Indiana, Ohio & Pennsylvania	\$2650
6/11-6/12	Fireside Dinner Theatre: Million Dollar Quartet	\$475
JUNE TBA	Hermann, Missouri	COMING SOON!
JUNE TBA	Mackinac Island & The Upper Peninsula	COMING SOON!
JULY TBA	Michigan's Fruit Loop	COMING SOON!
7/9-7/16	Boston Tall Ships	\$2900
8/6-8/7	Fireside Dinner Theatre: Disney's Frozen	\$475
8/15-8/22	The Finger Lakes	\$3200
SEPT TBA	Smokey Mountain Fall	COMING SOON!
9/8-9/15	Veteran's Salute to Washington D.C.	\$2600
9/19-9/29	New England Fall Foliage	COMING SOON!
10/3-10/13	Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta	\$3200
10/13-10/20	Almost Heaven, West Virginia	COMING SOON!
DEC TBA	Holiday in New York City	\$4300

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Capital City Card Con will be held at Iowa Events Center March 27-29. Photo courtesy of Capital City Card Con

- **Feb. 7:** A Celebration in Song. The fourth annual collegiate invitational concert, featuring the Des Moines Choral Society, Iowa State Singers, and The Luther College Nordic Choir. 607 High St., Des Moines; www.dmcchoral.org
- **Feb. 14:** Shiver on the River. Turkey bowling, buck saw, tug of war and beer cooler curling are just a few of the fun events at the Shiver on the River hosted by Captain Roy's, 1900 Saylor Road, Des Moines; www.captainroys.com
- **Feb. 18-21:** 2025 IHSAA State Wrestling Tournament. Casey's Center, 223 Center St., Des Moines; www.iahsaa.org/wrestling
- **Feb. 28:** 2026 MS Moments Orange Gala. An event dedicated to raising awareness and vital funds for MS Moments, a volunteer-led organization committed to supporting Iowa families affected by multiple sclerosis. Vibrant Music Hall, 2938 Grand Prairie Parkway, Waukee; www.charitypledgeit.org/orangegala
- **Feb. 28 - March 2:** All Iowa Auto Show. Iowa Events Center, 730 Third St., Des Moines; www.iowaeventscenter.com

MARCH

- **March 2-7:** IGHSAU Basketball State Tournament. Casey's Center, 223 Center St., Des Moines; www.iahsaa.org/basketball
- **March 6:** Wine, Beer and Food showcase. Fundraiser for the Des Moines Metro Opera. Des Moines Marriott Downtown, 700 Grand Ave., Des Moines; www.desmoinesmetroopera.org
- **March 13-15:** Iowa Home Expo. Iowa State Fairgrounds, 3000 E. Grand Ave., Des Moines; www.iowahomeexpo.com
- **March 14:** St. Paddy's Marathon, Half Marathon, 5K. Iowa State Capitol, East Locust Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, Des Moines; www.iowaruns.com/desmoinesstpaddys5k
- **March 9-13:** IHSAA Basketball Tournament. Casey's Center, 223 Center St., Des Moines; www.iahsaa.org/basketball
- **March 17:** St. Patrick's Day Parade, Downtown Des Moines; www.friendlysonsiowa.com/Parade/parade.htm
- **March 6-8:** Iowa Deer Classic. Iowa Events Center, 730 Third St., Des Moines; www.iowaeventscenter.com
- **March 27-29:** Capital City Card Con. Iowa Events Center, 730 Third St., Des Moines; www.sites.google.com/view/capcitycardcon/home ■



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\$149^[1] | **36** | **\$4,900**
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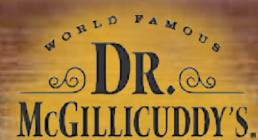
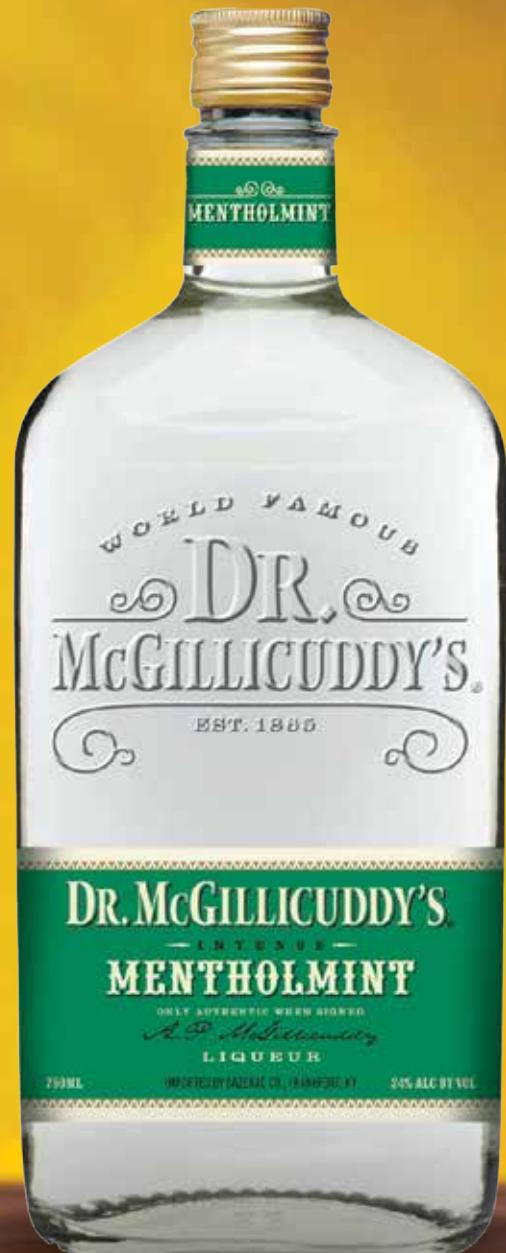


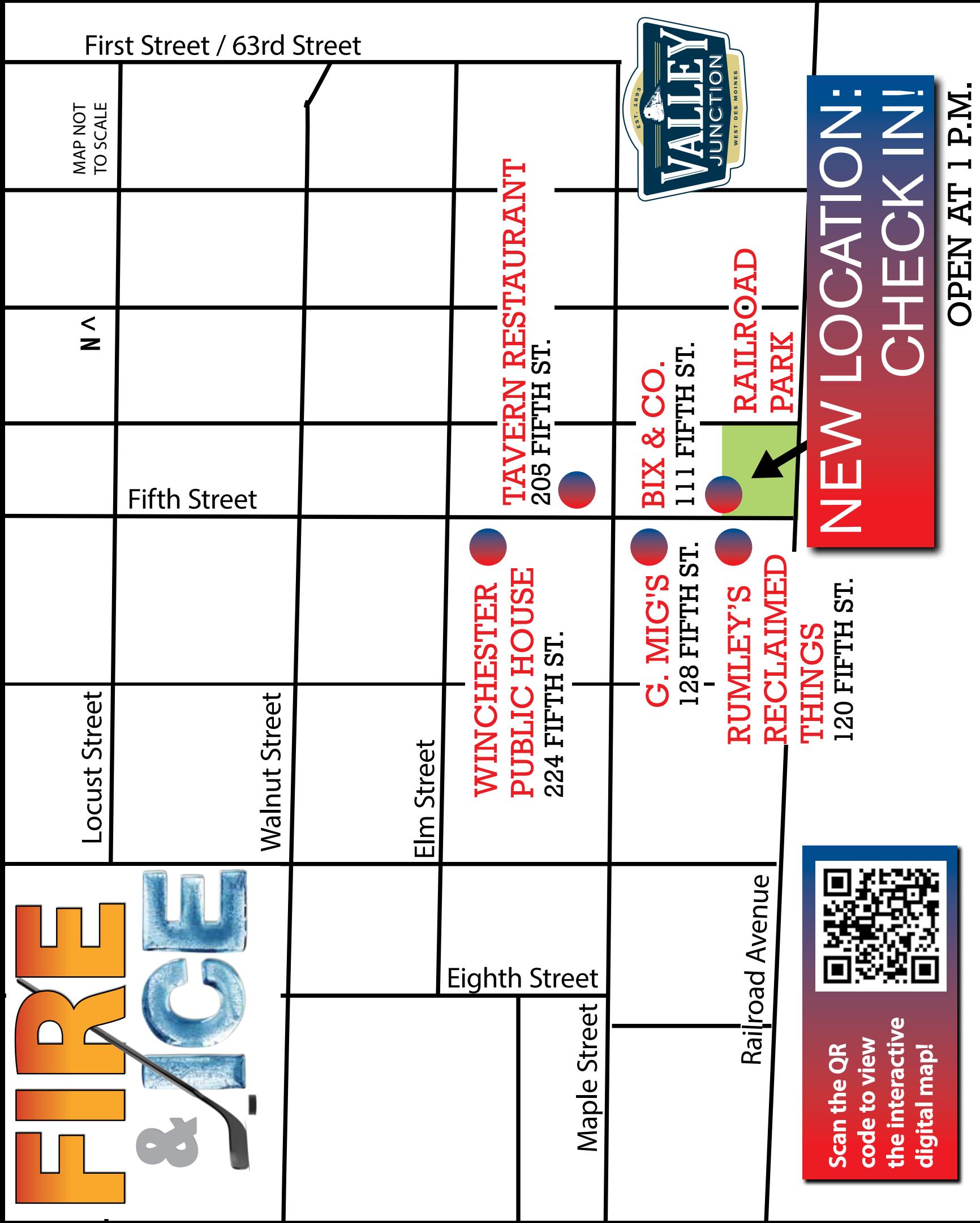
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Come celebrate with us during these fun events throughout 2026. We offer a variety of events including cultural events, farmers market, art festivals and more!

JANUARY

Fire & Ice Saturday, January 24

FEBRUARY

DIY in the Junction Saturday, February 21

APRIL

Spring Gallery Night Friday, April 17

Spring Sale-A-Bration Saturday, April 25

MAY

Farmers Market May-Sept Thursdays

Music in the Junction May-Sept Thursdays

Cinco de Mayo Saturday, May 2

Yoga in the Park Saturday, May 9

VJ Art Festival Sunday, May 17

JUNE

Farmers Market Thursdays

Music in the Junction Thursdays

Yoga in the Park Saturday, June 13

Valley Junction Pride! Sunday, June 28

JULY

Farmers Market Thursdays

Music in the Junction Thursdays

Junction Street Party Friday, July 3

Yoga in the Park Saturday, July 11

Summer Sale-A-Bration Saturday, July 25

AUGUST

Farmers Market Thursdays

Music in the Junction Thursdays

Yoga in the Park Saturday, August 9

SEPTEMBER

Farmers Market Thursdays

Music in the Junction Thursdays

Vintage, Thrifted, & Handmade
Sunday, September 6

Yoga in the Park Saturday, September 12

OCTOBER

Fall Gallery Night Friday, October 9

Yoga in the Park Saturday, October 10

Sip-n-Shop Thursday, October 22

Pumpkin Walk Sunday, October 25

Sip-n-Shop Thursday, October 29

NOVEMBER

Sip-n-Shop Thursday, November 5

Jingle in the Junction Thursday, November 19

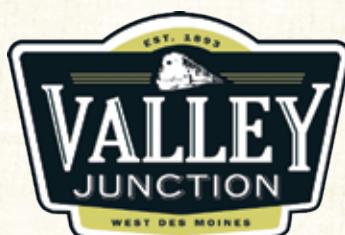
Small Business Saturday Saturday, November 28

DECEMBER

Jingle in the Junction Thursday, December 3

Jingle in the Junction Thursday, December 10

Jingle in the Junction Thursday, December 17



HISTORIC VALLEY JUNCTION FOUNDATION

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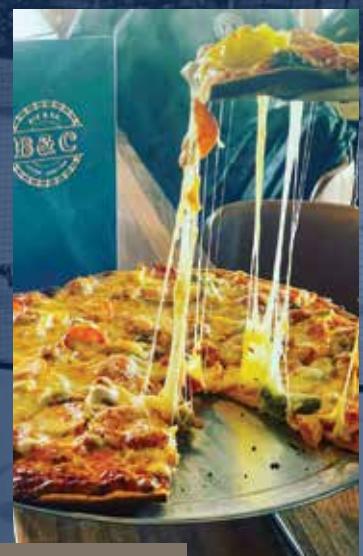
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IOWA WILD JANUARY

HOME GAMES

FRIDAY, JAN. 16

FOX NIGHT AT THE RINK

Local Heroes Night

SATURDAY, JAN. 17

COUNTRY NIGHT

LoCash Postgame Concert

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 21

WINNING WEDNESDAY

If the Iowa Wild Win, You Win!

FRIDAY, JAN. 23

OUTDOOR CLASSIC

Game Played in Hastings, MN

FRIDAY, JAN. 30

THROWBACK THREADS NIGHT

Knit Scarf Giveaway (First 1500 Fans)

SATURDAY, JAN. 31

MILITARY APPR'N NIGHT

Iowa Wild Playing Cards (First 1500 Fans)

**KWIK
STAR**



AROUND TOWN

PHOTOS BY MARY FOWLER



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Monica Eipperle and Caitlin Sananikone



Scott and Jena Pinegar



Sarah Kremer and Chris Lewis



Andrea and Scott Gleason



Jeff and Jennifer Trost

THE LOFT DSM HOLIDAY PARTY

100 Indiana Ave, Des Moines

Dec. 15



Kate Swanson, Keith Mele and Jesse Aldrich



Derek Jones, Stewart Alexander, Collette and Frank Thomas

BELLY UP TO:



The Tribute Eatery and Bar

Hospitality-focused establishment takes over the former 30Hop location in The District at Prairie Trail.

BY JACKIE WILSON

The District at Prairie Trail in Ankeny continues to evolve into a bustling mini city center. The ever-expanding area offers an abundance of shops and services, along with restaurant and drinking establishments.

One spot recently turned over. It is from the same owner, so it was a friendly exchange. The Tribute Eatery and Bar took over the former 30Hop location, while 30Hop moved across the street. The co-owners and operating partners are part of Craft Concepts, which was established in the Iowa City area. With about 25 different bars, breweries and restaurants, they also have presence in other local joints, such as Big Grove Brewery and Lua Brewing.

With successful backing and a business model, Tribute knows hospitality. Inside, the area is revamped for a modern, classic look. Tables and booths in the dining and bar areas are roomy and not crowded, so the servers won't be bumping your chairs on their way to another table. A large, round room is separated into a nook area with five booths and a table spotlit underneath a chandelier. Large windows overlook the downtown District, nearly resembling a big city.

A few televisions by the bar showed sports with no sound. Instead, piped-in music set the mood. The playlist had an upbeat, soft-rock, jazzy feel to it,

providing that just-right atmosphere at a low level so patrons can easily talk.

Arriving at happy hour from 3 to 6 p.m. is a smart way to sample appetizers and at a fraction of the cost. The Cosmo martini was just \$6. Other happy hour drink specials include \$5 draught beer, \$8 old fashioned and more.

Small happy hour bites include the burrata for \$9 (regular \$14), which includes fresh burrata cheese with heirloom tomatoes, seasonings, served on greens, with toasted focaccia. Oyster lovers can get one for just \$2 (with a minimum purchase of three). The flavorful gochujang crispy fried chicken costs \$7.

Other menu items include a wide selection of classic entrees and seafood, such as roasted chicken, pasta dishes, fish and chips and scallops. Handhelds start at \$16 and include a Cubano. Entrée salads offer vegetarian options from \$15-\$19.

Their Blueline specials include a tasty selection each day of the week. Choose from a bone-in pork chop for \$27 on Monday or a miso-glazed king salmon for \$33 on Tuesdays. Other daily specials include smoked ribeye, mushroom risotto, shrimp and lobster bucatini and wagyu meatloaf. If you are a prime rib fan, stop in on Sundays for \$39.

Kid's menu items are available for \$9.50. However,

TRIBUTE EATERY & BAR

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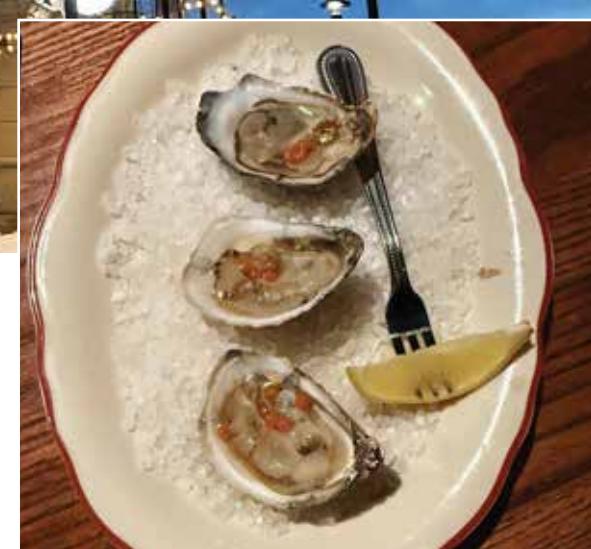
tributebar.com/ankeny

Monday - Wednesday: 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Thursday - Friday: 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Saturday: 9 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Sunday: 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.



we didn't see any youngsters on the recent trip there. Brunch is served on weekends, starting at 9 a.m. A return trip is a must to try the smoked salmon toast for \$15 or the lobster BLT for \$33.

During the summer months, sit outside on the large wrap-around patio, which offers both shade and sunny options. It is a perfect spot to gather during the summer's outdoor concerts and other events.

Service was spot on. Darin — Tribute's co-owner — thoughtfully answered questions and greeted patrons. Witnessing a passionate and attentive staff makes for an ideal dining experience, earning a spot on my "must return" list. ■

Noah's Ark is a shelter from the storm

Physically, the longtime restaurant grew in six stages during the 1950s and 1960s.



I'amici quattro

Noah's Ark has been selling pizza since World War II. It is certainly the oldest restaurant in Iowa to sell them continuously and, arguably, the first to offer them.

"After serving in the army, Noah (Lacona) got a government contract to feed soldiers passing through Des Moines. To get it, he had to stay open 24 hours a day. That was rare in the 1940s, but train stations were open 24-7. G.I.s were issued coupons for meals, and pizza was the easiest way to deal with the unknown demand. He did it at Union Station Café downtown," explained James Lacona, Noah's grandson and the current owner of the restaurant.

So, how did the restaurant get its name?

"In 1946 Noah opened Christina's Café, after his first child, in what was a two-car garage where the eastern part of the current restaurant is now. One rainy day, the roof started leaking. Noah went up there and started patching the shake shingles. When he came down, some of his buddies in the bar started asking, 'What are you doing up there Noah, building an ark?'"

Physically, the restaurant grew in six stages during the 1950s and 1960s.

"Noah did not believe in borrowing money, so he saved up before adding on. He built the second floor and five other additions one at a time after saving money," Lacona added.

Today the restaurant's whole is definitely greater than its parts. It shows off Noah's passions for Biblical art, nautical machinery and race cars. Regulars covet tables in semi secluded booths, at the bar and by the fireplace. The second floor provides banquet and party space. Both of my parents enjoyed their last meals at Noah's. I had my first pizza there at a 1954 birthday party.

Pizza are still the top seller. They are medium crust pies heavy on mozzarella and sauce that was made by Noah's mother, Teresa. All the sauces, sausage and meatballs come from unwritten recipes passed down through Teresa and kept alive by Noah's brother, Frank.

The pizza crusts, "love knots," yeast rolls and loaves of bread have history even longer than the restaurant. One of Noah's first jobs was working in the Italian-owned Supreme Bakery in the early part of the 20th century. Noah's grandson, Tony Lemmo, has partnered with food historian George Formaro to research Italian breadmaking in Des Moines. They believe that Supreme/Golden Crust breads are the same as Noah's makes today. That dates the recipe at least 100 years.



The "love knots" were created to cater to rising gluten intolerance and dieting diners. James started getting complaints from customers that the yeast rolls were addictive temptations, so he created the much smaller "knots."

Ravioli, spicy Italian sausage and meatballs are all made from scratch in the kitchen. The "Calabrese lasagna" is actually pasta chena, made with rigatoni instead of lasagna pasta. It is one of the most popular dishes on the menu.

Old fashioned touches remain unchanged. Noah's still serves veal and chicken livers. A revolving door entrance shelters diners from cold winds and heat storms. Chicken dinners, both grilled and fried, include half chickens, not just two pieces or strips. Beef tips with fettucine and hot beef sandwiches are as good as any and use a rich, light-colored gravy. Colbert sauce (a vanishing classic of butter and meat drippings with herbs and lemon juice) accompanies steaks and pork roasts. Fried green pepper rings and onion rings are served separately or as a combo.

Cakes are shipped in from Noah's favorite places in San Francisco and Chicago. Spumoni with rum sauce and cannoli are local favorites. Espresso is excellent. Parking lots to the south and the west of the restaurant probably comprise the largest restaurant lots in Des Moines. ■



Noah's Margherita

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

LUNCH WITH...

BY JIM DUNCAN

Connor Delaney at Hansen's Manhattan Deli

Over "Mama Mias" and "grinder" soup, we talked about the art of historic preservation in the city we both love.

Connor Delaney is the driving force behind White Oak Realty, the company that has salvaged and redeveloped much of Highland Park and Ingersoll. We asked him to lunch and met at Hansen's Manhattan Deli. That lunch spot sits between two White Oak properties — Historic Ingersoll Theater and a 1925 strip mall that made new space for Bartender's Handshake, Loyal Sons Barbershop and two boutiques.

Over "Mama Mias" (capicola, Italian beef, pepperoni, hot pepper cheese, provolone cheese, mild fried peppers and red roasted peppers with mayonnaise, oil and seasoning on hoagie buns) and "grinder" soup (the famous southside sandwich in a bowl), we talked about the art of historic preservation in the city we both love.

Manhattan Deli has been the most requested meeting site for CITYVIEW's "Lunch with..." interviews. **What are Delaney's other favorite restaurants?**

"Jesse's Embers and Chicago Speakeasy are up there. They have been around long enough to have taken on the personalities of their neighborhoods."

They also represent the beating hearts of two neighborhoods where Delaney has hung his hat professionally.

"White Oak Realty owns a half dozen properties and has facilitated 20 plus transactions in Highland Park. I've always loved this neighborhood. My father moved to Highland Park from Indiana in the 1970s, and mom taught art at Oak Park Elementary for 25 years. That's where they first met."

Delaney is the youngest guy involved in building and preserving Des Moines for the first half of the 21st century. Like Bruce Gerleman, Jim Cownie, Tim Rypma, Kirk Blunck, Harry Bookey, Jake Christensen and others before him, Delaney invests a lot of personal affection in his projects. Unlike many of them, he got into real estate-driven neighborhood transformation out of nowhere, without mentors or legacies.

"There wasn't much of a plan. My parents were both teachers. I graduated from Roosevelt in 2003 and joined the Air Force shortly after. I attended some courses at DMACC but lacked direction. I had a few jobs in retail, got my real estate license in 2013 and opened my brokerage in 2017.

"My first investment property was a late 19th century home owned by the Kingman family. That was late 2015. A friend used a metal detector in the front yard and found skeleton keys, buffalo nickels, Indian head cents, and an 1860s seated liberty dime. I

hired a few friends in the trades and did much of the work myself. We made the necessary repairs and sold it. I used that money to buy a home and some land that included a tributary that runs into Easter Lake. At the time, the city was spending millions dredging Easter Lake. I donated the tributary and some of the land to the INHF and sold some of it to city. They are improving the ground but leaving much of the setting natural. That raised the value of the home that remained.

"By then, I realized a basic pattern for success — buy a property, improve other properties in close proximity, apply for any incentives, and find the patience to wait for a thoughtful buyer or tenant. Patience is important, as their success will further the culture and therefore the value of what follows. It can be impactful to concentrate on properties in the same neighborhoods. One success reduces the risk of the next acquisition and so on. Multiple owners, multiple developers, and multiple tenants working toward a simultaneous goal can swiftly lead to impactful change. After the acquisition of The French Way building, White Oak Realty facilitated 20 transactions before major restoration commenced."

Delaney's deals have produced a bottom line for Highland Park that now features fully restored properties where quality businesses, restaurants and bars operate — Bar Martinez, Kalon Bridal, Lachele's Fine Foods, The Fitz. These businesses attract the renters and home buyers that can rebirth a neighborhood.

"Business and property owners are key. Their strategies can reduce risk while increasing value and desirability for all."

Delaney bought the Ingersoll Dinner Theater building when it seemed hopeless. The building sat idle for decades and had fallen into extreme disrepair. **What possessed him to take that leap of faith?**

"I had early memories with my grandmother. She kept a scrapbook of our theater visits in the late 1980s that still exists. There are tickets, programs and reviews she clipped from the Des Moines Tribune of Ingersoll Dinner Theater shows. The theater was an important part of her life.

"I love the old Hollywood glamour as well. We will have vintage photos and posters on the wall from when The Ingersoll was a movie theater. There are photos of AH Blank (movie theater mogul who later became one of Des Moines' great philanthropists) with all kinds of Hollywood stars. We want to invoke another time and place."

When I mentioned that I was so impressed seeing



"The Man Who Would Be King" at the Ingersoll that I saw it three times, Delaney made a note to check out that movie. **Nostalgia is powerful, but how does one parlay it into contemporary success?**

"We sent out a media release about the challenges faced in reviving The Ingersoll, and Steve Peters called the same night. He and I met for coffee the following morning."

Peters is the founder of VenuWorks, a company based in Ames that manages north of 55 events centers, theaters, arenas, etc. — all over the country. They have over 3,000 employees. He was the executive director of The Iowa State Center in the 1980s and grew up in Iowa.

VenuWorks manages the 900 seat Chanhassen Dinner Theater in the Twin Cities. It is arguably the top dinner theater in the country.

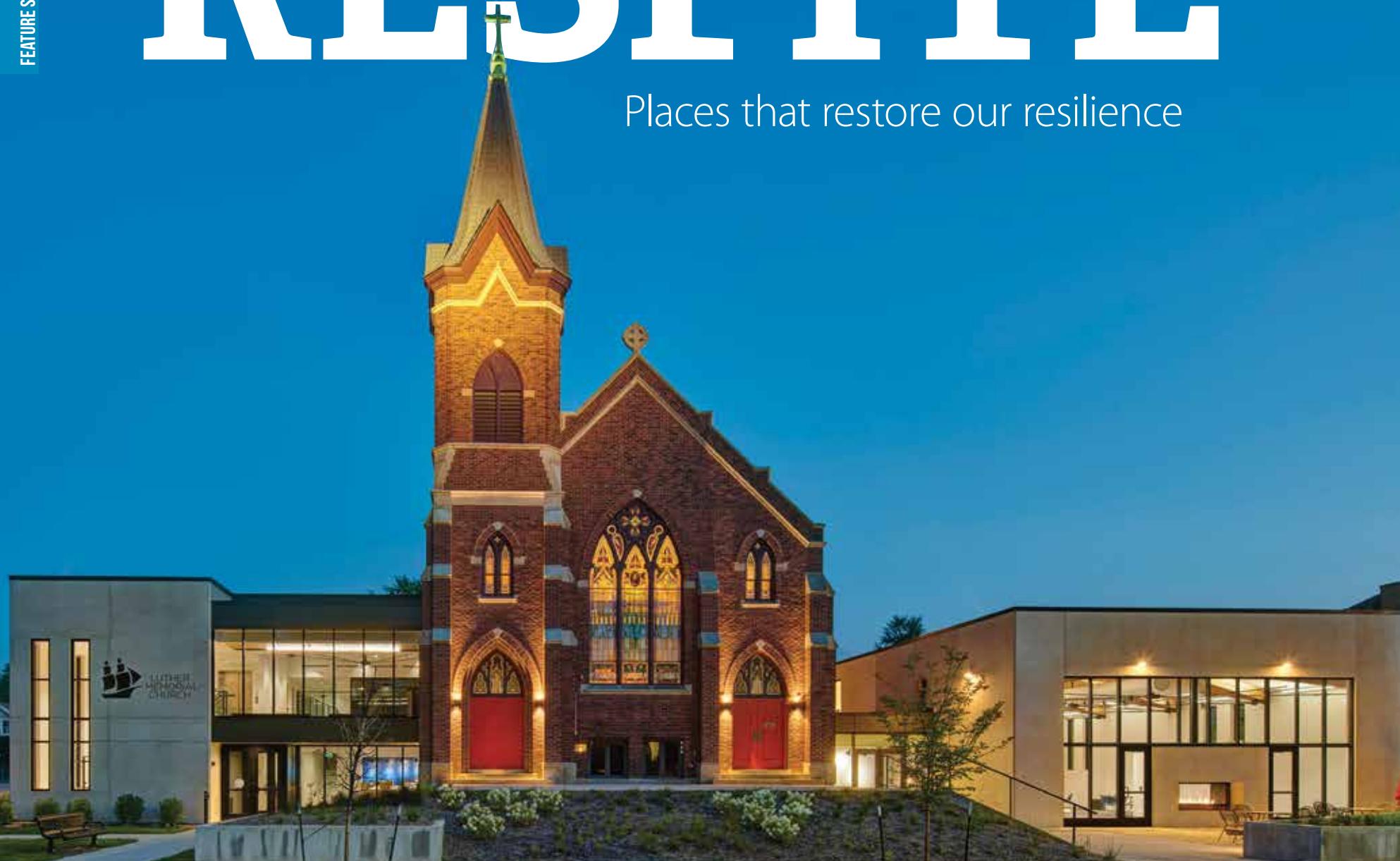
"If you've never been, please go. It is impressive what they've done and continue to do. I leave the theater operations and all announcements on that front to the Venuworks team. They do expect The Ingersoll to have musical theater and extended runs in the 2026 calendar year. We have added a large, modernized kitchen to produce nearly 500 dinners daily."

When I walked through the theater with Delaney in mid-December, there was a whole lot of work yet to be done before New Year's Eve and the first show.

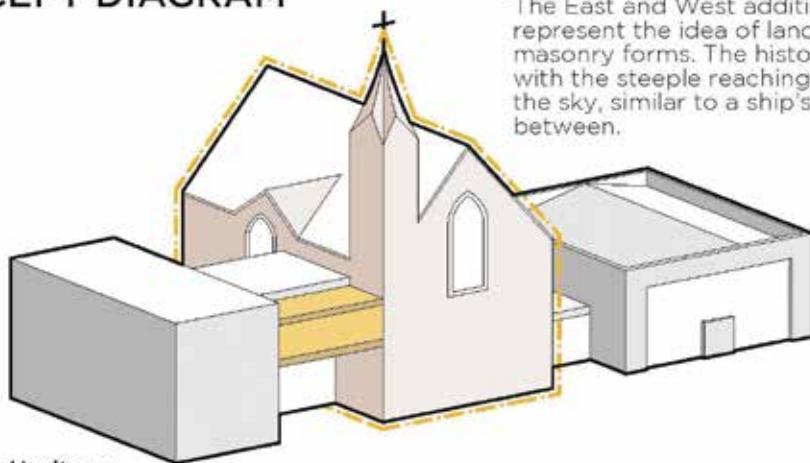
"We WILL be open to the public on Dec. 31. There are other happenings in the pipeline very soon for this strip of Ingersoll. More to come soon." ■

RESPITE

Places that restore our resilience



CONCEPT DIAGRAM



Bridge as Heritage

The form of the bridge draws from the Danish bridge building heritage of the church. It symbolizes the commitment of embarking on a journey.

Church as a Vessel

The East and West additions represent the idea of land, as simple masonry forms. The historic church, with the steeple reaching towards the sky, similar to a ship's mast, floats between.

Special to CITYVIEW

We reached out to the staff of Iowa Architect, the official magazine of The American Institute of Architects, Iowa Chapter, and requested permission to reprint portions of their cover story, Respite: Places That Restore Our Resilience, from their summer 2025 edition. In it, they featured projects by Iowa architects that truly do offer respite and that are places that restore our resilience. We appreciated the projects and the stories, and we thought you would, too.

RECONNECTED: LUTHER MEMORIAL CHURCH

Words: Grant Nordby, AIA | Images: Cameron Campbell, AIA, Integrated Studio | Architect: Slingshot Architecture

The sanctuary of Luther Memorial Church was built by Danish American craftsmen in 1918 to commemorate the 400th anniversary of Martin Luther's famous 95 Theses. Ever since, the building has served as a focus of the local Danish community, and it functions as the de facto "campus church" of nearby Grand View University. More than 100 years later, the church recognized a need for more inviting spaces to reconnect it with the campus and community. They turned to Slingshot Architecture for solutions.

There were numerous challenges. Principal David Voss, AIA, explains that the roofline of a gloomy 1950s-era addition had been "built up against the (sanctuary's) existing stained glass windows." It also decidedly lacked welcoming curb appeal. The basement community room was typical of many found across the Midwest: dark, dull and spartan. A gently inviting entry sequence and indoor/outdoor gathering spaces were sorely needed to extend spiritual and community life beyond liturgy and into people's daily walk. But how to find space on the crowded site, hemmed in by surface parking and neighboring structures?

A new at-grade fellowship hall now mirrors the 1950s footprint, buffered from the taller original sanctuary by dark-



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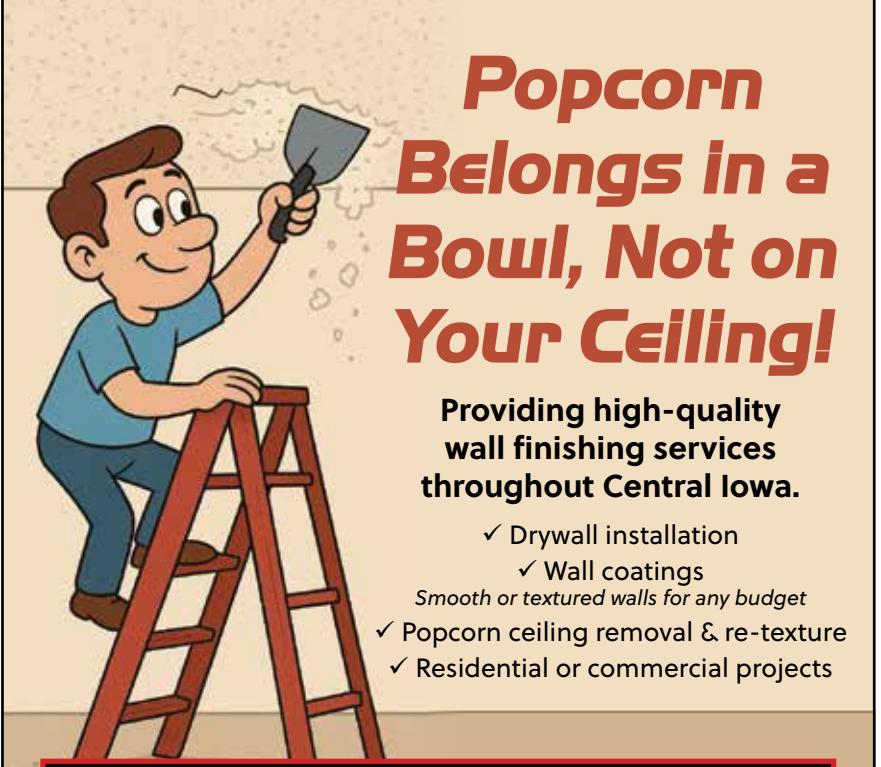
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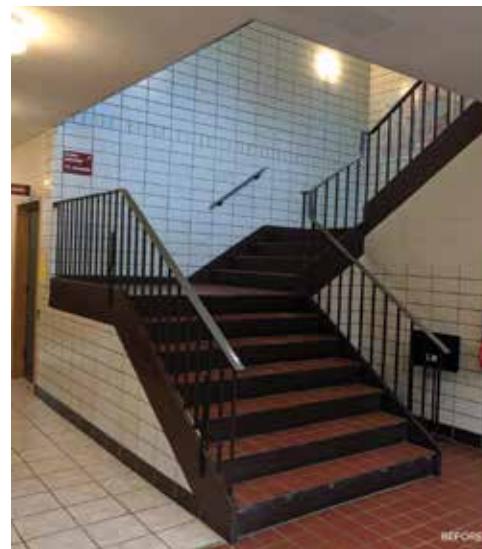
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clad, receding forms. This addition allowed for classrooms to relocate to the sanctuary basement. The 1950s addition was demolished, replaced by new construction of approximately the same volume but radically different in feel — now offering a series of transformational welcoming spaces. A generous, daylit entrance now leads to a two-story, skylit lounge, augmented by service spaces and a sanctuary-level nursery for wrangling young children during worship services. Once cozily settled, visitors turn up an ample stair to find themselves on a “bridge” spanning the entrance and taking them into the sanctuary. This has been restored to its original splendor, handcrafted woodwork gleaming in the light of restored and unobstructed stained-glass windows.

The new fellowship hall is heavily used by the community, fulfilling its mission of welcoming others. Its indoor/outdoor fireplace is surrounded by large windows, giving expansive views in both directions. These invite passersby inward via the commodious new outdoor terrace, and they prompt churchgoers to gather visibly in purposefully porous public spaces. This public-facing elevation aligns with the Beaux-Arts entrance of the imposing Humphrey Center (campus administration) across Grandview Avenue, to which it is explicitly linked by an ample walkway. New exterior lighting illuminates the sanctuary like a beacon at night, while the modest, welcoming embrace of the fellowship hall and main entrance invite the curious in through glowing glass walls.

The concept of warm, welcoming Hygge — a Danish term conveying ideas of comfort and close-knit community — consciously extends to the materials used. Restored woodwork celebrates original Danish American craftsmanship, while the additions continue the tradition in modernist Scandinavian fashion through wood accents and timber compression members. The latter pair with black steel tension rods in soaring “V” forms, mirroring the Gothic arches of the sanctuary. In strategic locations, these cradle skylights give light to both the original stained glass and to spaces below — an elegant re-knitting of new and old into more perfect unity. The timbers also nod to the Danish shipwright tradition, the sanctuary’s vessel-like



analogue made explicit in the restored model of a sailing vessel on display in the sanctuary. Modern methods extend and renew historic ones, re-linking churchgoers to their roots while embracing new growth.

The additions’ exterior forms are purposefully modest, and their materials are natural — appearing “quiet, clear and honest,” in Voss’ words. But these simple forms give way to joyfully daylit structural gymnastics indoors — their understated Scandinavian warmth half-concealed, half-revealed. Materials in the new spaces are organized in simple, clean forms washed by daylight, conveying a sense of calm yet convivial well-being.

This well serves the needs of churchgoers and visitors who come in search of comfort, community, and spiritual connection. Here, they find respite from the stresses of life, affording time and space to process vicissitudes and restore their spirit in the warm fellowship of friends.

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GRIMES PUBLIC LIBRARY: NURTURING COMMUNITY

WORDS: Mircea Nastase, Assoc. AIA | IMAGES: Cameron Campbell, AIA, Integrated Studio | ARCHITECT: INVISION

From the earliest Carnegie libraries dotting the state to the modern civic centers of today, Iowa's public libraries have continued to transition alongside their communities. These spaces are not only for learning but for gathering and pausing amid the rush of life. The Grimes Public Library embodies this role, positioning itself not just as a storehouse of books but as a shared space for its community. In this space, knowledge, refuge and connection intertwine.

Positioned at the intersection of homes and schools, the library is a natural hub for the rhythms of daily life. A bike path winds past its entrance, drawing in families, students and neighbors who see it not as a destination but as a part of their everyday landscape.

"Libraries are a fundamental piece of a city's social infrastructure and therefore should be designed for all members of the community," shares Grimes Public Library Director Cheryl Heid. The Grimes Public Library does just that. Here, a child stops on the way home from school to grab a new adventure, a retiree finds a place to linger over the morning paper, and a young professional escapes for a moment of quiet before returning to the rush of work. The library belongs to them all.

Originally designed at 31,000 square feet to accommodate this growing community, budget considerations led to a more modest 22,500-square-foot facility. Embracing this challenge, INVISION carefully designed the site and massing to ensure future expansion(s) to the public areas will be seamless, allowing the library to grow without disrupting existing operations.

The exterior of the building is divided into two main areas: a limestone and brick single-story private operations section that grounds the structure in history — recalling the solid, enduring materials that have long defined the Midwest — and a larger mass clad in contemporary black metal panels to contrast from the single-story mass and signify the main public space. Tying both masses together is a linear motif derived from the rhythm of book spines, expressed in narrow windows and metal panel patterns. The larger public collections' mass is topped with the building's most distinctive architectural gesture — the library's roof, shaped to evoke the character of an open book. What began as a pragmatic solution to conceal the elevator overrun evolved into a signature design feature, dignifying the main entry into the building while solving various design challenges.

Upon arrival, one will notice a break from the "traditional" library experience. A new model embraces an open, engaging, and often loud atmosphere emphasizing interaction and inclusivity. The library incorporates playful and interactive elements such as a small playground and hands-on activity stations, creating diverse spaces for all people. With three distinct areas — including a two-story collection space, a single-story administrative wing and public meeting spaces — the building offers diverse programming opportunities, with the lower level of the main collection space dedicated to children, a mezzanine level for teens, and a quieter second floor housing the adult collection. Even when the main collections area is securely closed for the day, a strategic layout allows public spaces to remain open after regular library hours, reinforcing the library's role as a true community hub that is accessible whenever needed.

The Grimes Public Library serves as the "living room" of the city. A welcoming space that fosters connection, nourishment, and growth through warm materials, soft seating, and intimate reading nooks that contribute to a sense of familiarity. An entry art piece, highlighting the donors who made the building a reality, embodies this notion by drawing a parallel between the deep roots of native prairie grasses — which



quietly anchor the soil and shelter fragile life — to how libraries provide a protective environment where young minds can nourish and grow. Architecturally, the library embraces this mode with materials that echo the intimacy of the home through wood-inspired panels, soft seating and spaces designed for gatherings. A centerpiece of this effort is the second-floor fireplace, where the flicker of an electric fire and the simulated sound of crackling embers provide a moment of pause. Here, a visitor can settle in with a book, wrapped in the quiet glow of a space that feels both public and deeply personal.

Through a collaborative design process between INVISION, the City of Grimes and library staff, the new facility stands as an example of how public architecture can foster resilience, engagement and renewal. More than just a place for books, the library has become an extension of home, a retreat from the everyday and a welcoming environment for all.

LEARNING REIMAGINED: THEODORE ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

Words : Anna Squier, AIA | Images : Chris Boeke Studio | Architect : Neumann Monson Architects

FEATURE STORY

A library is traditionally defined as a collection of resources, books, magazines and digital media, organized for use by a community for education and research. However, the role and design of libraries have evolved. No longer are libraries just quiet spaces lined with book stacks. Today's libraries are vibrant, flexible environments that encourage collaboration, exploration and engagement. The renovation of the Theodore Roosevelt High School Library exemplifies this shift. Led by the Roosevelt High School Foundation, the library's transformation aimed to create a modern learning resource center tailored to diverse learning styles. The project prioritized cutting-edge technology, flexible furniture, daylight and inclusivity to support both individual study and group work.

Neumann Monson Architects spearheaded the design, with architect Cheung Chan, AIA (also a parent of Roosevelt students), at the forefront. Chan worked closely with the Roosevelt High School Foundation, Des Moines Public Schools, students, the high school's principal and consultants to reimagine the library's role in a modern educational setting. The collaborative process resulted in a contemporary space that challenged the typical role of the library while embracing student culture and values.

Chan shares, "A guiding question throughout was, what role does a library play in a modern school, and how does it support the modern learning style?" Student engagement was key. In workshops, students received floor plans of the existing space and were asked to annotate them with ideas and priorities. This feedback became a visual roadmap that informed multiple design iterations.

"The goal was to integrate all forms of learning into one space," Chan explains. "We wanted to boost student engagement by creating more opportunities for collaborative study."

The result is an open layout with a variety of flexible spaces including conference



rooms, group areas, and study nooks, all designed with minimal partitions aligned with reveals in the ceiling that trace the existing building's structural grid.

Minimal white partition walls serve as a gallery for curated works by local artists, offering a visual narrative that echoes the community's depth and diversity. Perimeter walls are activated with built-in bookshelves that reintroduce the role of books in a contemporary spatial experience, anchored by built-in window seating that invites pause and reflection. Expanded clerestory windows introduce abundant daylight and framed views, enriching the spatial quality while subtly augmenting the original elevation's long vertical lines with tall vertical mullions. This verticality is echoed in the interior storefronts, creating a cohesive architectural language. The interplay of these vertical elements choreographs the movement of light and space, drawing

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occupants through the depth of the space toward areas of discovery and engagement. At the heart of the library sits the “Rider Bar,” a multifunctional circulation desk that also acts as a charging station and social hub. With a cantilevered design, it invites students to gather, connect and recharge — both figuratively and literally. Accessibility was also a major focus. Existing single-user restrooms were expanded and redesigned to meet modern standards, ensuring barrier-free, inclusive facilities for all students.

The renovated Roosevelt Library is more than just a place for books. It is a thoughtfully designed, student-centered environment that supports modern education through innovation, inclusivity, and collaboration. According to Chan, “To be able to see the space being utilized, whether in the way intended or not intended, is the most rewarding. Sometimes, unintended is the most exciting.” It is learning reimaged. ■



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COURTESY OF BEAVERDALE BOOKS

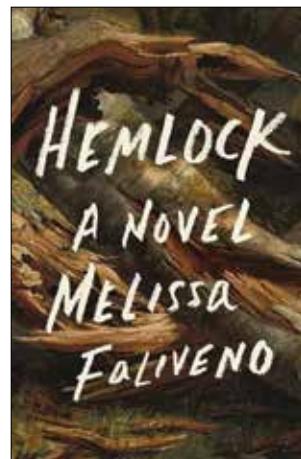
'Hemlock'

Melissa Faliveno's "Hemlock" is a story about addiction, isolation and a creepy deer. This is a haunting novel that balances psychological tension with an intimate exploration of identity and that indefinable sense of place that roots so many people. Set in a small Wisconsin town, the story follows a woman named Sam who is returning home after years away. She will finally have to wrestle with both her past and her present in a thousand ways as she is tossed about in a sea of alcohol, memories and her own inner demons.

The tension builds less through plot twists than through the simmering emotional undercurrents that Sam is flailing through. While there are secrets here, what actually happened to Sam's mother? This is less a mystery and more a slow-burn character study that treats the location as a main character in the best way.

Faliveno's background as an essayist is evident in her almost documentary-style descriptions and her ability to capture the nuances inherent in any place. Yet, the novel never feels overwritten; instead, it offers a sharp, immersive experience that lingers long after the final page. ■

—Review by Julie Goodrich



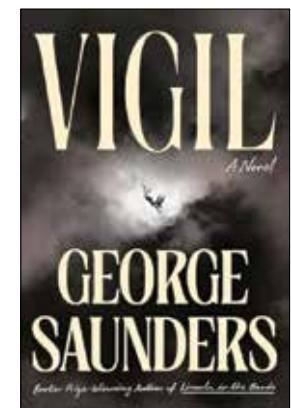
By Jennifer Eli Bowen
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'Vigil'

George Saunders' skill at breaking my heart in surprising ways is unparalleled. His newest offering, "Vigil," is yet another testament to his ability to fuse morality and emotion into a close-fitting narrative that feels bigger than it should. There are questions of humanity, honor, selfishness and how everything we do affects others, intentionally or not.

A stereotypical oil baron is about to die. In that death, he will come to face the myriad ways his actions have changed others' lives for better or worse. His justifications and very grey morals seem obvious on the face of things, but, like so many things in this world, there are layers and layers to dig through. What is one human life, really?

When the world outside feels so broken, a story of connection between even the most flawed of people feels revolutionary. Saunders invites readers to consider what it truly means to show up for others — quietly, imperfectly but wholeheartedly. The result is a story that manages to be uplifting in the saddest of ways. Short but full of rhythm and just surreal enough to shine, this feels like an instinct classic to me. ■ —Review by Julie Goodrich



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FILM REVIEW

BY DAVID ROWLEY

'Wake Up Dead Man' sharpens the 'Knives Out' formula to an Occam's razor's edge

The perfect whodunit doesn't exist. Or, does it?

Writer and director Rian Johnson challenges that age-old question with his latest film, "Wake Up Dead Man," and gives audiences a clever, unconvoluted caper that is as intellectually satisfying as it is wildly entertaining and proves the "Knives Out" series is far from running out of sharp ideas.

This third outing for the world's greatest detective, Benoit Blanc (Daniel Craig), is a sinfully entertaining, expertly crafted mystery that marries the playful spirit of Agatha Christie with a dash of Hammett's grit, all while delivering the most atmospherically potent and satisfying puzzle of the trilogy.

We're thrust into the story in a letter to Blanc himself, delivering us into the storm-lashed world of Chimney Rock and the parish of Our Lady of Perpetual Fortitude. Here, a young priest with a bruised past, Father Jud Duplenticy (Josh O'Connor), finds himself under the thumb of the fearmongering Monsignor Jefferson Wicks (Josh Brolin). Their tension is a live wire, crackling with barely concealed contempt that quickly escalates from theological sparring to something far more sinister.

The film belongs to Josh O'Connor, who delivers a captivating performance brimming with sensitivity, vulnerability and a simmering, empathetic vengeance. Father Jud is complex — a man seeking grace for his violent past amidst a new flock of wolves. O'Connor makes him profoundly relatable, his earnest faith providing a compelling moral center against which the other characters' hypocrisies starkly contrast.

When death predictably comes knocking at this cloistered community, Blanc is summoned to untangle a web of faith, guilt and long-buried secrets. Daniel Craig, now utterly at home in Blanc's linen suits and Foghorn Leghorn drawl, remains the franchise's hilarious and beating heart. His chemistry with O'Connor is a particular delight, their dynamic evolving into a partnership that is both funny and deeply moving.

They are supported by a star-studded ensemble. Glenn Close, as the formidable Martha Delacroix, continues to be a masterclass in screen presence, stealing scenes with a mere glance from the background. Jeremy Renner, Andrew Scott and Daryl McCormack expertly mine the pathetic, comedic depths of their self-obsessed characters, while Cailee Spaeny and Thomas Haden Church offer more sympathetic, grounded counterpoints.

"Wake Up Dead Man" distinguishes itself with a distinct and deliciously dark new aesthetic. Johnson and cinematographer Steve Yedlin trade the sun-dappled mansions of the past for shadowy stone corridors, rain-slicked graveyards, and haunting medieval architecture.

The film also bravely wades into the deep waters



"Wake Up Dead Man"

PG-13 | 144 minutes

Director/Writer: Rian Johnson

Stars: Daniel Craig, Josh O'Connor, Glenn Close

of religious debate, using its setting to explore faith, fanaticism and the power of words. In the process of one interrogation Blanc observes, "What I see is not a guilty man in torment, but an innocent man tormented by guilt" — a line that echoes through the film's core exploration of sin and redemption. While some may find its thematic arguments broad, they successfully frame the mystery within higher stakes — the festering hatred in isolated communities and the spiritual cost of failing to let go. It provides a substantive backbone that elevates the caper beyond mere puzzle-box mechanics.

While the "who" in this whodunit may not ultimately shock the most seasoned sleuth, Johnson brilliantly shifts the focus to the "how" and, more importantly, the "why." The mystery unfolds like a series of ornate Russian dolls, each revelation exposing a deeper, darker layer beneath. The closed-circle setup is masterfully compromised by flashbacks and hidden histories, ensuring the audience is constantly re-evaluating loyalties and motives. The solution is not just clever; it feels both surprising and inevitably right, a testament to Johnson's meticulously constructed plotting where every character, line, and prop has a deliberate purpose.

With a breakout performance from Josh O'Connor, a perfectly pitched performance from Daniel Craig, and an ensemble having the time of their lives, "Wake Up Dead Man" is not just a great whodunit; it's a compelling drama about guilt, grace and the ghosts we choose to bury. It's a reminder of the pure, unadulterated joy of being led down a dark path by a master storyteller, only to have the lights flipped on in the most spectacular way imaginable.

"Wake Up Dead Man" is a triumphant return to form that rectifies the minor missteps of "Glass Onion," offering a mystery that is more intricate, more atmospheric and, ultimately, more emotionally resonant than what came before. It is a film that demands — and rewards — repeat viewings, its layers promising new details to uncover each time. ■

PREVIEWS

BY DAVID ROWLEY

"28 Years Later: The Bone Temple"

R | 109 minutes

Director: Nia DaCosta

Writer: Alex Garland

Stars: Jack O'Connell, Ralph Fiennes, Emma Laird



"28 Years Later: The Bone Temple"

"Temple" takes us into a realm where the most terrifying threat may no longer be the infected, but the believers. Spike — now grown — is drawn into the ruthless world of Sir Jimmy Crystal, a twisted cult leader surrounded by zealots molded in his own image. Meanwhile, Dr. Ian Kelson (Ralph Fiennes) uncovers a deadly discovery powerful enough to shatter the fragile reality humanity has been clinging to. At the heart of it all lies the Bone Temple, a shrine built from human remains — a place of remembrance but also of unspeakable horror.

"Dead Man's Wire"

R | 105 minutes

Director: Gus Van Sant

Writer: Austin Kolodney

Stars: Bill Skarsgård, Colman Domingo, Al Pacino



On the morning of Feb.

8, 1977, Indianapolis entrepreneur Anthony G. "Tony" Kirsits entered the office of Richard O. Hall, president of the Meridian Mortgage Company, and took the man hostage with a sawed-off 12-gauge shotgun wired to his head. Acclaimed filmmaker Gus Van Sant recreates the incident in meticulous detail, following Tony's misbegotten attempt to seek retribution from the Hall family for cheating him out of what he felt he was owed. Featuring commanding performances from Bill Skarsgård as the unhinged Kirsits, Colman Domingo as a radio DJ who gets up caught in the chaos, and Al Pacino as the grouchy mortgage mogul, "Dead Man's Wire" is an eerily timely, unsettling, and captivating story about vigilante justice and the thin line between criminal and hero in American society.

"We Bury the Dead"

R | 94 minutes

Director/Writer: Zak Hilditch

Stars: Daisy Ridley, Brenton

Thwaites, Mark Coles Smith



After a catastrophic military disaster, the dead don't just rise — they hunt. The military insists they are harmless and slow-moving, offering hope to grieving families. But when Ava (Daisy Ridley) enters a quarantine zone searching for her missing husband, she uncovers the horrifying truth: the undead are growing more violent, more relentless and more dangerous with every passing hour. ■

BY JIM DUNCAN

Des Moines transcends the national gloom

Jeff Fleming returns to Moberg Jan. 9 with a year of reflections on "The Milky Way."



Jeff Fleming's "The Milky Way"

Listen to the elite guardians of American culture, and you might think the art world is self-destructing. The New York Times writes that the Broadway musical is doomed — by bad ticket sales, \$250 average ticket prices, and audiences that prefer old classics. They have been saying that about opera for decades, though. The Washington Post writes that the Kennedy Center is doomed by lagging ticket sales and the Rambo-led barbarian hordes of Donald Trump. It has been hemorrhaging taxpayer money for decades, though.

Gustav Klimt's "Portrait of Elisabeth Lederer" became the most expensive single painting ever, selling for \$236.4 million. The art media had to explain that the subject was not the disgraced Columbia University law professor who wrongly prosecuted the Central Park Five and that the genocidal hatred of Jews did not begin on Oct. 7, 2023. The Elisabeth Lederer in the painting escaped Nazi death camp duty by passing herself off as Klimt's daughter.

Ambiguity ruled pop music. Four different musical artists were declared "artist of the year:" Lady Gaga by Video Music; Billie Eilish by American Music Awards; Bad Bunny by Spotify; and Tyler the Creator by Apple Music.

Locally, the arts are doing much better. The Civic Center's Broadway series in 2026 will include long runs of three Broadway shows that are selling 90% of their seats in New York: "Six" in January; "The Outsiders" in February; and "Wicked" in September. The Des Moines Metro Opera is coming off its best year and expects its earliest ever sellouts in 2026. Des Moines Symphony looks to another sweet year beginning by matching "Romeo & Juliet" on Valentine's Day. TJ Moberg of Moberg Gallery says his gallery bounced back from its first-ever down year in the election anxiety of 2024 to surge in 2025. He expects 2026 to be their "best year ever."



Leah Kiser's "Symbiosis"

January touts

Jeff Fleming returns to Moberg Jan. 9 with a year of reflections on "The Milky Way." Who does that? The Milky Way is why the genius composer-turned-novelist Paul Bowles titled his greatest work "The Sheltering Sky" — because daylight protects us from contemplating the vast nevertheless of that infinite star stuff.

Our preview of this show impressed us with its brave look into that vastness. Fleming actually painted much of these with pins and needles. Consider a few things that have been written about his sole subject matter: "We're made of star stuff. We are a way for the cosmos to know itself." - Carl Sagan; "I can never look now at the Milky Way without wondering from which of those banked clouds of stars the emissaries are coming." - Arthur C. Clark; "Look at the stars. It helps you to remember that you and your problems are both infinitesimally small and conversely, that you are a piece of an amazing and vast universe." - Anonymous.

If the Milky Way is too foreboding, spend some time in Des Moines Community Playhouse's Studio Theater contemplating another common nightmare — the Big Bad Wolf. "Little Red Riding Hood — Both Sides of the Story" by Allison Gregory is told from the point of view of a hungry, misunderstood and vengeful wolf, interrupted by a delivery driver who looks a lot like Red Riding Hood. These productions Jan. 9-26 are priced at just \$16-21.

Olson-Larsen Gallery's "The Animal Show" brings together Joe Broghammer, Heidi McKay Casto, Bryan Holland, R. J. Kern, Leah Kiser, Paula Schuette Kraemer, Gary Olson and Steve Snell with the animals who fascinated them. Kern shows a few "divine animals" from his superb show of 2024 plus some new friends from county fairs. Broghammer brings ominous birds that could illustrate Edgar Allan Poe. Leah Kiser's flamingos, orangutangs and murderous cats are the animals that will haunt you. Those flamingos are depicted in Charles "Darwin's Daydream" and the orangutangs on "Symbiosis." Check them out. Through Jan. 31. ■

IOWA ARTIST



Art with ministry

Pastor Wendy Musgrave melds her two passions at Polk City United Methodist Church.

BY JACKIE WILSON

A stunning, vibrant nativity scene displayed at the Polk City United Methodist Church in 2023 may have resembled a typical decoration at Christmas time. Yet, upon inspection, each colorful square was a piece of trash, including an empty pistachio bag, a mouthwash ad and a cereal box. All of these squares were combined to make one giant art piece titled the "Blessed Messiah."

Pastor Wendy Musgrave is the artist behind the unusual artwork, which combines scripture lessons with art, plus participation from congregation members.

This year, she and the congregation created another piece titled, "Word Became Flesh."

She explains how her unusual art pieces have become the talk of the church.

In her 2023 fall worship series theme, she came up with the topic, "Bless This Mess." It looks at stories where humans may fail, yet through the "messiness," God is there, blessing the mess in a person's life.

She devised a plan, sketched her idea, then asked the congregation for help. She provided 240 squares, which were labeled with a certain color. Members were instructed to color, paint or find an object in that assigned color and encouraged to use recycled items.

Once all the colored squares were turned in, she took home the pieces, assembling 12 squares on each poster board for a total of 20 poster boards.

She brought the completed poster boards to church, then assembled them to reveal a 10-foot by 10-foot piece of art.

"Our mess became Messiah. Bless this mess became Blessed Messiah," Musgrave says.

The congregation's reaction was pure delight.

"Everyone was enamored by what we created. When you step back, it looks like a stained glass artwork," she says. "Members eagerly searched for the square that they created. It's incredible. Everyone said, 'I'm not creative' or 'I'm not an artist,'" Musgrave explains.

After the 2023 creation, she took a year off and planned for another one in 2025. For this project, she instructed members to write words that were meaningful to them or things they were thankful for. Again, they returned the 8-inch squares, where she placed them on poster boards. From there, she painted over them with acrylic translucent paint.

The result is an advent display titled "Word Became Flesh," with panels of peace, love, hope and joy.

"These words became the inspiration of the baby Jesus," she says.

Musgrave's first career was a graphic designer for various magazines, plus a passion for photography. When she became a pastor in 2017, she brought with her expertise, such as designing devotions and other visual aspects in the church. She melds the two passions.

"Each of us are called in different ways. A big part is using my creativity and design that impact my ministry," she explains. "I didn't leave that career behind. I'm both a designer and a pastor."

She says using art with ministry helps to spread the



word in a variety of methods.

"We communicate in a lot of different ways. To me, a visual aspect is a big part of it. I like to engage all our senses in worship," she says.

Due to the popularity of the artwork, she has made prints and created ornaments. She loves the community aspect of others joining in her art process.

"It's wonderful to use my creativity as part of my ministry," she reflects. "It's special when we can all create together." ■

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Rethinking chronic illness

America's modern healthcare system is failing us. Despite spending 90% of all healthcare expenditures or \$4.9 trillion annually on chronic illness, America continues to get sicker. This spending trend continues to only increase each year in spite of the marvel that is known as modern medicine.

More than \$8.5 million/minute goes to managing symptoms of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, obesity, dementia and autoimmunity. The traditional model focuses on treating illness after it strikes, relying heavily on medications (consuming 25 million pills/hour) while overlooking root causes like toxicity, inflammation, hidden infections and high calorie nutritional deficiencies.

A paradigm shift is past due: proactive, personalized prevention that uncovers metabolic vulnerabilities before they escalate into full-blown disease. As I like to say, "It's easier to fix the roof when it's not raining."

Thankfully we have MVX+ (Metabolic Vulnerability Index). Through a simple inexpensive blood test analyzed via advanced NMR technology, MVX+ provides an intuitive score and actionable insights into your body's hidden breakdown. It empowers targeted interventions — functional nutrition, detoxification and lifestyle changes — to build resilience and reverse course early. This can lead to a much greater quality of life.

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Dr. Dale Kimberlin D.C., Kimberlin Chiropractic Health Systems, 219 S.W. Third St., Ankeny, 515-895-4927, drdaledc.com, email help@drdaledc.com.

You don't need a New Year's resolution to start recovery

Every January, I hear the same thing: "I was going to start on New Year's Day, but I missed it. I guess I'll try again next year."

It breaks my heart every time. Because here's the truth: You don't need a New Year's resolution to start recovery. And, if you set one and slip up, which happens to most resolutions by mid-January, that doesn't mean you've failed — it means you're human. Resolution culture sets us up for this pattern.

The idea that getting help requires a "perfect moment" is one of the most dangerous myths in addiction recovery. People tell themselves they'll start after the holidays, on the first of the month, when life settles down, or when they hit rock bottom. They're waiting for a date that feels significant enough, a moment that matches the magnitude of the decision.

But addiction doesn't wait for perfect timing. And recovery doesn't require it.

There's no such thing as the "right" moment to start treatment. Life will always be messy. The holidays will always be stressful. Work will always be demanding. If we wait for everything to line up perfectly, we'll be waiting forever — and addiction will keep taking more from us in the meantime.

You can have a fresh start any day. All it requires is a moment of courage to pick up the phone and ask for help.

People start treatment every day. Some join on a Monday after a difficult weekend. Some call on a Thursday afternoon during their lunch break. Every single one of those moments is the right time — because the right time is

when someone is ready to reach out.

Treatment today fits into people's lives. Evidence-based care combines:

Medications like buprenorphine or naltrexone, which reduce cravings and withdrawal symptoms (CDC, 2023).

Group therapy, where people build accountability, community, and hope—reducing the isolation that addiction feeds on (NIDA, 2020).

Wraparound supports like help with transportation, housing and employment, which make it possible for people to stay in care (SAMHSA, 2021).

Flexible access, including virtual options that sometimes require just an hour a week.

If you've been thinking about treatment, this is your moment. You don't need a resolution or a rock bottom or perfect timing. You just need to take the first step, and we'll be here to walk with you. ■

Information provided by Madison Stifel, Recovery Support Coordinator, Groups Recover Together. Groups is a national outpatient program helping people overcome addiction and thrive in recovery. We provide evidence-based medication, group therapy, and personalized support—available online or in person—for opioid, alcohol, stimulant, and cannabis use disorders. Services are covered by most major insurance plans, including Medicaid and Medicare. Visit us at 3070 104th St., Unit 100, Urbandale, IA 50322. Learn more at joingroups.com or call 515-200-3494.



You don't need a New Year's resolution. You just need addiction treatment **that works.**

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Meet our care team



Out with the old, and in with the new

Since the Babylonians, we have been making resolutions and embracing personal change. This beautiful tradition passed down through centuries invites thoughtful reflection and intentional growth. Therapy can be a meaningful way to check in with yourself and stay focused on your goals. Counseling isn't only for trauma; it can help you learn grounding techniques and recognize negative patterns. Once you book that appointment, you might start wondering what you even do in therapy.

Whether you're unacquainted or you've been to therapy before, here are a few simple Do's and Don'ts to keep in mind:

Do find a therapist who aligns with you. Outgrowing a therapist isn't bad. Your needs and perspectives will shift as you grow; it's valid to want someone who matches your new chapter.

Do research different therapy styles. Approaches your clinician may take, like IFS or EMDR, work differently. A quick overview can help you feel prepared.

Do speak up and set boundaries. Therapists have different strengths, and you deserve support that affirms your experience. It's OK if something isn't for you.

Don't forget your therapist is a human, too. Your therapist can't read your mind. Honest communication helps your clinician provide the proper support.

Don't rush healing. You can't do everything in one appointment. Building trust and rapport takes time.

Most importantly, don't be too nervous to start. The first step is often the hardest, but it might lead the way to impactful healing. ■

Information provided by Micah Lowery, Administrative Assistant at ForWard Consulting LLC, 4309 University Ave., Des Moines.

What is going on with hemp?

As some of you know, and some have no idea, the hemp industry was dealt yet another big blow in the Congressional Appropriations Bill that was signed to reopen the Federal Government last month. Why was hemp even in there? That's a great question; it shouldn't have been. Unfortunately, when something natural helps, it opens itself up to the aggressive ridicule and unfair financial disadvantages of those big players against it. Alcohol consumption has gone down 54% in America in the last couple of years, and the addition of THC beverages and openly available natural products has helped that happen. It is also one of the reasons hemp is being attacked by legislation.

In the hemp amendment of this bill, it took all THC, 0.04mg per container, away from the hemp industry starting in November 2026. To make that number make sense, right now, the state of Iowa offers a maximum of 4mg per piece, which is extremely low. The new law more or less removes 97% of everything in the entire industry. The US Hemp Roundtable is a Federal agency that lobbies and helps the industry federally. Two bills are circulating to amend the situation. Please look them up or stop into a local shop to show support and to have us answer any questions. Thank you for supporting local. ■

Information provided by Lacie Navin, Your CBD Store, owner of locations at 125 Fifth St., West Des Moines, 515-279-0150, and 2732 S.E. Delaware Ave., Suite 160, Ankeny, 515-964-9862.

Yoga: a foundation for mental wellness and flexibility

As the new year begins, many people look for meaningful ways to rebuild routines, set fresh intentions and reconnect with their well-being. Yoga continues to be one of the most accessible and transformative practices for doing just that. Its blend of breathwork, mindful movement and intentional stillness creates a powerful foundation for mental health. Each class offers space to slow down racing thoughts, relieve stress and release tension stored in the body.

Yoga also improves flexibility in a sustainable and supportive way. Instead of forcing deep stretches, the practice encourages gradual progress, helping joints and muscles move with greater ease. Over time, this increased mobility supports better posture, reduces stiffness and decreases the risk of injury — an essential benefit for anyone navigating work, family responsibilities or active lifestyles in the new year.

Fitness: building strength, balance and consistency

Wellness goals often revolve around improving fitness, but long-term success comes from consistency rather than intensity. A balanced fitness routine should support strength, mobility and cardiovascular health while still being enjoyable enough to stick with. Yoga-based fitness programs excel in this area because they offer low-impact, full-body conditioning suitable for a wide range of ages and abilities.

Functional movements, core engagement and controlled transitions help build strength while protecting the joints. Many students also experience improved balance, stability and overall body awareness — skills that support

everyday activities and reduce the risk of falls or strain. Fitness in the new year doesn't need to mean pushing harder; it starts with showing up, moving with intention, and celebrating what your body can do.

FAR Infrared Therapy: Enhancing Recovery and Mental Clarity

Where traditional heated classes focus on warming the air, FAR infrared therapy gently warms the body from within, offering unique benefits that elevate both yoga and fitness practices. FAR infrared heat penetrates soft tissue, increasing circulation, easing tight muscles and supporting faster recovery. This makes it easier to stretch deeper, move more fluidly and experience less post-workout tension.

The soothing warmth also helps activate the parasympathetic nervous system, which promotes relaxation and mental clarity. Many people report reduced stress, improved sleep and an overall sense of calm after practicing in FAR infrared heat. For anyone setting new year goals around mental health, consistency or self-care, this therapy provides a powerful tool for staying grounded and motivated.

Whether you're building strength, increasing flexibility or seeking a calmer mind this year, combining yoga, fitness and FAR infrared therapy creates a holistic wellness experience that supports lasting change. ■

Information provided by Amy Johannsen, Owner, Oxygen Yoga & Fitness, 4820 100th St., Suite 201, Urbandale. 515-499-2835. www.oxygenyogaandfitness.com/urbandale.



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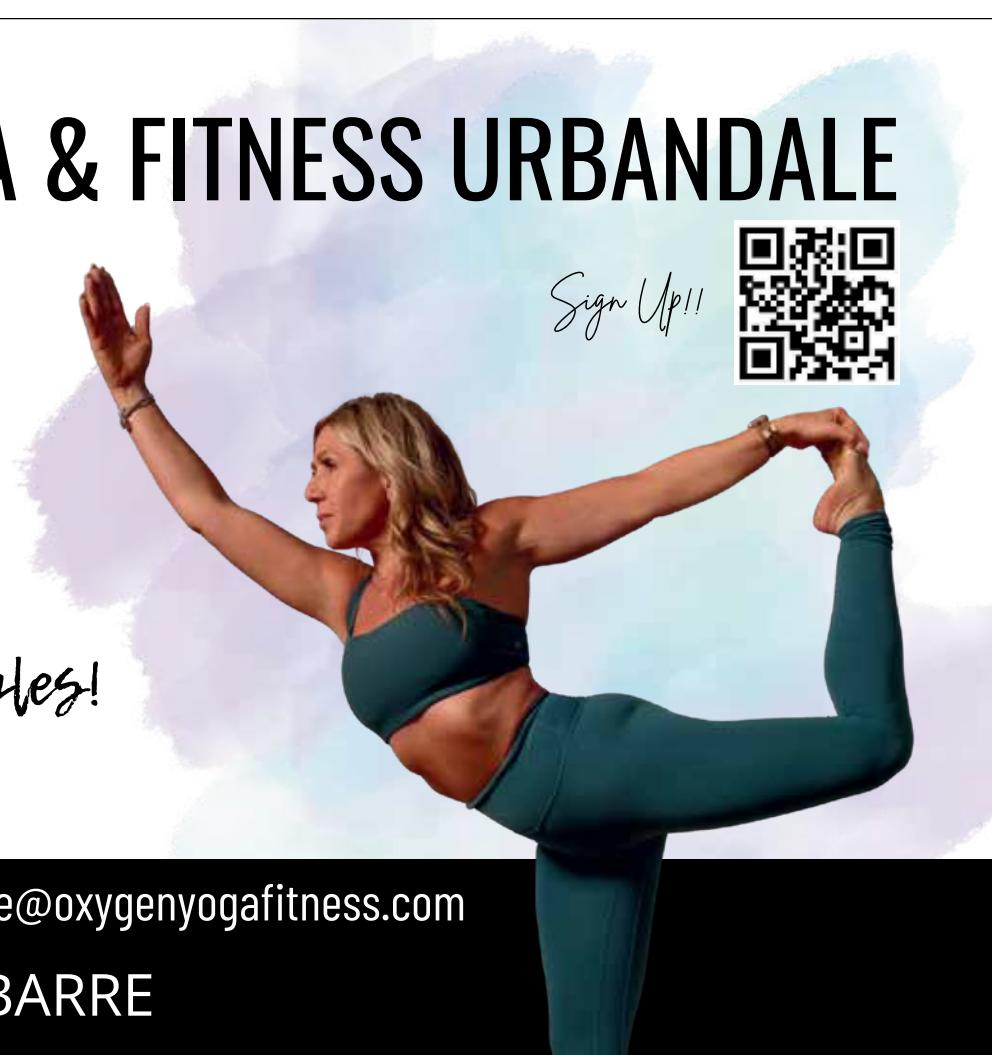
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FITNESS YOGA FUSION BARRE

When medical aesthetics meets functional medicine

Medical aesthetics has long focused on what we can see — skin tone, texture, volume and the visible signs of aging. Lasers, injectables and advanced skincare are powerful tools, and when used well, they can create meaningful, natural-looking changes. But after years of working closely with patients, many providers begin to notice something deeper: the most noticeable change often isn't just in the skin — it's in the overall vitality of the person.

There is a clear difference in how patients look and feel when their internal health is supported alongside aesthetic treatments. Energy levels improve, inflammation decreases, recovery becomes easier, and the skin responds more predictably. That healthy, balanced appearance isn't something that can be created through procedures alone — it reflects what's happening beneath the surface.

This is where functional medicine and medical aesthetics naturally intersect. Functional medicine focuses on understanding how systems within the body work together — hormones, metabolism, weight management, nutrition, stress and inflammation — rather than addressing concerns in isolation. When aesthetic care is paired with this approach, treatments tend to be more effective and results more sustainable.

At Nova, care is led by a nurse practitioner who prioritizes this internal and external balance. By evaluating lab work, identifying deficiencies and addressing hormone changes when appropriate, care plans are built to

support each patient's individual health goals. This may include targeted supplements, medications or hormone therapy, alongside aesthetic treatments — always with team collaboration and a focus on long-term wellbeing rather than quick fixes.

Time is also a critical part of this process. Many people are accustomed to brief primary care visits that focus on one concern at a time. At Nova, initial consultations are intentionally longer — often lasting an hour — to allow space for meaningful conversation. Sleep patterns, energy levels, stress, digestion, cycle changes and everyday habits are explored, including details patients may not realize are connected to how they feel or how their body responds to treatment.

When providers take the time to truly understand someone, patterns emerge. Those insights guide more thoughtful decisions, helping patients feel better internally while supporting healthier skin and more consistent aesthetic outcomes.

This integrated approach — where medical aesthetics and functional medicine work together — is the foundation of Nova's specialty and how care is delivered every day. ■

Information provided by Emma Culbertson DNP, ARNP-BC, Nova MedSpa, Ankeny and Polk City, 563-599-7422. www.novamedspa.org.



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CENTER STAGE

BY JOHN BUSBEE

Iowa Stage launches new season

A tantalizing potpourri of plays for 2026

Iowa Stage Theatre Company is central Iowa's successful professional theatre company, an evolving, dynamic amalgam of predecessor companies. That creative DNA has delivered a steady series of top-notch stage works featuring some of the best regional actors. At the ISTC core is the Resident Artists Company (RAC), with auditioning filling additional roles as needed. A quick Q&A with Co-Artistic Director (with Co-Artistic Director Davida Williams) Alex Wendel reveals a tantalizing potpourri of plays for 2026.

Center Stage: Why shift your season to a calendar year?

Alex Wendel: We found a lot of season reveals happening around the same time...a calendar year allows us to avoid conflicts of content/scheduling and to have our season reveal stand alone from a marketing standpoint. It's also a lot easier to wrap my head around a season that always ends with "Christmas Carol." It just feels so fitting to celebrate the year we had with such a warm production every year.

Center Stage: How does ISTC select its shows?

Alex Wendel: The suggestions come from all over but especially the RAC. The ultimate conversation that finalizes things happens between Artistic Producers, but not without a ton of input from everyone around us. We place a lot of importance on offering classics and contemporary works each year.

Center Stage: What makes ISTC unique?

Alex Wendel: We are the amalgamation of multiple companies that came before us (Drama Workshop, StageWest, Repertory Theatre of Iowa), which is a great excuse to not box ourselves into one lane. Classics, cult classics, contemporary and "problem" plays all in the same season. It keeps us on our toes, and we are fortunate enough to have a board of directors and audience base that appreciates the variety.

Center Stage: Are there any Iowa connections to scripts in the upcoming season?

Alex Wendel: Our opening production of the year, "Seagull," is an original adaptation (of Anton Chekhov's 1895 play) done right here by members of our company. It may take place on a small estate outside Moscow, but the content is universal especially to us right here in Des Moines. Using different public domain translations, we've woven the story together in a way that hopefully leaves you with a romantic heartache.



Iowa Stage produces one of the region's best holiday traditions, "A Christmas Carol," each December. This memorable scene is from the 2025 production, Craig Peterson (Christmas Present) and John Earl Robinson (Scrooge). Photo credit: Iowa Stage Marketing

The ISTC Season at a glance:

"Seagull" - The Play Advisory Committee pushed hard for a Chekhov script. This is the first script in Chekhov's canon of work.

"I'm Gonna Marry You Tobey Maguire" - Concord Theatrics just made the rights available for this new show that killed it on the West End. Without giving too much away, this is really a return to form for our StageWest DNA.

"Measure for Measure" - This was a conversation with Salisbury House as they are our partners for Shakespeare on the Lawn every year. Since we had just come off of three years of comedies, we knew we wanted to bridge the gap before jumping straight to a tragedy or historic. Measure is categorized as one of Shakespeare's "problem" plays because it can't really sit neatly in the comedy or tragedy genre. It's a mix in content and structure of both genres.

"Reefer Madness" - Dani Boal, on our board of directors, championed us working musicals back into our repertoire. Davida and I knew that whatever musical we chose, it needs to be something that isn't taking material away from the other local companies, and that it's something that you could only imagine ISTC producing. It's what came out on top to lead us into a new era of ISTC doing musicals.

"A Christmas Carol" - Brittney Rebhuhn and Clifton Antoine have done such a lovely job reimagining Christmas Carol this year. Once we saw the writing on the wall that this year's offering was going to be so fun, we saw it as a no-brainer to continue the tradition and build upon what they have built.

BARE BOARDS CHATTER

This is a good time to explore volunteer opportunities in the production side of theatre. Check out the local companies and what they have to offer.

Des Moines Playhouse: Jan. 9-25: "KF Red Riding Hood: Both Sides of the Story"

Des Moines Performing Arts – Live at the Temple Series: Jan. 9: "Amythyst Kiah"; Jan. 30: "Duke Tumatoe"

Tallgrass Theatre Company – Broadway Karaoke: Jan. 10.

Des Moines Performing Arts: Jan. 13-18: "Six: The Musical"

Des Moines Playhouse – AUDITIONS: Feb. 16: "Polkadots: The Cool Kids Musical"

Des Moines Playhouse – AUDITIONS: Jan. 19: "Crazy for You"

Tallgrass Theatre Company – AUDITIONS: Feb. 22-23: "For Peter Pan on Her 70th Birthday"

Auditions and a new perspective on Red

The Playhouse offers a wonderfully engaging tale through its Kate Goldman Family Series program with "KF Red Riding Hood: Both Sides of the Story." Wolfgang, the greatest actor in the world, is interrupted in his tale-telling when a delivery person arrives with a mysterious package. Like an unexpected package, when you open up a fairy tale, you never know what you'll find. A welcome addition to show options: Sunday, Jan. 11 at 4 p.m., a sensory-friendly performance.

If your thespian yearnings are long to tread the bare boards, here are some upcoming auditions to consider. Plenty of time to prepare:

"Crazy for You" (Gershwin musical) – Jan. 19, The Playhouse

"Polkadots: The Cool Kids Musical" – Feb. 16, The Playhouse, Kate Goldman Family Series

"For Peter Pan on Her 70th Birthday" – Feb. 22-23, Tallgrass Theatre, Dream Project ■

John Busbee produces The Culture Buzz, a weekly arts and culture radio show on www.kfmg.org, covering Iowa's arts scene with an inclusive sweep of the cultural brush. He received the Iowa Governor's Arts Award for Collaboration and Partnership in the Arts. He has performed in more than 100 musicals, including many leading roles.



PEOPLE & PETS

BY JACKIE WILSON

'We'll figure it out'

Kara Berhow and Holly Kilstrom foster dogs, host a "pawdcast," and create microchip stations for lost dogs.



Two friends, who are both dog lovers, took several steps beyond caring for their furry friends. They established a nonprofit foster rescue, host a dog "pawdcast" and installed microchip stations for lost dogs.

Kara Berhow and Holly Kilstrom began fostering rescue dogs 13 years ago. The pair established a nonprofit, Oh My Dog Rescue (OMD), in November 2022. Since then, they have rescued 720 dogs.

They obtain dogs from various situations. Abandoned dogs that need homes. Owner-surrendered pets. Dogs pulled off the euthanasia list from various animal shelters.

When they first established the nonprofit, they thought they would ease into it. Instead, they took in seven dogs from a condemned home.

"All the dogs were severely matted. We needed to take them to be sedated and shaved at the vet," Berhow recalls. "Yet, each dog found incredible homes. It was the launching point and our motto — we'll figure it out."

OMD pays costly veterinary bills before dogs are adopted out. They rely on donations and assistance through their "Mutt Mafia." Dog lovers are contacted when a dog is brought in. The Mutt Mafia is alerted through all communication methods, via texts, social media, emails and phone calls to find a foster family. Usually, a dog spends about three weeks in foster care.

They say dogs staying with foster families is more beneficial than dogs sitting in a shelter. One way OMD differs is that the foster families decide where to place the dog for adoption.

"Our foster home parents get to know dogs," Kilstrom says. "They determine if they are good with kids or if they chase cats. We can figure out which home that they can thrive in. If they were in shelter, it's hard to know."

Because of the emotional aspect of taking in death-row, abandoned and unkempt dogs, the pair started a podcast to share their stories and answer common dog-related questions. The OMD Pawdcast is dog-related on a variety of subjects.

"It started as an outlet. Rescue work is stressful," Kilstrom explains. "We wanted to be real about the rescue world. We spill the truth and reveal all the little details."

So far, they have recorded 82 Pawdcast episodes, chatting about common dog problems, nutrition, wellness and more. They featured guests from animal shelters, veterinarians, a pet psychic, a prison dog program and more.

They applied for a grant, and with the endowment, began installing microchip scanning stations. If someone finds a lost dog, they bring it to the station to see if it is chipped. This saves on community resources by keeping dogs from going to "dog jail" and out of animal control units. So far, they have installed 10 stations outside the Des Moines suburbs.

Both Berhow and Kilstrom are longtime dog lovers. They created a community through their Mutt Mafia, which consists of passionate, caring dog lovers.

"Like-minded dog people are good humans with a common love for dogs. If we can help these creatures who love us, then we can return the favor back and give them their best life," Berhow says.

To learn more about the OMD Pawdcast, or about fostering, adopting or sponsoring a dog chip station, visit ohmydogrescue.org. ■



The death of a teacher

Jay Holstein was a rock star.

Jay Holstein died the other day. Most of you don't know him. He was 87 when he died, and his time in the public eye had long passed. Or maybe you didn't know him, but you heard of him when you were a college student. And, maybe even then, you thought he was just a small man teaching an impractical course in the obscure religion department at the University of Iowa. Who cares about a college professor who touches your life for five minutes before you are on your way to that three-car garage attached to a home in West Des Moines with the cold plunge and granite kitchen counters?

Well, like much of life, things never are as they seem. Pure and simple — Holstein was a rock star.

And, yes, he had a back story. For starters, he was a Jewish rabbi from out East. Sure, we don't see many rabbis when we grow up in Webster City or Harlan or Strawberry Point. But, there he was, in Iowa City for the long haul. Hired in 1970 to teach Judaic Studies to Iowa college students. And, yes, you might wonder why in the world you'd take a course in Judaic Studies? Duh, because Holstein taught the course.

See, Holstein's classes, no matter the syllabus or what he named them, were all about a single proposition — the unexamined life is no life. In every class, he demanded that we throw all our beliefs and thoughts and prejudices on the table and take a good hard look. Period. With this stripped-down rawness, he taught us all to think about life and death and morality and courage and cowardice and joy and sadness. And, we sat poleaxed as he stormed around the front of the lecture hall shouting and whispering and laughing and writing nonsense on the blackboard and then later on the overhead projector. He grabbed each of us by the throat and roared that we look at our lives. What is right? What is wrong? What are our beliefs? Why are they our beliefs?

"Look!" he demanded. There is no time for foolish dilly dallying. Life is short. And his favorite saying, spoken coolly or excitedly or sardonically: "Pick a number and make a choice." Yikes, you mean we have to choose how to live our lives?

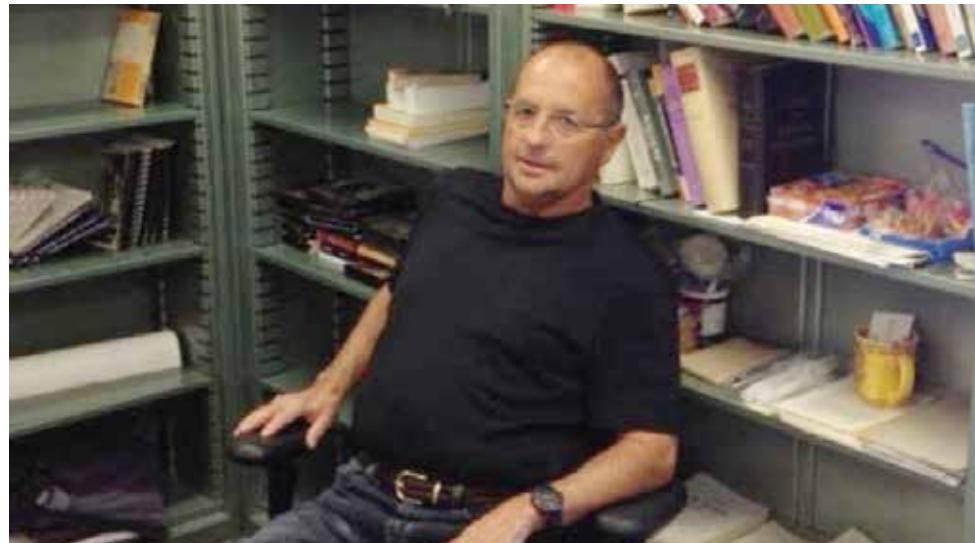
And, his classes grew and grew as he won teaching award after teaching award. By the time I stumbled upon him in 1972, the word was out. He had 800 students in a class. They couldn't find lecture halls big enough at the U of I. Come see the madman at the front of the room and leave with your innocence in tatters! Yup, going to class was as dangerous as that pool table that spelled trouble "right here in River City." It was electrifying. It was crazy. It was wonderful.

And, he was my friend.

Holstein was a runner. He ran marathons. I was not a runner. I sometimes ran to the bathroom. I decided to become a runner so I could know this man. And, I did.

He gave me two invaluable gifts as we ran up and down the hills to and from the Coralville Dam. He applauded whenever I said I didn't know the meaning of a word he used, or didn't understand a concept, or was flat out confused. To admit not knowing was a tremendous strength, according to him. And, he was right. It served me well my entire career as a prosecutor and served me well in my relationships. Who knew that admitting you're a dope was so powerful? Holstein knew.

And, he told me there are always others in the room smarter than you, or more handsome, or more politically connected or more whatever. But that we all can still play the game. We can demand answers. We can speak for ourselves. We are enough. Yup, he was an early Brene Brown before shame was known as something other than



a helpful tool to be inflicted by parents and religious institutions.

We ran thousands of miles together over the years. He shared his secrets and his life. I shared mine. I came to find out that he was flawed to the core like all of us. The difference was that he knew it, and he woke up every day shaking his fists at the gods like his much studied old man in Hemingway's "Old Man and the Sea." They say it's not courage if you don't know the risk when you climb out of the foxhole. He knew the risk.

A week ago, Holstein's ex-wife and friend Ellen sent me a text while I was at my son's wedding. Ironic for her to reach out at that time because Holstein married my wife and me 45 years earlier.

Holstein was dying, she said.

So, I made my way to him in hospice care. His eyes fluttered open, and we talked and laughed and told stories for an hour and a half. And then he slept for another hour and a half, holding my hand. The next day, he didn't wake up when I came. Less than two days later, under Ellen's watchful eye, he died.

A rift in the universe.

When we were talking in hospice, he said, "Listen, why don't you die first and see what's what and then come back and tell me. I'd do it for you, but why don't you go first? I hate to be surprised." Staccato laugh — but even then he stared into that space seen only by the dying.

Smiling, I promised I would come back from the dead only if he promised the same.

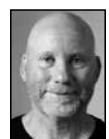
Deal.

So, here I am — keeping my eyes peeled for some kind of message from a small rabbi who used to teach nothing practical in the forgotten religion department at the University of Iowa.

My dear friend.

May he rest in peace. ■

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.



Still feels like a teenager

Big Head Todd and The Monsters co-founder says respect is the reason for the band's 40 years with original band members.

A jam band formed by a group of high school buddies is still going strong 40 years later.

Big Head Todd and The Monsters was formed by Todd Park Mohr, Brian Nevin and Rob Squires in Colorado in 1986 with Jeremy Lawton joining later.

The band found success with hits such as "Bittersweet," "Broken Hearted Savior" and more throughout its career.

Mohr, co-founder of the band, was a big-time blues music fan and wanted the name to reflect a throwback of the blues greats, such as Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson. Their initial name was Big Head Todd, and they then added the rest of the band as "the Monsters."

The band comes to Des Moines' Hoyt Sherman Place on Jan. 23 as part of their Monsters Tour 2026. Mohr says Hoyt Sherman is one of their favorite venues.

"We've begun to cherry pick our venues. Hoyt Sherman is incredible. One year, everyone made it out in a snow storm," he recalls.

Mohr and his bandmates are used to the snow in Colorado, where they formed a high school band. Mohr says he still feels like a teenager.

"I've been joking about it that we're still stuck in high school with the same friends, playing the same music," he laughs.

In today's music world, it is rare for original band members to stick together for 40 years. Mohr says respect is a big reason they've remain bandmates.

"Obviously, we enjoy music. We have common goals. We listen to and respect each other. If we agree on something, it's pretty good," he reflects. "It's just like a successful marriage. You listen to each other and be respectful. That creates a trust so that we can do good work together."

Their music genre encompasses blues, alternative rock and country rock with "jamband sensibilities." Mohr simply says they are a rock and roll band.

"I think rock and roll has always been a melting pot of blues, R&B and country," he explains. "I think we've gotten better over the years with what we are communicating to our audience."

They have witnessed the shift from albums to CDs and now to Spotify and other streaming services.

"It's been a dramatic shift. It's helped bands like us who are not a superstar act. It helps nourish a smaller audience," Mohr says. "But, I think it's harder because the downside is the record companies aren't committed to long-term careers for the artists."

Mohr stays updated to his fans' listening preferences with more than 600,000 monthly followers.



Photo by Kirsten Cohen

MUSIC

"I check to see what people are listening to and make sure we play that at our concerts," he says. "We choose from more than 230 songs from our playlist. It's a pretty eclectic selection."

In 2023, the band was inducted into the Colorado Music Hall of Fame. Mohr says he appreciates the honor.

"Colorado is our home, and that award supports local artists," he says. "But, I'm not a fan of awards. Music isn't a competition."

The band has played at Red Rocks Amphitheatre in Colorado about 35 times and has been ranked as one of the top acts to perform there.

"Red Rocks is always a thrill. You feel so lucky to be there," he reflects.

The band has recorded more than a dozen albums and is currently in "playing mode." The next album is set to come out as a top 40 live album. Mohr is also currently working on his own folk album.

Mohr says he feels fortunate for the band's longevity and success, noting that he appreciates the fans who listen to their music consistently.

"I marvel at it. A lot of music is so good. Listening to it repeatedly is a big deal. I take it seriously, and whatever makes that happen, you pinch yourself," he says. "Music is a special thing." ■

SOUND ADVICE

The Celtic Music Association kicks off 2026 with their concert series. Concerts feature popular and traditional Irish and Scottish music. Jan. 17 is **Dallahan**; **Runa** is Feb. 28 and **Tannahill Weavers** on March 28. All concerts are held at the Franklin Junior High Event Center, 4801 Franklin Ave., Des Moines. Tickets \$40; \$35 in advance at various ticket outlets. For ticket info visit, www.thecma.org.

The Ingersoll Dinner Theater is back in 2026 but simply named **The Ingersoll**. All shows offer dinner, and the lineup varies from jazz, contemporary, big band, tribute bands and more. Des Moines' own Steve Berry performs "**Steve Berry Open Stage**" on Jan. 15; **The Memphis Flash**, an acoustic Elvis Presley, on Jan.

17. Attend in January or February and receive a free dinner with ticket purchase for just \$60 plus tax. For tickets, www.theingersoll.com.

Each year, the Surf Ballroom in Clear Lake commemorates the death of Buddy Holly through its **Winter Dance Party**. This year, various events are held from Jan. 29 through Feb. 2 and include appearances by **Billy F. Gibbons, Austin Allsup** and nearly a dozen other musical acts. Can't make it to Clear Lake? Then hit the Val Air Ballroom on Jan. 30 for John Mueller's Winter Dance Party, featuring all the music from Holly's last concert, which was Feb. 2, 1959. Tickets for the Val Air concert run from \$39 to \$71. ■

Fisher is on a mission to open doors for others

The Adel resident's unrelenting efforts to get businesses to install handicap accessible doors is inspiring.

Robert Fisher has become a local celebrity in Adel — not for acting, singing or dancing, but for his constant drive and passion for his mission, which is helping to open doors for others. Fisher has been working tirelessly to get businesses in his community to add button powered handicap accessible doors. It all started when he moved to the area.

"When I moved here, my post office did not have a handicap button. I decided to call the headquarters and tell them about it. And they denied me. So, I decided to do everything I can to put one there, and they have no choice but to put one there for other people to get in," Fisher said.

Fisher accomplished that first goal. His local post office added handicap accessible doors, much to his and the other handicap residents of the area's delight in 2023. But, he did not stop there. Fisher said a fellow churchgoer of his thanked him for his efforts at the post office.

"That gave me joy. I desired to put one at my convenience store, at my bank, everywhere in Adel," Fisher said.

And, so far, he has been accomplishing those goals as well. The Casey's nearby and Lincoln Savings Bank have both added their own handicap accessible doors thanks to Fisher's efforts.

Not only is it a great help to people who are in wheelchairs, but Fisher says it is



good for businesses too. He has several fliers he uses to help spread information on his mission. He says there are approximately 3,079 residents with a mobility disability living in Dallas County, and many of them are willing and able to work but are limited by the number of businesses that do not have power doors. He recently held a town hall meeting to spread the message.

"I like to spread awareness and spread my movement that the handicap button will help them, make them aware, and to educate them. There are a lot of business owners who are not aware and don't educate themselves," Fisher said.

No need to worry. Fisher will do the educating and encouraging. He is happy to do so — with a smile on his face.

"I see all the people struggle in their wheelchairs that cannot go into a building. They are trying to open that door. It's too heavy for them. They need a handicap button," Fisher said. "It's important to me because, if they're not able to open the door by themselves, there's no doubt about it, you have to put a handicap button there."

WHO 13 News Director Rod Petersen, who joined in the interview, likened Fisher's pursuit of greater accessibility to that of former Iowa U.S. Senator Tom Harkin, who was instrumental in the Americans with Disabilities Act, one that requires all buildings that serve the public to be handicapped accessible.

"I never give up," Fisher said. "I'm a very persistent man."

Fisher encourages people to send messages to these businesses that should get up to date with accessibility. The business reputations can improve with these changes and can even take advantage of tax credits for installing the power-assisted doors.

All the while, Fisher has been gathering signatures for his petition to change the Adel city code to require businesses to meet these requirements.

Fisher's motto is short and simple: "Making the world a better place for handicapped people." He says he just wants to make people's lives in wheelchairs a little bit easier. So far, he has hit on both of those mottos, so much so that Adel's city leaders are planning to give him a key to the city.

"My advocacy has only just begun. I am continuing to push open doors, both literally and figuratively," Fisher said. ■

TWO FLAVORS, TWO ROOTS UNDER ONE ROOF



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DES MOINES FORGOTTEN

BY KRISTIAN DAY

Nudity, sex and controversial politics

'I Am Curious (Yellow)' attracted large, but anonymous, crowds in Des Moines in 1967.

The past 12 months were wild ones, and this didn't fully sink in until a reader approached me at the dungeon synth show I promoted at the Locals bar here in Des Moines. He was a former Des Moines Register reporter and shared with me that he attended Mini-X theater in the late 1960s and early 1970s. What amazed me was how many other people had sent me emails and messages about their visit to the same place. Besides attending the Mini-X, many shared one other similar detail: They all seemingly saw the Swedish erotic and political film, "I Am Curious (Yellow)," directed by Vilgot Sjöman, at the Eastown on Grand Avenue. This movie shares much of the same social unrest that many Americans feel today.

"I Am Curious (Yellow)" is about a 20-year-old woman named Lena who collects information on everyone and everything, storing all that she finds into an archive. She indulges and experiments with relationships, political activism and meditation. But, there is also a strange meta moment. The actors, director and crew are shown in a humorous parallel plot about the making of the film and their reactions to the story and each other. The movie is filled with nudity, sex and controversial politics, which had the film seized at customs, forcing the distributor to file an appeal. During one screening here in Des Moines, the projectionist reportedly pulled out a handkerchief and covered the screen during the raciest parts. Since it was screened as an adult movie, one has to wonder if it was the sex or the political activism that was covered up? I mean, no one wants a mood killer.

By any of today's standards, this film is simply a hard "R." Two years after the release of "I Am Curious (Yellow)," a different version of the movie was released called "I Am Curious (Blue)." It takes place before and after "Yellow," but it also has the same scenes that played out differently, almost like an alternative reality. "Yellow" deals heavily with society and politics while Blue turns the camera toward intimacy and self-examination. It also focuses more on the director versus Lena.

The reader I met at Locals explained that he attended the screening on a cold night, not unlike the ones after the big snowfall we had in early December. He said they were tripping and stumbling over hills of dirty snow that had been plowed off the streets. Ice layered the roads, and the cold air flowed through their lungs, ever so gently. The theater was filled.

"People flocked, but they were wearing ball caps and sunglasses at night to keep themselves anonymous," he shared.

This also came after the Des Moines Tribune ran a story on Oct. 29, 1969, about the censorship board criticizing the release of the film.

"'Curious' contained outrageous" sexual scenes. "If that doesn't run against community standards, I don't know what we're here for," Rosalyn Shecter, head of one of the film censorship boards, said. "The distributors refused to make the cuts. We timed the sex scenes in 'Curious,' and the actual sex scenes came to 40 minutes."

Even before this, I had married couples now in their 80s tell me they saw the film during its Des Moines run and tell me, "We weren't always old you know." Obscenity be damned, the film had its run and played for several months in our city. It won its appeal after the seizure that opened the floodgates to what "art films" could contain.

Why am I writing about this film? The other commentary I frequently about is the cycle of stress our citizens tend to go through. Civil unrest, gnarly politics



Vilgot Sjoman's complete and uncut *I Am Curious (Yellow)* is a 'remarkable film (which) has been playing for a long time to droves of Swedes, and to several million people almost everywhere, it is the story of a young girl who is, or was, curious about politics, nonviolence, Zen, commitment, socialism, other Swedes and, to be sure, sex. It is a serious film with a noble theme, and, in dramatic terms, it is original,' says Look magazine. The Evergreen Film presented by Grove Press stars Lena Nyman. A Sandrews Production. ADMISSION RESTRICTED TO ADULTS 18 AND OVER.

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and artists expressing themselves are not always geared toward the nuclear family. This past year was a rough one for some, but let us never forget that stress leads to change. ■

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



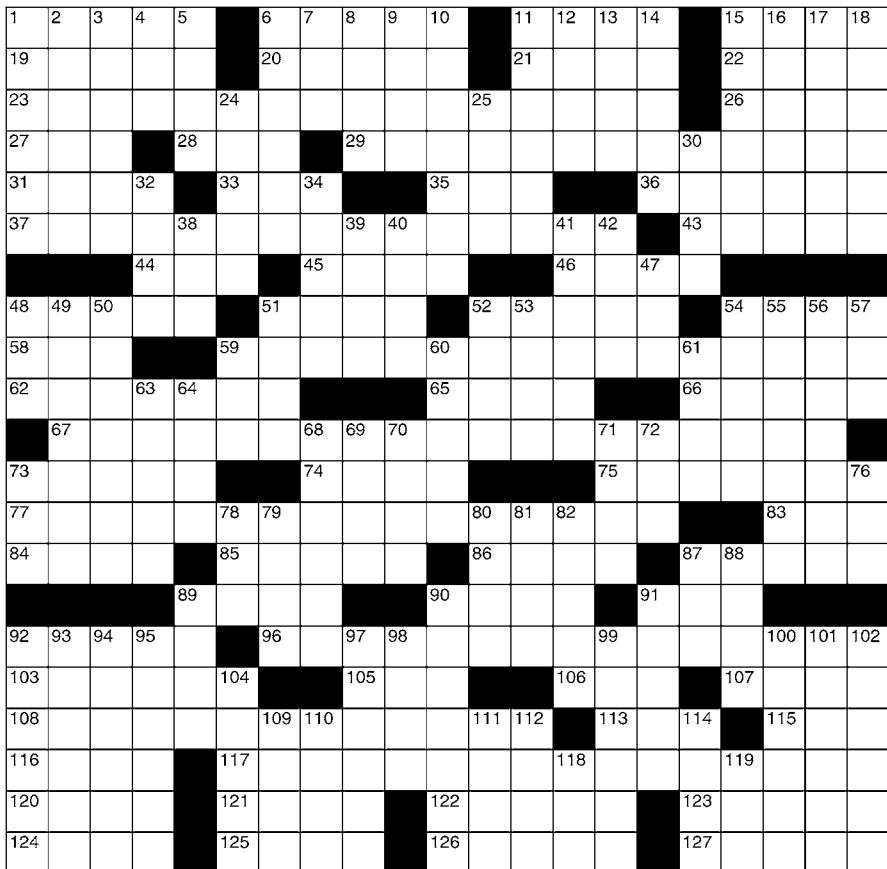
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SIX-E-SOMETHINGS



FUN & GAMES

ACROSS

- 1 Audibly
- 6 Mission --, California
- 11 Spill the beans
- 15 Golf coups
- 19 Perceive
- 20 -- Good Feelings
- 21 Many a "Hee Haw" character
- 22 Boxing event
- 23 Involuntary leg reactions
- 26 Stimulate
- 27 -- yung (Chinese dish)
- 28 Rocket downer, for short
- 29 Relative of a tank top
- 31 "O Fortuna" composer
- 32 Carl
- 33 Some arm muscles, informally
- 35 No. on a road sign
- 36 "And that's that"
- 37 Note that recommends a job applicant, e.g.
- 43 Wood-dressing tools
- 44 Pigsty stuff
- 45 In the thick of
- 46 Dark, gloomy rock genre
- 48 Fast, sporty auto
- 51 "My treat"
- 52 Greek "S"
- 54 Face cover
- 58 WWW address
- 59 Longer-than-normal prison term
- 62 Cat breed
- 65 Region
- 66 Long-unshaven
- 67 What "have solved" is in, in terms of grammar
- 73 Ad awards
- 74 Utilize a Juul device, e.g.

75 Aided in evil

77 In bed

83 Yoko of the avant-garde

84 Utters

85 Stimulate

86 "Dame" Everage

87 Cleric's home

89 Oregano, e.g.

90 Telly watcher

91 "Help us!"

92 Cat food brand

96 Innermost parts

103 Cuba's largest city

105 "Norma--"

106 Get it wrong

107 Cel figure

108 Fir or spruce

113 -- Lingus

115 Cato's 1,101

116 Monopoly expense

117 2020 drama thriller film

120 El --, Texas

121 "Why should -- you?"

122 Concur

123 Carried, as a load

124 Loads

125 Stitches up

126 Lunchtimes, often

127 Pack-toting equines

DOWN

- 1 Solicit
- 2 "The Raven" maiden
- 3 Done just a single time
- 4 Purpose
- 5 "It's -- vu all over again"
- 6 Pests like rats and roaches
- 7 Rile
- 8 Lobed body parts
- 9 "Piano Man" singer Billy

75 Aided in evil

77 In bed

83 Yoko of the avant-garde

84 Utters

85 Stimulate

86 "Dame" Everage

87 Cleric's home

89 Oregano, e.g.

90 Telly watcher

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103 Cuba's largest city

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116 Monopoly expense

117 2020 drama thriller film

120 El --, Texas

121 "Why should -- you?"

122 Concur

123 Carried, as a load

124 Loads

125 Stitches up

126 Lunchtimes, often

127 Pack-toting equines

DOWN

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!



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ALWESE
Sneak
Consume
Respond
Foreign

BEADO
Taste
Answer
Believe
Intrigue

SEWNAR
Sew
Nar
Nar
Nar

INLAE
In
Lae
Lae
Lae

TODAY'S WORD

"With this diet you can eat all you want — just don't _____ it!"

SUDOKU

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

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.

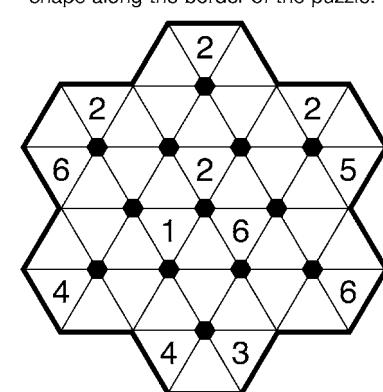
DIFFICULTY: ♦♦♦

♦ 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.

	+	5	+		= 20
+		+		-	
	-		-		= 1
-		+		÷	
	+		÷		= 7
=		=		=	
14		15		5	

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

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WHAT THE...

Think you're funny?

Send us your best caption...

Email to celeste@dmcityview.com — **BE SURE TO INCLUDE YOUR NAME**

Next month's photo:



IMAGE BY DORIS PECKA FROM PIXABAY

This month's winner

"Please, ladies —
there is enough of
me to go around."

- Bryan Moon



PHOTO BY OLEKSANDR PIDVALNYI FROM PIXABAY

Runners-up

"Relax! I need the shades for Rudolph's red glare. I'll take them off for our picture." - John Flater

"After consuming the milk and cookies left out at Snoop's house on Christmas night, Santa had a hard time finding his sleigh." - David Jon

"Officer, no, it's not what you think!" - S.A. Allen

"Bad Santa never leaves fingerprints." - Debra Lane

"Hold up. It's Christmas Time." - Joe Powers

"New on Netflix : 'John Belushi Jr. stars in Shutter Shady Santa – The Christmas Criminal!'" - Mary Wedewer

Send your "What The...?" caption and image entries to celeste@dmcityview.com.

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CARS IN THE CITY

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



Toyota Corolla Cross

The smallest in Toyota's SUV lineup provides reliability, economy and resale value.

BY JACKIE WILSON

Toyota has been consistently recognized as the most reliable brand for nearly a half a century, appearing in nearly every "best of" list, citing reliability, safety, economy and resale value.

Take, for example, the Toyota Corolla. The small sedan debuted in 1966 in Japan and made its way to the U.S. in 1968. By the mid-1970s, the Corolla was the best-selling car in the world.

The Corolla is still around and still breaking sales numbers. The Corolla is now offered in an SUV called the Corolla Cross. The Corolla Cross launched in 2022 with the first refresh for the 2026 model, which is this month's Cars in the City review.

The Corolla Cross is the smallest in Toyota's SUV lineup of nine, and the XLE model we drove was \$36,098. It is similar to the popular RAV4 but is a bit smaller and costs about \$5,000 less. The Cross is also available in a hybrid model, which bumps up about \$5,000. No base-priced, stripped-down models were available.

The Corolla, in "soul red crystal" color, stood out in the white snow. It was toasty after the salesperson warmed it up on a 20-degree day. The first thing I noted was the heated, leather-trimmed steering wheel, a

perfect selling point for that day.

Heated seat warmers and dual climate controls ensure each person remains in comfort. They are an extra cost, sure, but on an Iowa winter's day, they are worth it.

The entertainment options appeared on the 10.5-inch touchscreen. Crank it, is my motto, and if it has a tin-like sound, you definitely want an upgrade. So, an extra \$1,000 for a booming JBL 9-speaker stereo with subwoofer and amplifier is well worth the thumping bass — especially when driving across Nebraska.

Another dealer-installed item on the Corolla is a door edge guard. This handy durable piece is made of either rubber or vinyl and is applied to the door's edge. It protects the car from chips, scratches and dings, when opening the door into other objects, especially in close-quarter garages. Inevitably, when I open my car door, I tend to knock down my garden tools that are mounted on the wall. So, paying a couple hundred bucks might be worth it for one less scratch.

The back seat holds two adults comfortably, if not a bit snug. Even if you are an occasional passenger, it is still better than traveling in an airplane. These seats are like flying in coach, and you can carry more than 3.4



ounces of liquid anytime you want.

If you're considering purchasing a new car, Toyota's reliability, economy, safety and resale value are four great reasons to consider the Corolla Cross. And, most likely, you will be glad you paid for all those extras. ■

Johnston finds passion in stained glass creations

The IT retiree wanted to do something to engage the other side of his brain.



The most well-known examples of stained glass are found in churches that draw eyes inside and outside of the building. As it turns out, it is easier than one might think to make stained glass creations, as David Johnston found out in his retirement.

Johnston says it's as easy as taking a class. He had signed up for one at the Des Moines Art Center, but it was cancelled due to the pandemic. He then opted for an online class, and he has been making his own stained glass art ever since.

"We explore our artistic sides when we're idle," Johnston said on starting his hobby during the pandemic. During a time when many people began exploring various hobbies, his just happened to be stained glass.

"Everybody was doing something, and because I was in IT, and that's a right-brain function, I was looking forward to doing something different, using the other side of my brain. As I started cutting and playing around more, it just took me, reeled me in more and more. And, I really enjoyed all the different things you can do," he said.

Johnston is partially inspired by his mother, who was also an artist.

"You'll see a lot of other people's works in my inspiration. My mom was an artist, so I enjoyed watching her paint as a child," he said.

For Johnston, inspiration not only comes from other stained glass artists but architects as well. He pointed to a creation of his that was of a wheat field.



"Frank Lloyd Wright has some very detailed work. This is the first piece I've done that had a lot of skinny, vertical pieces, which a lot of his works have. So, I'll look at somebody else's work, and that'll inspire me to try it on my own," Johnston said.

Vincent Van Gogh's "Starry Night" is on his list of famous works he would like to recreate.

"I really like his techniques, the colors and flow," Johnston said.

The pieces take more thinking than simply what colors or patterns he believes will look good. He says they also need to be structurally sound without hurting the overall look.

"It's copper foil around glass, and then you solder it. It needs to be hiding in plain sight, right? It needs to be something that has a creative element but offers support, like these wires right here (gesturing to one of his creations). That's totally holding that together," Johnston said.

He says you can get stained glass to use in these art pieces at Hobby Lobby, which is cheap and easily accessible but not the best quality. He goes through other suppliers including Indianola Stained Glass, a place he says has high-quality glass.

Johnston uses a handheld glass cutter for his work. If the edges come out rough, he uses a grinder to smooth them out. He said — while knocking on wood — that he has not had any catastrophic failures while cutting glass or putting together a piece.

"You learn to listen to the glass and to talk to the

glass, and you learn what you can get away with and what you shouldn't get away with. Sometimes, I'll take chances on a curve. Curved pieces are hard to do, but if you take your time and think about it, then it's doable," Johnston said.

Recently, Johnston had his artwork featured at the Waukee Library. It led to his first sale since he started the hobby years ago.

"I noticed that there's an art room, and people were showing their stuff. So, I reached out to them. I had to wait in line, but it was pretty exciting to get it set up," Johnston said.

His daughter convinced him to reach out to the library.

"I probably wouldn't have even thought about doing this. She said, 'Dad, you need to do this.' She helped me set that up. It was exciting. I sold one piece, which is more than I thought I would sell, but I think, for me, it was more about the process of showing it more than 'I'm going to get a lot of accolades,' or anything like that. It was a good exercise because I would like to have a booth in the show next year, maybe the Waukee art show," Johnston said.

Above all else, working on stained glass is just something Johnston enjoys spending his time on.

"It's less about showing and selling as it is my enjoyment of making them. If I can make something that somebody likes, that's awesome, I really would like that, but it's meditative. It's just relaxing. The process of creating is rewarding," Johnston said. ■

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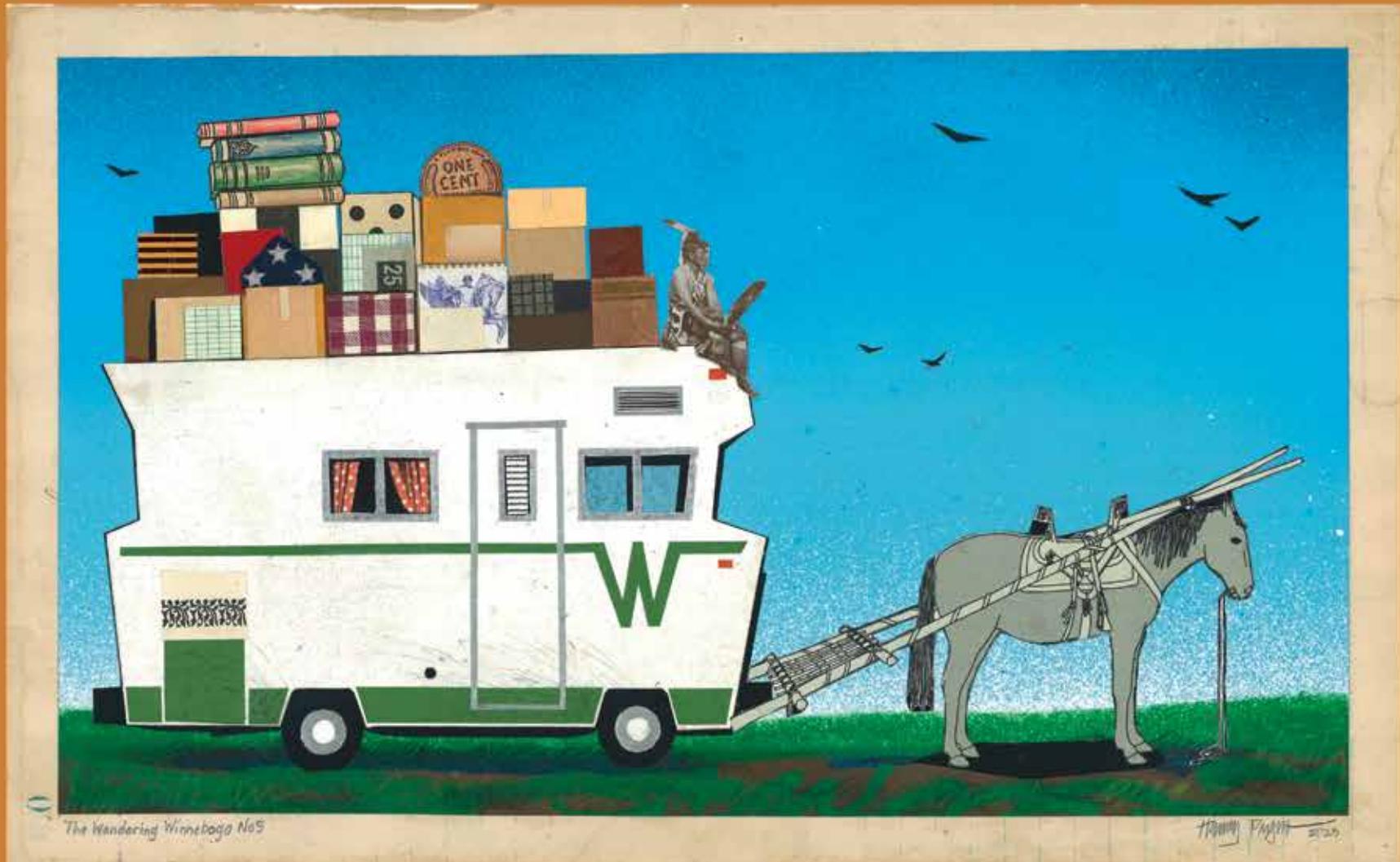


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