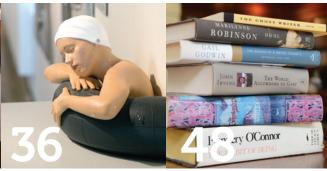


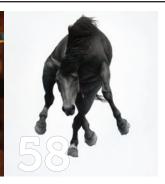
# ROADS LESS TRAVELED lowa is fortunate to have two great interstate highways bisecting the state, east/west and north/south, with another tracing its western edge. Safe, fast and comfortable, they're a boon to business as well as to travel. Interstates divide the state, but they fail to reveal it. If you want to discover lowa's unexpected wonders, don't rely on "next exit" signs whizzing past. Take a drive on a state highway; head down any random county blacktop. Roll the windows down and experience lowa more deeply, serendipitously ... deliciously. You'll come back amazed by your finds, with a fresh pride in our state and its people, astonished that nobody told you all that was "out there." You'll learn of some examples in this magazine. Let us know what else you discover. CONNIE WIMER CHAIRMAN, BUSINESS PUBLICATIONS CORP. INC.

NCIL BLU

# CHAPTER 1 ARTS AND CULTURE







#### AROUND IOWA

Focus on 947 towns, then ponder lowa's new ice age. Consider barns tucked under quilts and how to speak lowan. Mourn anew for brothers lost to the Civil War, and celebrate lowa's role in the movies. And, of course, discover and do even more.

#### THE ART OF SHARING

Clarinda natives transformed the local Carnegie library into a museum to showcase their eclectic collection of worldclass contemporary art.

#### THE INSIDE STORY

The Iowa Writers' Workshop has nurtured literary giants. Slip into the hallowed halls with us as we reveal its inner plot twists.

#### EXPLORING DARK CORNERS IN A SUNNY ARTIST'S STUDIO

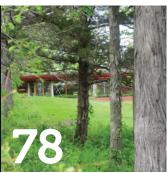
Tumbling horses and White House postcards are just two facets of a complex artist, a gifted photo-realist wrestling with the subjects of sex and death.

CHAPTER 2 HOME AND GARDEN



### WORTH THE WAIT

A Humboldt gardener's cacti bloom briefly and brilliantly only once each year.



#### SO WRIGHT

An architectural legend leaves a legacy in simple forms—a house called Cedar Rock, which still amazes visitors today.



#### **CUSTOM MADE**

Iowa artisans draw on diverse influences—from Chicago subways to African sculpture—to create fine furniture that's artistic as well as practical.





#### **CRAFTY BUSINESS**

At Cobble Hill restaurant in Cedar Rapids, diners savor one-of-a-kind dishes that combine flavors in creative and bold ways.

HUMBOLDI HUXLEY **IMOGENE** IOWA CITY **KEOKUK** MALVERN MINEOLA ORANGE CITY OSAGE QUASQUETON SAC CITY ENANDOAH LVER CITY NC OLESBORO WATERLOO

# CHAPTER 3 FLAVORS continued

### CHAPTER 4 DESTINATIONS



#### **BON ENTREPRENEUR**

lowans are forming boutique companies to market an array of specialty food products.

#### PEACE ON THE PRAIRIE

Drawn by the appeal of ecology, holistic health and spirituality, pilgrims trek to a prairie retreat seeking relaxation and rejuvenation.

# AN IOWAN'S SUPREME COURT

With trappings of the All England Club, a Wimbledon of the West grows on a farm near Charles City.

#### WEEKEND ON THE WABASH

Delights and discoveries along a western lowa trail keep bicyclists on track.

# CHAPTER 5 ADVANCES

# 50 162 172

#### SOUND CHOICES

Great live music involves more than speakers and a spotlight. Come along to three venues where acoustics and ambiance complement the talent.

# CAREER PATHS BLOOM ATOP WELL-ROOTED STEM

lowa is a national leader in mentoring girls to consider fields in science, technology, engineering and math.

# PROTECTING THE MONARCHY

lowans are all aflutter in their determination to save the monarch butterfly.

#### CHAPTER 6 WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE



#### **FARMHER**

When a TV tribute to
America's farmers focused
only on men, an lowa
photographer set out to
correct the record and
increase awareness of
female farmers.





Since its start 30 years ago, lottery proceeds have been just the ticket for lowa. More than \$1.6 Billion has been raised for state programs that benefit all lowans. When you play the lottery, lowa wins!

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Facing winter, many lowans hope to just hang on. For ice-climbers, winter is a series of uphill battles. With tools, skills, determination and apparent disregard for personal comfort, these intrepid souls relish the satisfaction that awaits at the sunny summit. Photo by Brad Lane.



#### **NEW ICE AGE**

By Brad Lane

Grain silos aren't an uncommon sight in Iowa, but just 5 miles northwest of the University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls, one silo stands above the rest. That's because every winter the silo is transformed into a cascading wall of ice, thanks to Don Briggs, an associate professor at UNI.

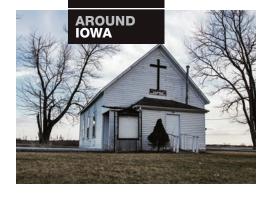
Once the temperature consistently drops below 26 degrees, Briggs and his team of passionate volunteers spray the side of the silo with water, which freezes to create a thick layer of ice. And like the geese flying south in the winter, legions of outdoor enthusiasts flock to the silo from every area of the country to climb their way to the top.

"It was a brainstorm I had in 1999," Briggs says about the beginning of silo ice climbing. "I was helping a buddy on his farm and I kept looking at his silos and wondering how I could rock-climb them. This was in the fall when it was starting to get cold, so I began thinking I could spray water to ice-climb."

Open to all skill levels and anyone over age 10, a visit to the ice silo wall includes all the gear you need, trained staff to belay, and access to the warming hut for complimentary hot drinks and comfortable couches. Daily rates are \$35, while season passes are \$150.

"We're a small group of people that can't wait for cold weather," says Briggs, who teaches "Principles of Outdoor Recreation" at UNI and has literally written the book on silo ice climbing. "It's a lot of work and we do it selfishly so about four or five of us can climb, but it's a labor of love and we enjoy sharing it with everyone."

For more information check out icesiloclimbing.com. Copies of Briggs' book, "Silo Ice Climbing," are sold at the facility for \$15.







































#### ONE CAMERA, 947 TOWNS

By Belle Du Chene

On any given day, photographer Cody Weber finds himself lost, driving down a dirt road in search of a town few have heard of and even fewer have visited. His mission? To photograph all 947 towns in lowa—even those that are sparsely populated and largely forgotten.

The 27-year old Keokuk native began his photo project, called "Forgotten Iowa," after developing a self-described mild obsession with genealogy. He discovered that for more than 150 years, his family has remained in the same 30-mile pocket of land from Keokuk to Hamilton, III., and Kahoka, Mo., where his great-great-great-grandfather built some of the buildings that are still standing.

Seeing his family name embossed in the brick of a building's foundation sparked his curiosity. "I thought to myself, 'How many more interesting things are there in lowa that I would have never seen, simply because I never had a reason to go there?' " he says.

And so it was that Weber began driving to all corners of lowa last February, his 27-year-old girlfriend, Kat Kanan of Troy, Mich., acting as his copilot during road trip after road trip. Without her, he says, the project would not be possible because he would "still be lost somewhere in southeast lowa." As of press time, they had visited 141 towns and had stashed away some 30,000 photos to document their journey.

A self-taught photographer, Weber started taking photos at age 15 and has kept his camera close by every day since, taking every opportunity to learn more about his craft. "Portrait photography is how I make my living," he says. "But one day I realized I lacked structural and landscape skills, so I set out to work on building them. I had no idea this sort of photography would become my passion."

Over the last several months, word of his "Forgotten lowa" project has spread via social media and through traditional media. "It's a strange experience," he says, "to have been found online and mentioned once, then



having all of this happen so quickly."

Weber hopes to have photographed as many as 400 towns by the start of winter and has no anticipated completion date. He would like to take the project in a new direction by eventually incorporating video footage in the mix. To see his work, visit forgotteniowa.com.

Keokuk photographer Cody Weber (above, right) relies on maps, megabytes and a cooperative copilot in his quest to snare images from every remnant of a town in lowa, including the photos at left.





# SCENTS AND SENSIBILITIES

By Sophia S. Ahmad

In unassuming Osage, Milkhouse Candle Creamery is producing natural soy wax candles that illuminate homes around the world.

Founded in 2002 by husband and wife team Eric and Janet Sparrow, Milkhouse produces the candles in a 15,000-square-foot facility and sells them in about 2,000 stores worldwide. The company also has a 130,000-square-foot plant in New Hampton, believed to be the largest soy candle manufacturing facility in the United States.

The Sparrows enjoy burning candles at home, and in 2000 they decided it might be fun to make their own. After selling their products at cost to colleagues and friends, they refined their formula and began attracting a

devoted customer base. They launched their company in 2002. Eric left his teaching job one year later, and Janet quit her job as an occupational therapist in August 2014 to work for Milkhouse

The company embraces a sustainable and natural focus. Products are free of artificial colors and contain lead-free wicks. The wax, made from lowa soybeans and beeswax, is paraffinfree. Candles come in some 50 varieties, and their aromas are created with phathalate-free ingredients. Glassware is made from 40 percent recyclable.

The candles exude an inviting, rustic Midwestern sentiment. The Culinary line features candles with

fragrances like Cranberry Amaretto (one of Milkhouse's first scents) in American made earthenware crocks that are intended to be used for baking after the candle is burned. Candles poured into milk bottles and cream and butter jars round out the best-selling Creamery Collection, which includes scents like the woodsy Cabin Fever and the tart

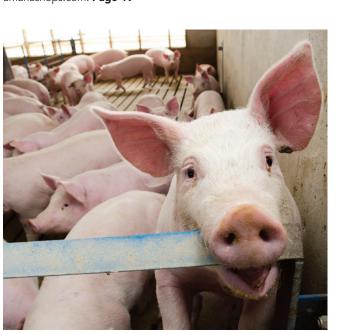
One of the Sparrows' favorite scents is Sticky Buns. It creates a feeling of comfort, Eric says: "The ambiance of the flame and the fragrance of the candle evoke an image of families baking together. It's totally Norman Rockwell."





#### **AMANA**

Amana has stood strong for 160 years, crafting timeless and durable goods. This fall we're revitalizing Amana Made. Discover a more modern side of Amana with new products and designs at amanashops.com. **Page 19** 



#### **IOWA PORK**

The Iowa Pork Producers Association is an industry-inclusive organization whose mission is to provide a unified voice to promote and educate for a sustainable, socially responsible, profitable and globally competitive pork industry. **Page 23** 



#### **IOWA BEEF**

The Iowa Beef Industry Council works on behalf of Iowa's cattle farmers through the Beef Checkoff Program within the areas of education, promotion, and research. Visit iabeef.org for beef cooking tips and recipes. **Page 23** 



#### AGRI-INDUSTRIAL PLASTICS COMPANY

Founded in 1978, Agri-Industrial Plastics Co. is a leading industrial blow molder of large scale industrial parts including non-automotive fuel tanks for the turf equipment, power sports, agricultural, and marine industries. **Page 65** 









#### **NOTEWORTHY**

By Belle Du Chene

When Lisa Orgler isn't teaching landscape design courses in the horticulture department at lowa State University, she focuses on illustrating cheerful graphic note cards (pictured) that focus on lowa's state symbols, such as the geode and the goldfinch.

Her initial goal was to draw a different kind of food every day for a year. But the project evolved to include drawings of gardens and the symbols.

"I love doing illustrations that teach somebody about something," Orgler says about her work combining art, nature and education. "My next goal is to show people how lowa's prairie plants can be whimsical too." Orgler, who lives in Huxley, holds both bachelor's and master's degrees in landscape architecture from ISU and is a registered landscape architect.

The note cards, which cost \$15.50 for a pack of four, are available at the Charles H. MacNider Museum in Mason City, Domestica in Des Moines, RSVP in Iowa City and the Octagon Center for the Arts in Ames. You also can purchase them at lisaorgler.com.



REVITALIZING AMANA'S HERITAGE DISCOVER WHAT'S CHANGING AT AMANASHOPS.COM

#### **BLOCK PARTY**

By Larry Erickson

Think about barns and color, and what do you get? You have your white ones, your red ones and ... no, that's about it. A genuine movement is changing that, bringing splashes of color with artistic flair to farmyards across the state.

Commerce tried to do that before, early in the 20th century when advertisers, notably Mail Pouch Tobacco, saw barns as billboards. In days long before interstates and the Internet, travelers along country byways would see broad barn walls bearing vivid encouragement to "Chew Mail Pouch Tobacco."

But today, travelers through rural lowa will see an entirely different kind of work on the sides of barns—distinctive quilt patterns painted on 8-foot panels.

The phenomenon of wooden "barn quilts" started in Ohio and spread westward faster than the emerald ash borer. Quilts have now been reported in some 45 states. The trend hit northwest lowa's Sac County in 2005, when a committee was formed to encourage the spread. 4-H groups jumped on the project, and the expanse of barn-side artwork races happily on.

Unadorned barns are getting harder to find, as more and more sport the quilt-inspired finery. Sac County has brochures to lead barn-bent tourists from one colorful image to another. There's even a virtual tour at barnquilts.com.

The surge of quiltomania led community leaders in Sac County to bring the fun in from the farms. Many civic buildings in the county, from museums to churches, now have nearby 4-by-4-foot "community quilt" boards,

most often displayed on posts like road signs rather than affixed to building walls. Then there are the dozens of in-town homes that have joined the effort. In total, Sac County has about 200 quilts adorning properties of every stripe ... or other pattern.

"Seems like every week we see a new one spring up somewhere," says Harold Payton, who has been active on Sac County's barn quilt committee. Today, the committee is more focused on maintaining quilts than adding to the numbers, he says: "We had to slow down or we'd be putting up barn quilts the rest of our lives."

Sac County isn't alone in its pastoral passion for barn quilts. In fact, search the terms "barn quilts" and "lowa" in your favorite Web browser, and you'll find sites devoted to barn quilts in Black Hawk County, Grundy County, Hamilton County, Sac County, Washington County and more. Find links to barn quilt maps in states from coast to coast at barnquiltinfo.com.

In Dallas County, John Thomas became a barn-quilt convert in 2014. "I had my granddaughter come up with the idea and paint it," he says. They've now created two quilts, flanking the door to the Thomas barn near Dallas Center. One is classic Americana, red white and blue. The other is brilliant green and yellow, a scheme reflecting Thomas' fondness for John Deere farm equipment.

"A lot of people see these and want one," Thomas says with a chuckle. Another barn quilt showed up down the road last year. And the cheery contagion continues to spread.

Grand barns, fading barns, sagging barns and leaning barns all stand a bit taller with a cheery and colorful painted quilt.































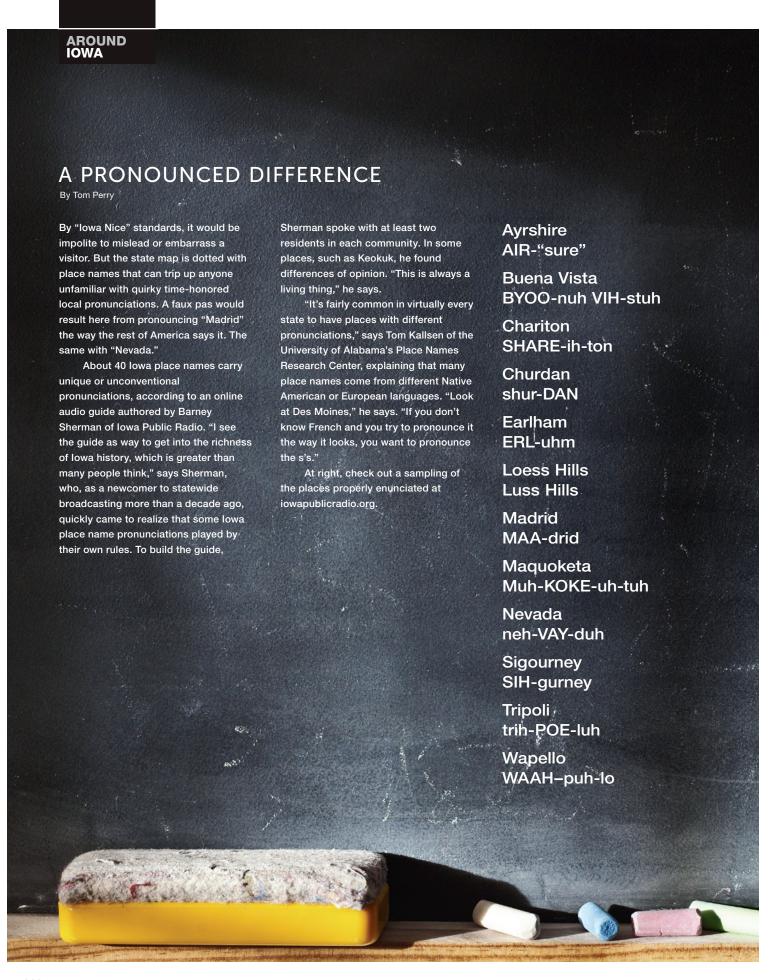














#### HONEY AND SPICE SAUTEED **PORK HAND TACOS**



PREP TIME

MINUTES

COOK TIME

**MINUTES** 

SERVES 4 PEOPLE

соок то

REST FOR

145° F

3 MIN

#### **INGREDIENTS**

1 POUND BONELESS PORK CHOPS, CUT THINLY (1/2") **INTO STRIPES** 

1 TABLESPOON HONEY

1 TABLESPOON OLIVE OIL

1 TEASPOON LEMON JUICE

1 TEASPOON SOY SAUCE

1/2 TEASPOON GROUND CHIPOTLE PEPPER, (SUBSTITUTE PAPRIKA)

8 SMALL CORN TORTILLAS, WARMED

1 CUP ROMAINE LETTUCE, SHREDDED

1 CUP PICO DE GALLO, \* SOUR CREAM TO TASTE

#### DIRECTIONS

In a medium sized bowl combine the honey, olive oil, lemon juice, soy sauce and ground chipotle pepper and whisk to combine. Add the sliced pork to the marinade and let it sit for 15 minutes. Heat a skillet over high heat. Add the slices of pork to the skillet and cook for 1-2 minutes on each side, flipping with tongs in the middle of the cooking process. Once cooked, remove the pork to a plate and reserve.

Arrange 8 corn tortillas on a platter. Sprinkle each with equal amounts of shredded lettuce and pico de gallo. Arrange a few pieces of pork on top of each taco, and top with sour cream or crema if desired

For more pork inspiration, visit www.iowapork.org.

#### GRILLED STEAK AND FRESH MOZZARELLA FLATBREAD



PREP TIME MINUTES **COOK TIME** 

**MINUTES** 

SERVES 4 PEOPLE

соок то

**REST FOR** 

145° F

3 MIN

#### **INGREDIENTS**

1 TO 1-1/4 POUNDS BEEF TOP SIRLOIN STEAK, CUT 1 INCH THICK

1-1/2 TEASPOONS LEMON **PEPPER** 

2 CUPS PACKED FRESH BABY SPINACH

1/4 POUND FRESH MOZZARELLA CHEESE, CUT INTO 1/2 INCH PIECES (3/4

2 TABLESPOONS CHOPPED FRESH BASIL

1-1/2 TEASPOONS BALSAMIC **VINEGAR** 

4 NAAN BREADS (INDIAN FLATBREAD) OR PITA **BREADS** 

#### DIRECTIONS

Press lemon pepper evenly onto steaks. Place steaks on grid over medium, ashcovered coals. Grill, covered, 12 to 17 minutes (over medium heat on preheated gas grill, 12 to 16 minutes) for medium rare (145°F) to medium (160°F) doneness. turning occasionally.

Meanwhile, combine spinach, cheese and basil in large bowl. Drizzle with balsamic vinegar; toss to coat and set aside.

Remove steak from grill and let stand 3 minutes. Place naan on grill; grill, covered, 1 to 3 minutes or until lightly browned, turning once.

Carve steaks into slices. Top naan evenly with spinach mixture and steak slices.

For more beef recipes, visit www.iabeef.org.





#### QUEST: POLITICS WITHOUT LABELS

By Joe Gardyasz

The first words that come to mind when someone mentions Congress or the federal government shouldn't be gridlock, divisiveness and dysfunction.

As the caucus season opens in lowa, there's a nonpartisan effort under way to eliminate the incessant bickering and to get Washington working again. It's called No Labels, and in lowa the movement is gaining an A-list of leaders and supporters, among them state Sen. Jeff Danielson, former state Sen. Maggie Tinsman and former Lt. Gov. Joy Corning.

Launched in 2010 by U.S. Sen. Joe Manchin, a West Virginia Democrat, and former Utah Gov. Jon Huntsman Jr., a Republican, No Labels seeks to move Congress and the federal government beyond the petty partisan bickering and deadlock and begin addressing a common set of national goals that both parties can agree upon. The organization summarizes those goals in its National Strategic Agenda:

- Create 25 million new jobs over the next 10 years.
- Secure Medicare and Social Security for another 75 years.
- Balance the federal budget by 2030.
- Make America energy-secure by 2024.

To date, 60 members of the House of Representatives, including three of Iowa's four representatives, have signed on as co-sponsors of a resolution in support of Congress adopting the National Strategic Agenda, with Republican Steve King the Ione holdout. A Senate resolution is also in the works, and No Labels is working to get support from both of Iowa's senators, says Peggy Huppert, Iowa's executive director of the organization.

With the Iowa caucuses approaching, one of No Labels' key goals is to contact all of the presidential campaigns. Huppert says she has already contacted the majority of the campaigns and has spoken to nine candidates personally about No Labels.

"So far, I haven't had any candidate or campaign say they're not aware of No Labels, so that's encouraging," she says.

When this magazine went to press, No Labels expected to have about 12,000 lowa supporters signed up. The organization is also seeking to expand its leadership corps, which numbers about 60 people. No Labels plans to ask its leaders and supporters to ramp up their efforts in engaging with candidates during campaign events, as well as spreading the word through their social media connections and personal networking efforts.

To find out more and to get involved, visit NoLabels.org or go to No Labels Iowa's Facebook page at facebook.com/nolabelsIA.



Leaders of No Labels in Iowa include Iowa State Sen. Jeff Danielson; Peggy Huppert, the group's state director; and former Lt. Gov. Joy Corning. Photo by Duane Tinkey.



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To learn more about our thriving community, business opportunities and everything Greater Des Moines has to offer, visit **DesMoinesMetro.com**.



#### ART IS IN THE AIR

By Shannon Stump

Des Moines International Airport serves as the first impression of lowa's capital city—and often the entire state—for the some 2 million passengers who pass through the facility every year. Starting this fall, a dramatic new piece of public art will greet those passengers and enhance the airport's aesthetic appeal.

"Birds of a Feather" is a threedimensional aluminum sculpture of a goldfinch, lowa's state bird. Created by Swisher artist Bounnak Thammavong, the work also features a plume cloud that trails behind the bird. Tiny kites hang underneath the cloud. The sculpture—which, as of press time, was scheduled to be installed in late September—will be suspended above the baggage claim area.

The project stemmed from Metro
Arts Alliance, a Des Moines-based
nonprofit organization that seeks to
make the arts accessible to as many
people as possible through educational
programs and community events. Metro
Arts commissioned "Birds of a Feather"
to celebrate its 40th anniversary.

The organization wanted the

installation to be eco-friendly, plus "we wanted it to engage the public, and we wanted it to reflect our state," says Kim Poam Logan, Metro Arts Alliance's executive director.

Thammavong, who specializes in large-scale public installations, delivered a design concept that successfully blended those criteria. He views public art as means for a city to express its personality and values: "Public art is extremely important in communities. It sets a tone for the culture of the community in a real quick visual."

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#### IOWA'S ROLE IN THE MOVIES

By Tom Perry

lowa's connection to movies go back to 1919 when white farmers in the Sioux City area invested in "The Homesteader," believed to be the first feature-length film made with an all-black cast and crew. Since then, Iowa has had plenty of ties to movies large and small. Test your knowledge with the following quiz.

- 1. What real lowa town is home to the namesake fictional character in "Saving Private Ryan?"
- A. Grundy
- B. Paton
- C. Leon
- 2. Who had a starring role in the first movie version of "State Fair?"
- A. Pat Boone
- B. Dana Andrews
- C. Will Rogers
- 3. Which lowa native did Roger Ebert describe in 1993 as "the most talented actor, in his age group?"
- A. Ashton Kutcher
- B. Elijah Wood
- C. Tom Arnold
- 4. Which 1970s movie brought Sylvester Stallone to Dubuque?
- A. "F.I.S.T."
- B. "Rocky"
- C. "Farewell My Lovely"

- 5. Wall Lake native Adam Williams had a role in "North By Northwest," while Charles McGraw, born in Des Moines, appeared in "The Birds." Which of the following Sioux City natives never appeared in an Alfred Hitchcock movie?
- A. Jerry Mathers
- **B. Macdonald Carey**
- C. Frances Rafferty
- 6. Davenport native Lara Flynn Boyle played a role in which movie or movies among the following?
- A. "Men in Black"
- B. "Dead Poets Society"
- C. "Poltergeist"
- 7. In the 1982 movie "Airplane II: The Sequel," Sonny Bono played a passenger on his way to lowa for ...?
- A. A wedding
- B. Political campaigning
- C. Impotency treatments
- 8. Whom did Robert Waller, author of "The Bridges of Madison County," reportedly see playing the role of Francesca?
- A. Isabella Rossellini
- B. Talia Shire
- C. Susan Lucci

#### **ANSWERS**

- B: The character Pvt. James Francis
  Ryan, played by Matt Damon, tells
  Capt. Miller (Tom Hanks) that he is from
  Paton (in Greene County).
- C: Although Dana Andrews starred in the 1945 musical "State Fair" and Pat Boone starred in the 1962 reboot, Will Rogers starred in the 1933 non-musical version based on the novel by Phil Stong, who was born in Pittsburg, Iowa, near Keosauqua.
- B: Ebert praised Elijah Wood for his role in "War," which predated Wood's starring role as Frodo Baggins in "The Lord of the Rings."
- 4. A: "F.I.S.T.," the 1977 film based loosely on the life of union boss Jimmy Hoffa, was shot in Dubuque, which was manipulated to resemble 1930s Cleveland.
- 5. C: Frances Rafferty never appeared in a Hitchcock movie. Mathers, born in 1948 and reared in Rock Rapids, Iowa, played a young boy in Hitchcock's 1955 film, "The Trouble with Harry," before he became Theodore "Beaver" Cleaver. Carey (1913-94) starred in Hitchcock's "Shadow of a Doubt," released in 1943, before playing Dr. Tom Horton on "Days of Our Lives."
- 6. B: Most scenes in which Lara Flynn Boyle appeared were deleted for the final cut of "Dead Poet's Society." Boyle appeared in sequels of "Men In Black" and "Poltergeist," but not the originals.
- C: In the 1982 comedy, the fictional Des Moines Institute treated sexual impotency.
- A: Rossellini, Cher, Susan Sarandon and Anjelica Huston were all reportedly considered. Meryl Streep, director Clint Eastwood's pick, ended up with the role.





# NOW IT'S TIME FOR LEADERS TO LEAD.



# BROTHERS LOST TO CIVIL WAR ALMOST LOST TO HISTORY

By Tom Perry

Memories of six brothers losing their lives in one war might seem poignant enough to last for ages.

Yet, over the past century, the story of Louisa County's Littleton brothers, all Civil War casualties, teetered on the brink of being lost forever.

A combination of factors contributed to the Littletons' enduring obscurity, including the fact that five of the brothers were buried near battlefields or at cemeteries far from lowa (the sixth was buried in lowa, though no one knows where), says the Louisa County Historical Society's Tom Woodruff, who is part of a local effort to raise \$250,000 for a memorial to the brothers. It will be adjacent to the Toolesboro Indian Mounds, near the unincorporated town of Toolesboro.

Interest in what is believed to be the largest wartime loss of life in one immediate family in U.S. history was triggered by a scrapbook of old newspapers a friend gave Woodruff in 2010.

"Why didn't I ever find this?"
Woodruff recalls wondering upon seeing mention of the six brothers, their names misspelled "Lyttleton," in a clipping from the May 2, 1907, edition of the Columbus Gazette. "I thought, 'There's a story waiting to be told here.'

Woodruff, who is in his 80s, spent the better part of two years fact-finding. Brothers Thomas, William, George, John, Kendall and Noah were living on a farm in Toolesboro, according to 1860 census records. The brothers volunteered and served with white Union military units. Their father, James, listed as mixed race, and mother, Martha, listed as white, died before the war, leaving behind their sons and four daughters. From 1862 to 1864, some of the brothers died in battle and some from their injuries and disease.

Today, more than 150 years later, an 11-foot work in granite by Will Thompson of Armadillo Arts in Iowa City is planned to pay tribute to the six brothers, whose sacrifice was nearly forgotten forever.

"This is such a compelling story,"
Thompson says. "My thoughts first went
to the family and how there really
needed to be a fitting way to honor the
memory of these men."



The haze of gunsmoke and time have obscured many details of the Civil War. Today, lowans seek to create a clear and enduring image of six brothers from Louisa County, all casualties for the Union.



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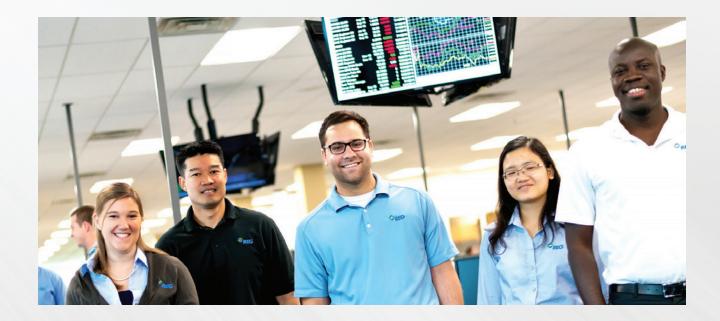


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Renewable Energy Group, Inc. (REG) is a leading North American advanced biofuels and renewable chemicals company; growing from a farmers' cooperative in rural lowa, it now operates 11 active biorefineries in seven states.

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REG draws its success from its integrated value chain model. Through its nationwide logistics and distribution system, the company sold a record 287 million gallons of biomass-based diesel fuel in 2014. Utilizing diverse feedstocks including inedible corn oil, animal fat, used restaurant grease and vegetable oil, REG generated revenue of \$1.27 billion in 2014.

The growth of REG continued in 2015 with an investment in German biodiesel company Petrotec. REG also announced the acquisition of its 11th biorefinery, a 100-million-gallon nameplate capacity refinery in Grays Harbor, WA. This continues to add to the diversified REG portfolio, which included the recent addition of a renewable chemicals division in South San Franciso, CA, and a 75-million gallon renewable diesel biorefinery in Geismar, LA.







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- DANIEL OH. PRESIDENT AND CEO

"It is a fundamental challenge to maintain your corporate culture, market and sell your product and deliver to investors," said Daniel J. Oh, REG President and Chief Executive Officer. "But we have a fully integrated business chain with employees who are experts in every different aspect of our business. Part of that expertise comes from living and working in Iowa itself."

Rooted in Ralston, IA, REG got its start two decades ago while operating under the umbrella of West Central Cooperative. At the time, West Central was looking for ways to add value to its vegetable oil inventory. The answer was biodiesel, an advanced biofuel that reduces greenhouse gas emissions while diversifying the country's energy stream.

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REG spun out of West Central Cooperative in 2006, but continues to operate the original biorefinery built there in 2003.

REG owns and operates two additional biorefineries in Iowa: REG Mason City and REG Newton (right).

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# Growing is an Iowa tradition.

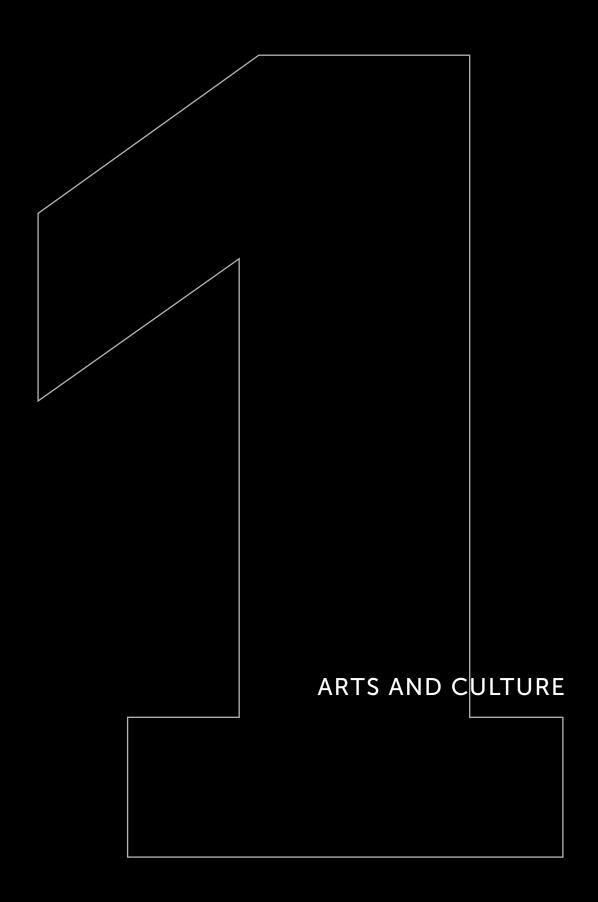
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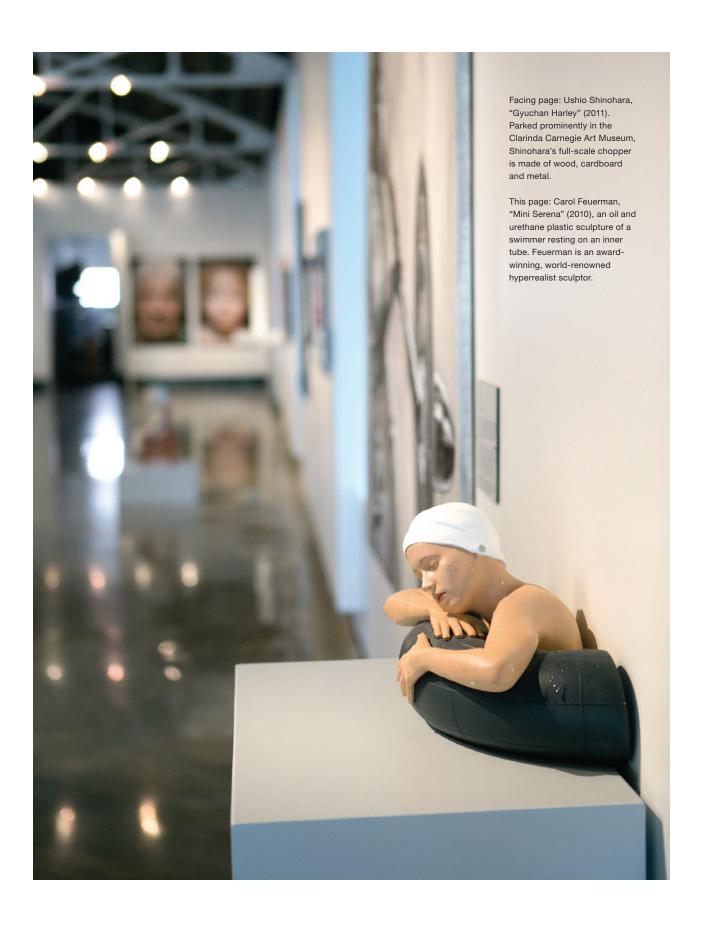






Clarinda natives Robert and Karen Duncan renovated the town's Carnegie library to house—and showcase—their eclectic collection of world-class contemporary art.

WRITTEN BY VICKI INGHAM



teel baron and philanthropist Andrew
Carnegie granted the town of Clarinda
\$15,000 to build a public library in 1907.
For generations it was a beloved fixture
in the community, and when it was put
up for auction in 2012, people were
worried about its fate. That Clarinda
natives Robert and Karen Duncan

stepped in to buy it seemed nothing short of miraculous, considering that they hadn't known it was for sale until the day before. When the Lincoln, Neb., couple proceeded to renovate it and install a portion of their art collection, Clarinda unexpectedly found itself on the map as a destination for connoisseurs of contemporary art, decorative arts, and crafts.

Since the Duncans began collecting in the 1980s, they have amassed what has been described as one of the top 50 private collections in the country. At more than 2,000 objects and growing, the collection is eclectic and international in scope, with works by brand-name artists as well as emerging and lesser-known ones. The Clarinda Carnegie Art Museum, which opened in November 2014, features rotating exhibits drawn from these holdings, with a new themed exhibition installed every six months.

The Duncans hadn't planned on founding a museum.

They had already teamed up with fellow collectors Katherine

and Marc LeBaron to create Assemblage, a private, invitationonly gallery in Lincoln, to enjoy art they didn't have space to display at home. They did, however, need a storage solution for Karen's collection of art books and first editions. Karen thought moving an unused Carnegie library to their 40-acre property would be perfect. By happy chance, she discovered that the Clarinda library was for sale.

She and Robert had grown up in the southwest lowa town, and that library was like her second home. She made some quick phone calls and learned that it would be too heavy to move across the Missouri River, but, she says, "Robert said, 'Let's buy it anyway.' I said, 'What would we do with it?' and he said, 'We'll figure something out.' "

"We love art, we love architecture, we love Clarinda, we love books," Robert says. "This was an opportunity to bring all those things together. And then we got the idea to make it a museum."

"A good museum," Karen adds.

#### LONGTIME COLLECTORS

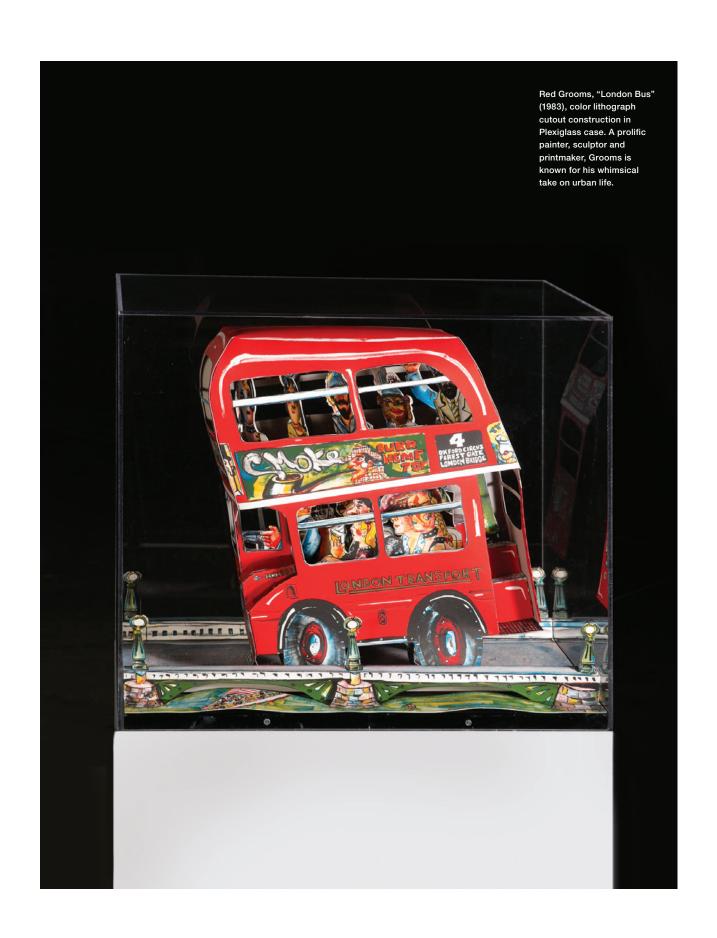
Both Karen and Robert had been collectors since childhood— Karen pursued butterflies, Robert gathered license plates. They bought their first piece of art on a trip to Spain in the 1970s—an impressionistic landscape of olive trees.

In Lincoln, Robert succeeded his father as head of Duncan Aviation and eventually built the firm into the

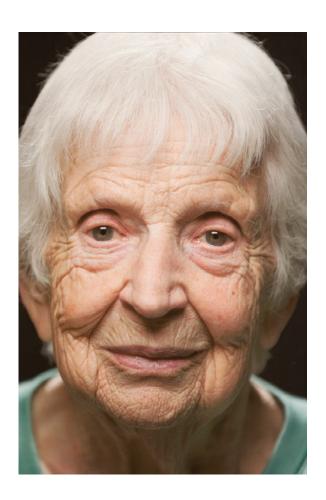
Continues on page 44

# "WE ENJOY SHARING OUR ART. WE FEEL THAT'S PART OF OUR RESPONSIBILITY."

ROBERT DUNCAN









Facing page: Peter Sarkisian, "Book Version 1" (2011), found book, video projection, audio.
This work features a tiny man crawling around a dictionary, making corrections he deems necessary. Sarkisian is a New Mexico-based artist known for his video sculptures.

This page: Roger Bruhn, "Elaine" (2008) and "Maya" (2006), photographs. Bruhn didn't photograph Elaine and Maya with the intention of pairing them, but the two subjects have interesting similarities: Their heads are tilted at the same slight angle, and they both appear as if they're on the verge of smilling.



#### **EXHIBITS**

"Motion: Emotion" runs through late October (as of press time, the closing date hadn't been set). Among the photographs, prints, paintings and sculpture on display are the examples pictured with this story.

The museum's next exhibit will open in mid-November.
Collections featured will include one-of-a-kind chairs by Roy
Lichtenstein, Isamu Noguchi and
David Wegman, as well as a chair-themed bronze sculpture by
George Segal; ceramic shoes by
Claudia Alvarez; ceramic pie
birds; cast iron pieces; model
planes; and contemporary and
Ikebana baskets.

For more information, visit clarindacarnegieartmuseum.com or call 712.850.1175

Clarinda Carnegie Art Museum 300 N. 16th St., Clarinda

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Willie Cole, "Gas Snake (G)" (1992). Cole works with found objects to create thought-provoking sculptures. He is also known for his two-dimensional pieces.





#### CARNEGIE LIBRARIES IN IOWA

Between 1892 and 1917, the Carnegie Corp. of New York handed out nearly \$46 million to help build 1,795 public and academic libraries across the United States and Puerto Rico.

In Iowa, Carnegie provided the money to build 101 public libraries and seven academic libraries, including the Clarinda library (above). Of the public libraries, 49 still serve as libraries, 45 serve other functions and seven no longer exist.

Only one other former Carnegie library is now an art museum (in Cedar Rapids). The libraries in Charles City and Le Mars serve as art centers, where the focus is on classes, community activities and local exhibitions.

Continued from page 38

world's largest privately owned business-aircraft maintenance company. Karen served as president of the board and executive director of the Nebraska Chamber Orchestra. After she joined the board of directors for the Sheldon Art Association in 1983, she became good friends with George Neubert, the then-new director of the Sheldon Museum of Art at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. Through Neubert, Karen and Robert became interested in contemporary art and began immersing themselves in the world of museums, galleries, and international exhibitions and fairs. They credit Neubert with helping them learn, but they are largely self-educated as collectors. Karen reads constantly, and they study auction catalogs, magazines and monographs. And they look at a lot of art.

Although they're partial to sculpture, Robert and Karen collect all media, including video and installation art. "The one thing that runs through their collection," says Anne Pagel, their curator, "is that it focuses on human beings—figures and the things they do, anything from portraits to body parts to human activity. That's what drives the collection."

Karen also collects lkebana and contemporary baskets, pie birds, house shapes, Bakelite and jewelry. Together, Robert and Karen acquire furniture that is meaningful to them—some one-of-a-kind, some limited edition, and some production pieces. "They're interested in a lot of things and have broad interests," Pagel says. "They don't collect for investment. Their motivations are much more personal, more of a sincere response to what they see."

#### **BUILDING RENOVATION**

For the community, the renovation and repurposing of the building were as exciting as the chance to see world-class art. "The stained glass and the pillars out front are what people from the community remembered as children walking up the steps," says museum director Trish Okamoto.

Designed and built by William W. Welch of Clarinda in 1908, the brick, classically inspired building was structurally



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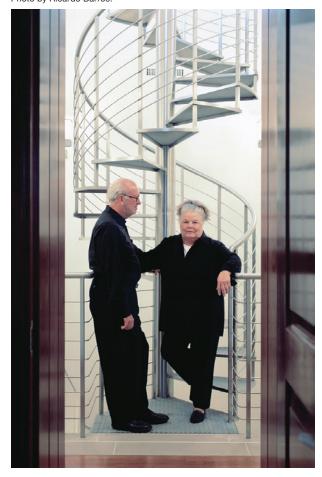
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Robert and Karen Duncan. Photo by Ricardo Barros.



sound, with all the woodwork, windows and doorways still intact. It had served as the town library until 2004, when a larger library was built elsewhere. The boutique and businesses that occupied the building next had made few changes. The Duncans hired the Omaha architectural firm Alley Poyner Machietto to oversee the renovation, which included a new roof, floors, and electrical and plumbing systems. The lower level, once the children's library, now includes a catering kitchen, accessible restrooms, and a

handicapped-accessible back entrance with elevator, as well as display space.

The current show, which will run until late October, is titled "Motion: Emotion" and explores the idea of movement in five categories: human, animal, transportation, time and kinetic art. The next show, expected to open in mid-November, will focus on some of the Duncans' collections of crafts and decorative arts, including Ikebana and contemporary baskets, artist-designed chairs, and Karen's ceramic pie birds.

#### **WORLDLY REACH**

Reaching beyond the community, the museum has attracted visitors from such far-flung locales as Russia, Yugoslavia, Germany and Puerto Rico, as well as cities closer to home, including Kansas City, Omaha and Des Moines. Okamoto estimates that about 40 percent of Page County's residents have never been to an art museum, and the mystified response to some pieces has been predictable. She encourages doubters to leave their preconceptions at the front door and "just take it in. It's about the exploration, that's what art is."

Although the museum is open only two afternoons a week (Wednesdays and Sundays, 1 to 4 p.m.), admission is free, and the remaining weekdays are available for school tours and educational programming. The Duncans are passionate about the power of art to enrich life and they want others to have the same experience. "We enjoy sharing our art," Robert says. "We feel that's part of our responsibility, to share it with others."

"Who knows what could come out of it?" Karen adds. "There could be another Georgia O'Keefe coming out of southwest Iowa."

Robert agrees: The museum "raises awareness of how art interacts with your life, your soul. It may inspire a kid to become a musician, an artist, a designer, even a businessman who appreciates the importance of creativity."

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wo futures lay before Arna Hemenway, and the time had come for him to choose his path.

It was 2011, and Hemenway was a 22-year-old living in rural Kansas with his future wife and a creative writing degree. He wrote fiction but paid the bills with

scattered work—a night shift janitor at an apartment complex, a blogger for jewelry companies, a tutor to international students needing help on college admission essays. Now he was out of money.

One path led to law school—and to stability. The other led to an uncertain future as an aspiring novelist. "Am I going to commit myself to a life of starving-artist poverty, or am I going to be a lawyer?" he remembers thinking.

His heart had long known the path he'd choose— in fourth grade he had decided he wanted to be a writer— and so he applied to a handful of creative writing Master of Fine Arts programs. Like many writers before him, his first choice was the lowa Writers' Workshop at the University of Iowa. And like many writers before him, he didn't expect to get in: The program boasts an acceptance rate lower than Harvard Medical School.

But a week after his honeymoon in the fall of 2011, Hemenway sat in his first fiction workshop class, one of the 3 to 4 percent of workshop applicants who receive good news. Each year lowa admits about 50 students, split evenly between its two-year fiction and poetry programs.

Writers apply to lowa because, well, it is lowa. The university offered the nation's first postgraduate program in creative writing in 1936. Even with a recent explosion in the number of MFA programs in creative writing—from 15 in 1975 to 229 last year, plus nearly 200 more M.A. or Ph.D. programs—lowa has retained its near-mythical status in literary circles.

"If any writing program is going to be successful, it has to be measured by the successes of the writers it has

produced over the years," says David Fenza, executive director of the Association of Writers and Writing Programs and an Iowa Writers' Workshop poetry program graduate himself. "And Iowa has passed that with flying colors."

The program is a hallowed shrine to American literature, with an alumni roll call of students and faculty full of literary giants like Flannery O'Connor, Philip Roth, Jane Smiley, Michael Cunningham and Marilynne Robinson. In the late 1960s, Kurt Vonnegut taught a workshop course at Iowa. Among his pupils were Gail Godwin and John Irving.

The life of a professional writer is not an easy one, and even the most gifted applicant faces long odds of literary success and acclaim. Some earn M.F.A. degrees and go on to teach writing at a high school or college. But would-be writers see the notable authors who emerge from the lowa Writers' Workshop, past and present, and feel driven to follow in their path.

• • •

This pantheon of American writing can be found inside the Dey House, an 1857 Italianate home with a large front porch on the north end of campus, built on a bluff overlooking the lowa River.

In the early days, classes were held in army barracks near the river, and the workshop hopped around campus until settling in at the Dey House in 1997. The building's front half features old wood floors, a cozy front sitting room with couches draped in blankets, and offices with cluttered desks and book-lined shelves. A 2006 addition, gifted in part by a workshop alum, more than doubled the space, adding a library wing in the rear with floor-to-ceiling windows and faculty offices and classrooms.

Inside those classrooms, students gather around tables to discuss and critique their poems and stories. These are the workshops that form the foundation and heart of the program.

Professors have their own quirks, but in general this is how it works: Workshops are at night, and two students are





Workshop director Lan Samantha Chang, an accomplished writer and a graduate of the lowa program, replaced Frank Conroy a decade ago. Photo by Duane Tinkey.

"up" each week. A student who will be up turns in a story or poem a few days in advance, and the class picks up copies from the long row of wooden cubbies in the Dey House basement. Everyone reads the piece and brings a typed letter—usually two single-spaced pages—with comments for the author. Then the students and professor probe and discuss the work while the author, generally, remains silent. Classes are scheduled for two hours but can go three, four, five hours or longer.

Students, who are not graded, attend lectures and seminars throughout the semester, but these weekly workshop classes are a student's only real class requirement.

"You get in a workshop with a big-name professor and think, 'I am going to get the wisdom and be super successful now,' " Hemenway says. Not the case.

Instead, Hemenway says he learned how to learn. He began to understand how he could improve his craft. Much like an artist can be taught proper brush techniques and perspective, a writer can be taught how to write stronger dialogue. Character development. Tone. Pacing. And at lowa, students learn from accomplished writers; Room 129 of the Dey House is Pulitzer Prize-winner Marilynne Robinson's office, for example.

Expectations for Iowa students are severe.

"We want students to be the kinds of writers who will change America's literary conversation," says Lan

Samantha Chang, who recently finished her 10th year as director of the workshop. Chang reads every fiction application herself—more than a thousand for the 2015-16 academic year—before asking faculty and some students to help her choose finalists.

Students past and present say Chang, the first lowa Writers' Workshop leader who is not a white man, has an almost frightening encyclopedic knowledge of writing and fiction. She's also an lowa Writers' Workshop graduate and an accomplished novelist and short-story writer.

Over time, the program takes on the character and tone of its leader, and in the decade since she succeeded Frank Conroy as director, Chang has changed the ethos of the program—the workshop classes specifically.

"I've tried to create an environment that I think would be constructive for students here," she says. "They are extremely gifted, and they have often given up a lot to come to the program."

While Chang flourished in Conroy's intense workshops as a student, she also knew other talented writers found their competitive and sometimes cutthroat nature difficult. She prefers a more modern teaching approach—rigorous still, but generous in spirit.

Conroy led the workshop for 18 years. The Dey House's reading room, with its tall wooden bookshelves filled with thousands of books written by workshop alumni, is named in his honor. He was a man from another time, a gifted writer and jazz pianist who saw writing as a challenge, and if you couldn't handle a tough workshop, then good luck with a bad review in the New York Times. His critiques are a part of lowa Writers' Workshop lore.

• • •

Sands Hall found her workshop experience painful when she arrived to earn an M.F.A. in fiction in 1990. Conroy and his "patriarchal style" set the tenor of the program, and

Continues on page 56



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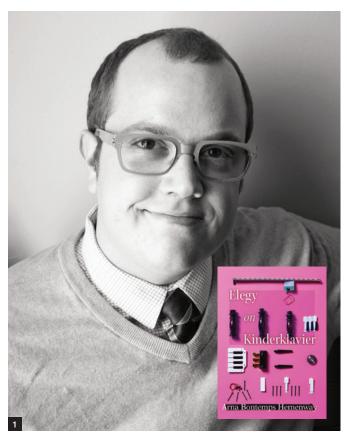


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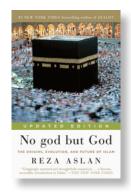


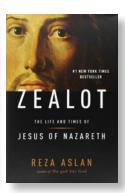




- Arna Hemenway refined "Elegy on Kinderklavier" with feedback from the workshop. Photo by Carmen Maria Machado.
- Sands Hall, who was a student when Frank Conroy was the director, found the workshop experience tearfully unsettling but ultimately rewarding.
- Garth Greenwell appreciates the current workshop atmosphere:
   "People read so carefully and generously. They want to be helpful."
   Photo by Vasil Tanev.
- Reza Aslan recalls his first workshop encounter as "a two-and-a-half-hour murder." Defying that ordeal, he produced "No god but God" and "Zealot."









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Continued from page 52

thus, she says, her fellow students felt they too had a license to deliver sharp, unfiltered criticism.

"If I could give you a recording of the things said around those tables, you wouldn't believe it," says Hall, now 63 and a creative writing professor at Franklin & Marshall College in Pennsylvania.

The first time Hall workshopped her writing, Conroy did not hold back. Afterward, she went to the mall and cried inside a bathroom stall until fellow students coaxed her out and bought her a beer.

Reza Aslan, the best-selling author of "No God But God" and "Zealot," says he showed up on campus to study in the fiction program in 2000 "thinking I owned the place." Conroy had read his novel manuscript and personally picked him for the program, even offering a coveted Truman Capote Fellowship. The first time he was "up" for workshop, he turned in the first chapter of that novel.

"Oh, my God," Aslan said before breaking into a laugh, "it was a two-and-a-half-hour murder."

At one point, Conroy went from page to page reading passages he found particularly egregious out loud in a cartoonish voice. "I was devastated," Aslan recalls. "I was seriously considering just packing up and going home."

The next day, Conroy walked him into his office, sat him down and told him: "Son, you obviously know what it means to be a writer. The problem is you don't know how to write. But don't worry, I'm going to teach you."

After his debut book became a best-selling and critical hit, Aslan returned to Iowa City in 2005 for a reading. Two days before he arrived, Conroy died. "I never got the chance to thank him," Aslan says. "He taught me everything I know about writing. I wouldn't be here without Frank."

Garth Greenwell was accepted into Iowa's poetry program more than a decade ago, but Iowa's and Conroy's tough reputation turned him off so he declined. He earned an M.F.A. in poetry from Washington University in St. Louis, but after stints as a high school and college instructor, Greenwell decided he wanted a life with writing at its center.

At the age of 35, in 2014, Greenwell applied to only one fiction M.F.A. program: Iowa. He was accepted, and received an Arts Fellowship, which gave him two years of funding with no other obligations to work or teach. He headed to Iowa City with hopes of finishing and selling his first novel.

By the time he was "up" for the first time, in Chang's

novel workshop, his fears and nervousness about lowa's past reputation had already fallen away. "It was so clear to me that there was a kind of generosity of spirit in the room," he says. "People read so carefully and generously. They want to be helpful."

Greenwell graduated from lowa last May with a book deal. His debut novel, which he sold while he was still a student to an editor he met on campus, will be released in January 2016.

"It's an incredible thing to think about," Greenwell says. "That's one thing about being at lowa: There's such a palpable history at this place. And to think now I am a small part of that history."

• • •

On a warm, clear early evening this past April, a man with a short haircut, light-framed glasses and a red-tinged beard stands in front of the music and photography sections on the second floor of Prairie Lights Books in downtown lowa City. His bright blue and neon green sneakers peek out loudly from behind the podium. A crowd of nearly 100 fills rows of folding chairs, and people spill out into makeshift aisles. One woman sits cross-legged on the floor and sips from a glass of red wine.

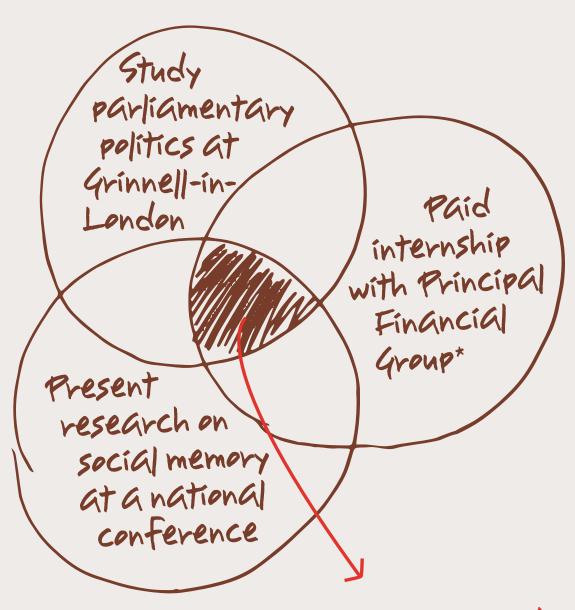
Arna Hemenway begins to speak and quickly seizes the room's attention. He reads from "Elegy on Kinderklavier," his story collection that days earlier was awarded the \$20,000 2015 PEN/Hemingway Award for Debut Fiction.

Hemenway workshopped the stories in the book during his time at Iowa. He worked with Chang and other professors to get them right. His story tonight is a devastating look at a family falling apart while a boy is dying of cancer, told from the perspective of the child's father.

When he finishes, Hemenway smiles, closes his book and leaves to polite applause. He takes a seat near the front to hear the next scheduled reader, yet another lowa grad.

As an Iowa Writers' Workshop student, Hemenway spent countless nights listening to authors inside Prairie Lights, which hosts visiting writers nearly every night of the week. Now he had made it back, this time as the author inspiring those students on the folding chairs.

"It was rather surreal," Hemenway said later. "One of those rare times in life when you achieve something exactly that you've dreamed about. I felt very lucky." ■



An amazing third year Grinnellians defy stereotypes.

\*Internships with the Principal Financial Group are not guaranteed.





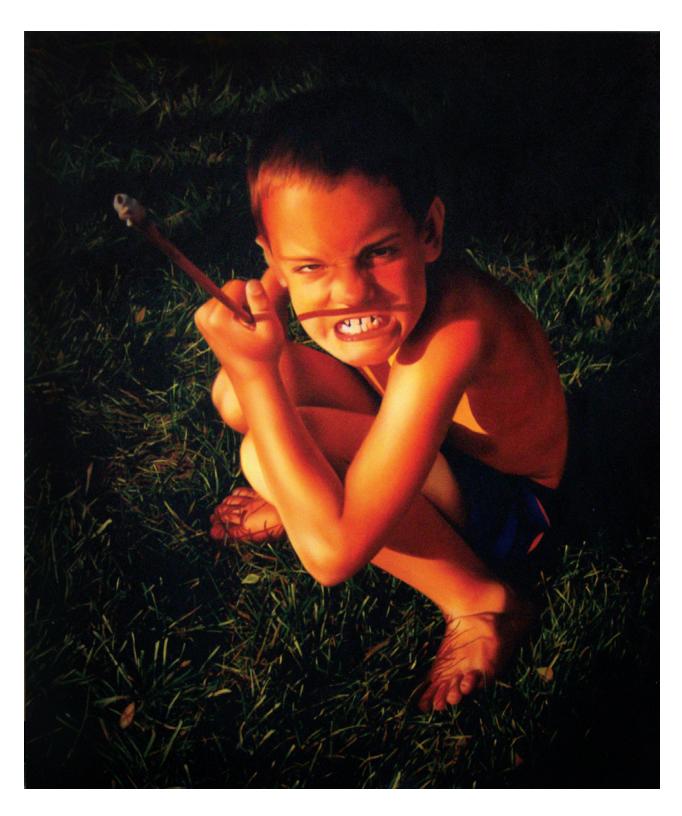
## EXPLORING DARK CORNERS IN A SUNNY ARTIST'S STUDIO

A gifted photo-realist wrestles with the realities of sex and death.

WRITTEN BY LARRY ERICKSON

Facing page: Horses reign in a series of dramatic drawings by Des Moines artist Larassa Kabel. In the plunging plight of such typically graceful animals, Kabel portrays life's sometimes-desperate rush to its inevitable end. ("My One and Only," colored pencil on paper.)





Kabel's dedication to the spontaneous character of photographic imagery is evident in this 2009 painting, "Boys to Men" (oil on canvas, 48 x 39 inches).



othing about artist Larassa Kabel's chipper nature hints at the dark focus of her work. It's the goodnatured artists who have the emotional strength to delve into disturbing content, she says:
"Artists I've met who do the darkest work tend to be the most cheerful."

Drawing and painting with a poet's sensitivities, Kabel works in visual metaphors, offering brutally realistic images of subjects that aren't what they seem. Images of dead fawns represent the unspeakable loss of children, taken by drowning, SIDS and other cruelties. Families torn by such tragedies have responded emotionally to these animal images, finding a voice to express their loss in the presence of Kabel's arresting artwork. In turn, the artist has named paintings in this series after actual deceased children, a gesture welcomed by their grieving families.

Art should tap into emotions, Kabel says, and prod reactions from viewers. "I don't care if they hate it or love it," she insists, "but I hate if they just walk by."

People rarely just walk by the Kabel portrait that is part of the Des Moines Art Center's permanent collection. The colored-pencil image of a young woman with long curls is rendered in such detail and tone that it recalls the fine grain of Kodak's rich Panatomic X film. "She's a splendid artist, and we're delighted to have her here," says Jeff Fleming,

the Art Center's director, ticking off a list of her recent exhibits around the country. She has been featured in two Art Center exhibitions, and a big solo show in Chicago is coming up in November, when her works will be at the Mission gallery on Chicago Avenue.

#### **FALLING HORSES**

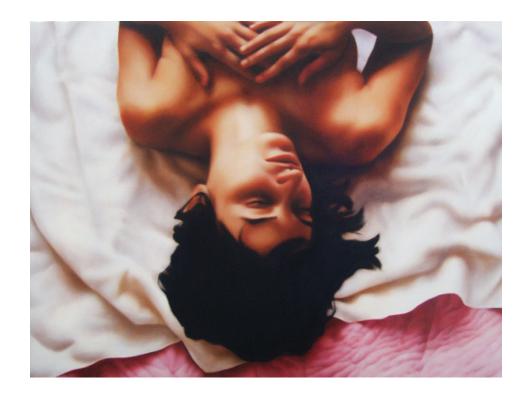
She is perhaps best known for a startling series of images of horses plummeting through space, plunging to an unseen but certain demise. Like so many of Kabel's subjects, the horses "mean other things," she says. Frozen in a moment so vivid and so real, the drawings have led some viewers to suspect a work of digital photo manipulation. In an instant, these horses command even a casual viewer to contemplate the cold abruptness of imminent death.

As Kabel first envisioned the work, a series of six horses, roughly life-size, would be installed in a large hall at some significant height, reinforcing the impression of falling and offering grim finality in the presence of the floor below.

Because of their scale, the horses were drawn while Kabel clung to a ladder. Interestingly, she says, "I don't like heights or the idea of falling." But she does like the beauty and power of horses and sees an irony in portraying them in colored pencil as powerless, unbalanced and unnerved. She has described the drawings as "poetic disaster," drawing out the viewer's gut-level response to a sense of hopeless desperation.

Continues on page 64





Facing page: Yet another horse tumbles behind artist Larassa Kabel (pronounced LaRESSa CAble), who placed him in his unhappy situation.

The 2011 colored-pencil drawing, "Any Minute Now – Flyboy," measures 108 x 108 inches. Photo by Duane Tinkey.

This page: "Pink Blanket," a 2009 oil on canvas, seems to suggest more than it shows in its 30 x 40 inches.





Left: A fawn that died at a wildlife farm became the subject of "The Hazards of Love – Trina," one in a series of drawings that bear the names of deceased children (2009, colored pencil, 25.5 x 38.5 inches).

Right: Part of the Des Moines Art Center's permanent collection, "Don't Stop Believing" showcases Kabel's deft touch in portraying tone and texture (2012, colored pencil on paper, 19 3/4 x 23 3/4 inches). Photographed by Rich Sanders.

#### Continued from page 61

The unlikely horse project was a huge boost to an already significant recognition of her work. The big score, in terms of public awareness, was an even less likely success that paid nothing: a small painting selected for the 2012 White House Christmas card. Kabel was invited to submit her work for consideration, and she created an image of the Obama family's dog, sporting a scarf, on their snowy south lawn.

Having the president as a client is the sort of thing that can draw attention, and Kabel received plenty, with coverage in news outlets from coast to coast. "It was completely unexpected and somewhat surreal," she says, recalling the events that included a White House reception with the Obamas.

#### DARK EMOTIONS

The Christmas card image stands in stark contrast to the core of her recent work, which she says explores "the darker emotional side of people."

Countless hours have been devoted to a visual exploration of women's sexuality and its perceived domination by men. Men and women have very different experiences and perceptions of sexuality. "The dominant narrative is from the male perspective," she says.

"Women have to be careful, knowing they may not be safe," she adds, and that has influenced her thoughts and artwork. "It's totally about how the female voice is not the dominant one that is listened to."

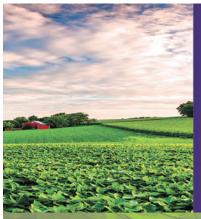
Her family is supportive of her artistic endeavors, on various levels. There's 16-year-old Emmet: "He doesn't like art." And her husband: "He likes my work." He did, however, inquire once with some concern about the themes: "Are you going to be depressed?" Then there's her mother, also an artist, who loves her daughter's work, as mothers do.

Born in Mount Clemens, Mich., in 1970, Kabel came to lowa as a high school freshman at Martensdale-St. Marys. lowa State University helped set her future course. After exploring the potential of a career as a technical biomedical



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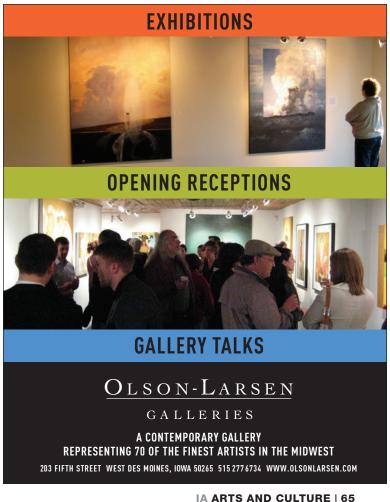
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AN ARTIST'S
QUANDARY:
"THE MOMENT
THAT YOU
HAVE THE
INSPIRATION
DOESN'T TELL
YOU WHAT
TO DO WITH IT."

illustrator, she shifted gears and entered an ISU honors program, which allowed her to set her own curriculum. Her artistic focus at the time was in fibers.

"That program taught me patience and self-discipline," she says. After graduating in 1992, she did freelance artwork, producing graphic design and illustrations for clients who would pay her \$250 fee (not coincidentally, the monthly rent for her studio at the time). By then married to Des Moines schoolteacher Chris Snethen, and the mother of a young son, she nurtured a dedicated routine, framing her studio workday between dropping off and picking up little Emmet at school.

Emmet's a teenager now, but his mom's routine remains steadfast to her work ethic. She fondly quotes New York painter Chuck Close: "Inspiration is for amateurs." And she follows Close's counsel: Show up and get to work. So weekdays she shows up with her two pseudo-protective Boston Terriers, Beans and Inu. The dogs settle into the couch; Kabel settles into her work.

Her studio is high on the north side of downtown Des Moines' artsy Fitch Building, a warren of creative offices, nooks and studios. The light here is soft and even, falling on walls cloaked in photo studies and sketches, some as similar as photocopies.

She describes this daily immersion into her artwork as "such a privilege."

#### INSPIRATION FOR IDEAS

Some ideas are born here. Others come here to develop before appearing under pencil or brush. The falling horse idea came from a spa vacation while Kabel was following a regimen that took her from a warm pool to a sauna to an ice bath. "The sensation was unnerving," she says, "and I actually felt like I was falling, like there was no end to it."

It brought to mind thoughts of death, of its commitment, of an end to things ... and with it came the metaphor of the falling horse. "The moment that you have the inspiration doesn't tell you what to do with it," she says with bemusement. But she knows when she has to do something. The ideas demand action: "Subjects I'm drawn to involve questions that don't go away," she says.

Her artistic responses to those questions have grown steadily in stature, with a 2009 solo show at the Des Moines Art Center securing her position as an artist on the rise.

"lowa is just so easy," she says with comfortable pride in her adopted home state. "I'm lucky I came here."

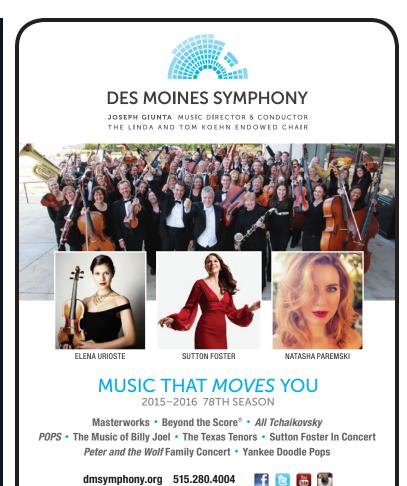
#### **DISTINCTIVE WORK**

Her images are distinctive among photo-realistic art. Most in the genre rely on multiple photographic exposures, to replicate everything from foreground to horizon in sharp detail. Kabel enjoys the shallow depth of field that comes from photos created with a large lens aperture. So the picture of the dog on the White House lawn has him rendered crisply while the house is out of focus in the background. She also creates pictures with seemingly random crops, as if from a casual photo snapshot rather than a carefully composed image.

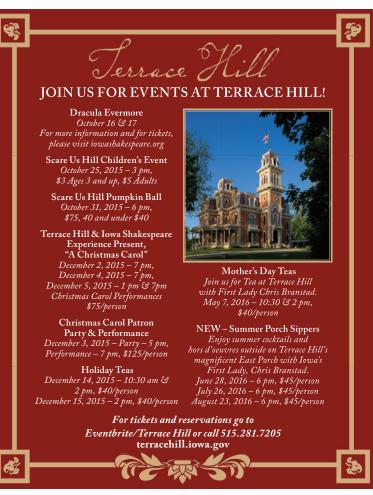
The work takes time. Lots of it. "Some (pieces) can take as much as six months," she says. "Even smaller ones take a month, and that's going steady." She prefers not to dwell on the hourly return.

The current collection isn't a feel-good, family-friendly artistic experience, she concedes. But like all of her work, it has a message and demands a response. Like the metaphoric horses and fawns, she says, "I just hope it just gets people to think about it."









# There's more growing in Iowa than cornfields



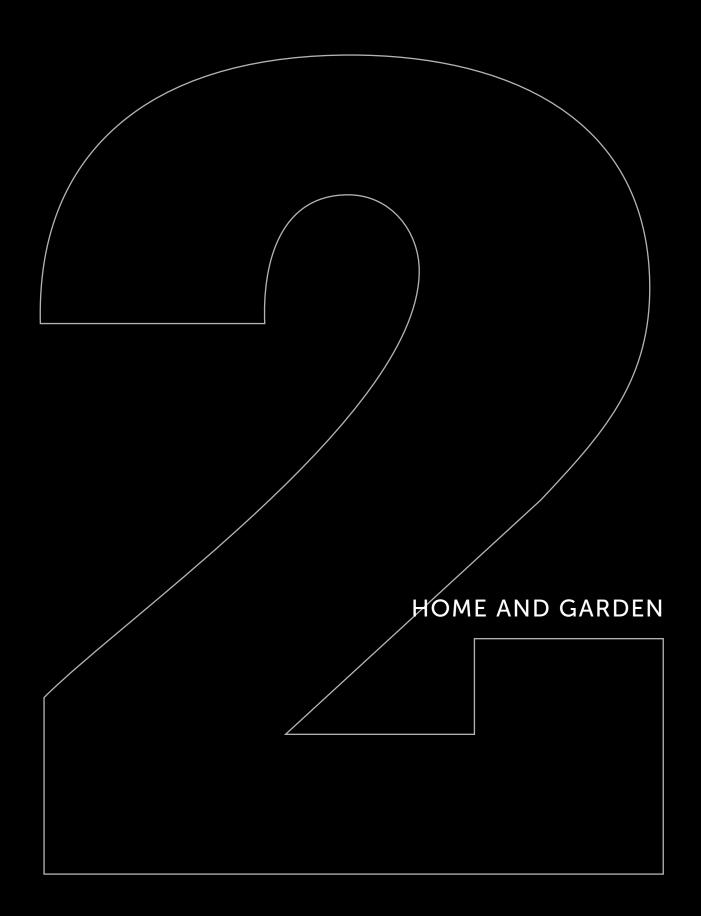
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mid unending acres of lowa's corn and soybean fields, the last thing you'd expect to find is a robust collection of Central American orchid cacti. No, they aren't commodity crops. They aren't even hardy enough to weather lowa's tough winters. But behind a white clapboard farmhouse in rural Humboldt grows a thriving collection of these spineless, tree-growing cacti, the obsession of a man named Steve Reedy.

The story has one notable protagonist, the man himself, and 125 co-stars, his ever-expanding collection of varieties traded and collected from around the country. Most varieties of *Epiphyllum*, as the group is botanically known, flower once a year, an annual spectacle in late spring and early summer. Some varieties flower for only one day. The longest flowering cultivars hold their blossoms for up to five days, opening during the nighttime hours en route to full glory by sunrise.

But the diversity of Reedy's collection extends the pleasure of the display, even if some aspects are brief. "By having so many of them, I get to spread the season out over a month," says Reedy, an lowa State alum who spends his days assembling clutch parts in a Humboldt factory. "This teaches patience. You can't be in a hurry."

The setting for this story is as unlikely as the characters—a renovated former chicken coop and nearby

lattice canopy just off Reedy's deck at the home he shares with his wife, Joan. Reedy allows the plants to go dormant every winter, maintaining temperatures inside the chicken coop at 40 to 50 degrees. Passersby might mistake the whole setup for a sunroom, seemingly situated to take in the view of endless cornfields punctuated by the occasional white peak of a home or barn.

His passion for collecting has roots in his past. The cactus that started it all—which he later identified as the famed *Epiphyllum ackermannii*—came from his mom. The red orchid cactus, known for its bold display of flowers, grew in the Reedy household when Steve was in high school. His mom received the plant as a gift from a woman in town, who had gotten it from her grandmother, who lived just a mile down the road from the Reedys. Her grandparents had brought it from Norway. Few plants have such thorough pedigrees.

"Mom didn't really know anything about it," Reedy recalls. "I trimmed it up about 25 years ago because it was growing all over the place and kept a cutting to grow for myself. It eventually bloomed really well."

In 2003, after a stint in Minnesota, Reedy moved back to the family farm and discovered the world of Epiphyllums online, including several forums founded by collectors in southern California. With more than 15,000 registered hybrids of orchid cactus to tantalize his curiosity, his obsession grew with each cutting he traded or each plant he bought. "I really started collecting in 2007 off eBay," he

Continues on page 76

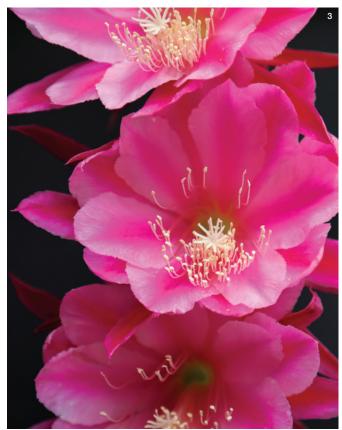
Studying this brilliant Meadowlark gives Reedy pause. "I'm not sure this is the real deal," he concedes. "This should have a double set of petals, but (it)...only has a single set." Experts are particular.













- 1. The rich color typical of its flowers makes Acapulco Sunset a collectible variety among gardeners devoted to spineless, tree-growing cacti.
- 2. A seedling grown from an online trade produced Reedy's "hybrid No. 1," which he calls Candy Corn.
- 3. Three open blossoms help this flowering cactus live up to its name, Show Boat.
- 4. "If you could get all of them to fold back, that would be better," Reedy says, critiquing the blossom of Sakurahime, shown here just slightly past its peak flowering.



Steve Reedy strolls across his sun-washed green lawn, focused on the more sublime colors of flowering cacti.

Continued from page 72

says. He joined the Epiphyllum Society of America, the premier club for breeders and collectors.

He's also tinkered with his own hybridizing. "I figure with more than 100 hybrids, it's survival of the fittest. If something doesn't work, something else will take its place," Reedy says of his current collection. "This is my candy store."

What draws him to the orchid cactus? "Just the appeal of the color," he says modestly. "Everybody collects something. This kind of just ended up being my thing."

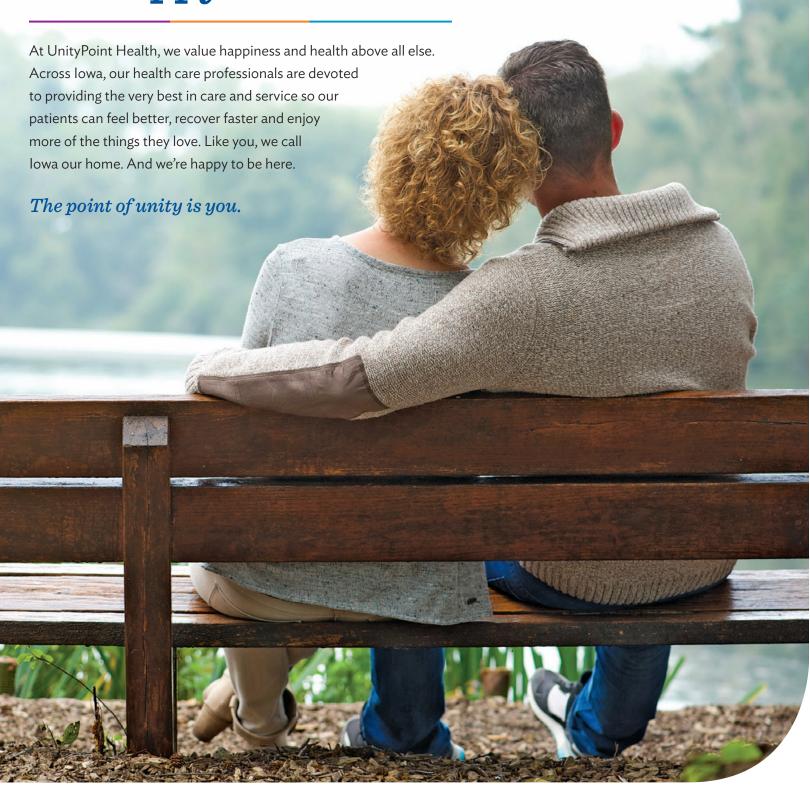
During a late spring visit, the snap of my camera lens is punctuated only by the mechanical click of the ceiling fan overhead. The robins' songs shift to eventide warbles, and an audible lone cricket makes its presence known. The light softens as the clock ticks past 7 p.m. The colors glow along with the heady prose of their keeper, as he enunciates the finer details of each flower, its story and

provenance, often while reading from a copy of the Epiphyllum Registry. The compendium of registered hybrids also contains his own inscriptions of when he received plants and when they first flowered.

"The more I got to looking at these (cacti), I couldn't keep them to myself," he says. Reedy occasionally sells cuttings at local fairs, finding ways to share his passion and his plants. He dreams of finding a public space in Humboldt where his collection could be displayed, perhaps in a courtyard at the local hospital. As I leave that night, he makes sure I have a few specimens for the collection at the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden.

"Some of these remind me of fireworks caught mid-burst," he says, lifting a flower for closer inspection. "And like fireworks, you have to be here when they are going off."

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# SO WRIGHT

AFTER DECADES OF DESIGNING ARCHITECTURAL MARVELS, A LEGEND LEAVES A LEGACY IN SIMPLE FORMS IN NORTHEAST IOWA.

WRITTEN BY LARRY ERICKSON
PHOTOS COURTESY OF CEDAR ROCK STATE PARK

Scrappy trees cling to thin topsoil on the limestone bluff at Cedar Rock. No basement was considered for the single-story
Usonian house, which suits the site well. The trees and broad eaves shade the home's expanse of glass. Cedar Rock is nestled in "the
brow" of its riverside perch, says Katy Hund, a program planner at the site: "It fits like it's part of the landscape."





### IF YOU GO

Cedar Rock, its 11-acre site and a visitors' center are open for guided tours through mid-October. Tours of the home depart hourly from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. You can reserve a tour time by calling the park office at 319.934.3572 or by email at cedar\_rock@dnr.iowa.gov.

n rural Buchanan County, on a wooded patch of rocky ground, two visionaries meet shortly after World War II, both intent on a project they hope will inspire the public in this postwar era and beyond.

Almost 70 years later, their spirits seem to linger in their shared and shaded legacy, a house called Cedar Rock near Quasqueton. And true to their vision, lowans and visitors from far beyond the state's borders tour and marvel at their enduring architectural gift.

Such a future, though, is hard to imagine from the perspective of 1945. The legendary architect Frank Lloyd Wright is at his zenith, widely regarded as the world's most progressive architect of grand homes and public buildings. But in seeking something more, Wright finds himself drawn to something less—the challenge of creating elegance on a modest scale.

Thus he conceives Cedar Rock as a Usonian house, a style he created the decade before. He designs his Usonian homes around several essential elements: The single-story slab houses have flat roofs, are clad in glass and mortar, and celebrate the free flow of relatively modest space inside—1,800 square feet in this example.

Wright's patron in developing Cedar Rock is Lowell Walter, a visionary in his own right. After years of rumbling along lowa's dreary dirt roads, Walter made his fortune in road improvements. Thus was born an lowa tycoon with a pride in his home state and a keen interest in building materials, which has led to Mr. Wright.

As he refines his Usonian ideal, Wright is featured in Ladies' Home Journal. Keen to introduce a new era of American housing, the editors seize on Wright's new direction and a particular example that he calls his Opus 497. The editors marvel at such futuristic innovations as a "family room."

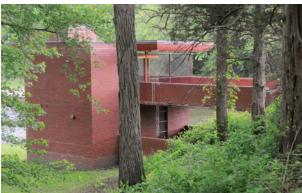
Eager to find a worthy setting for his Opus 497, Wright considers a January 1945 letter from Walter, who has seized on Wright as the perfect candidate to develop the vacation home that he and his wife, Agnes, envision, an aerie overlooking the Wapsipinicon River. Their goal, Walter writes, is a "modest home to be designed and built on a limestone bluff."

But Wright insists it can't be a hilltop home: "No house should ever be on a hill or on anything. It should be of the hill. Belonging to it," he wrote in a 1932 autobiography. "Hill and house should live together."

Once Wright meets Walter and his wife, Agnes, and sees the site, he immerses himself in the details of his opus. Cedar Rock will become one of only 19 residential projects that Wright designates as his "signature homes," the signature being a red ceramic tile embossed with his initials and displayed prominently on a wall in the entryway. This designation means that virtually everything in or around the home is designed or selected by the architect.

At Cedar Rock, that includes the bathrooms' quirky "Pullman car" fixtures, which swing out for use like those in railroad train compartments. The design of the nearby boathouse is similarly, singularly Wright's vision, as is the





fire pit area where the Walters will entertain guests for decades. "Mr. Wright designed or chose practically the entire furnishings, including rugs, drapes and dinnerware," Lowell Walter later wrote.

Cedar Rock's low and sweeping single story spreads to some 150 feet in length between groundbreaking in 1948 and completion in 1950. The compact bedroom wing tails off at a 45-degree angle from the expanse of the 30-by-30-foot garden (or family) room with its grand fireplace and tailored Steinway. (See accompanying story, right.)

Wright positions the home so the garden room's three glass walls offer sweeping vistas of the river valley. He scatters clerestory windows and skylights among the rooms, capturing light and releasing hot air. Electrical lighting is neatly recessed to be effective without being conspicuous.

Among the Walters' first guests in 1950 are Mr. and Mrs. Frank Lloyd Wright, with whom they share enjoyment of the site's brilliant autumn colors in addition to the home, guesthouse and fireside chats. The Walters will delight in their getaway for three decades, until Lowell's death in 1981. A year later, four years before her own death, Agnes donates the home to the state, where the property ultimately becomes part of Cedar Rock State Park.

Top: Clad in glass and highlighted by clerestory windows, the 900-squarefoot garden room has welcomed guests and tourists since 1950. The woodwork is walnut, a selection that Wright made here and in his most famous residence, the spectacular Fallingwater in Pennsylvania.

Bottom: The nearby River Pavilion or boathouse includes an apartment for guests and an adjacent fire circle, where the Walters and Wrights celebrated their project in the autumn of 1950, a few months after its completion and three decades before it would become a tourist attraction, drawing visitors from across the United States and countries beyond.

### PEN PALS

Lowell Walter and Frank Lloyd Wright exchange notes on aspects of the project as it develops, and the architect gives his client high praise in at least one prominent detail. Wright had suggested a grand piano for Cedar Rock's "garden room," the term Wright favors over the Ladies' Home Journal's silly notion of a "family room." He doesn't suggest just any grand piano, but a 7-foot Steinway.

"As I studied voice at one time, we thought we would appreciate owning one," Walter pens in response. But he wonders if the piano's 38-inch height may seem too tall in the room's conspicuously low-slung expanse.

"Dear Lowell," Wright answers eagerly, on a first-name basis though Walter's correspondence is consistently addressed to Mr. Wright. "How would you know that piano would look too high in your house? You are one of the smartest men I ever knew. We are writing to the manufacturer and asking them to take two inches off the legs."

Wright's penchant for low ceilings is personal, he explains in his autobiography: "It has been said that were I three inches taller (I am 5ft 8 1/2in tall), all my houses would have been quite different in proportion. Perhaps."



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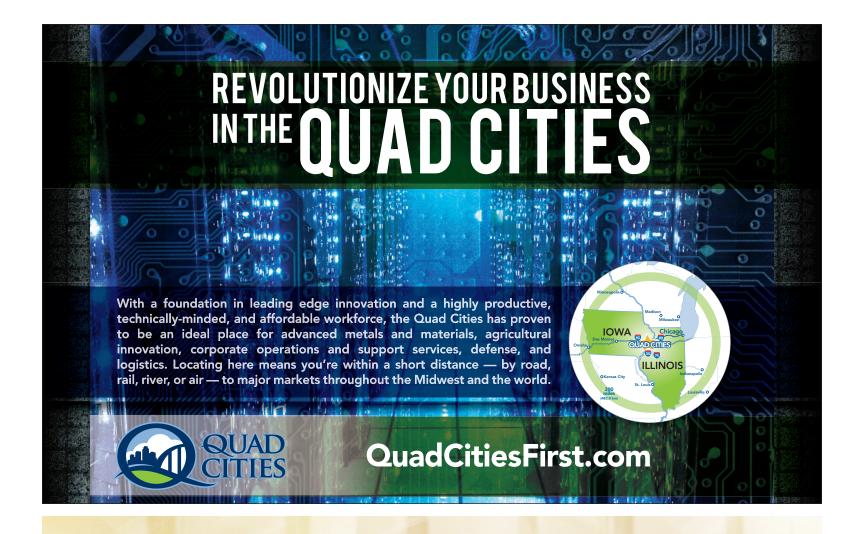












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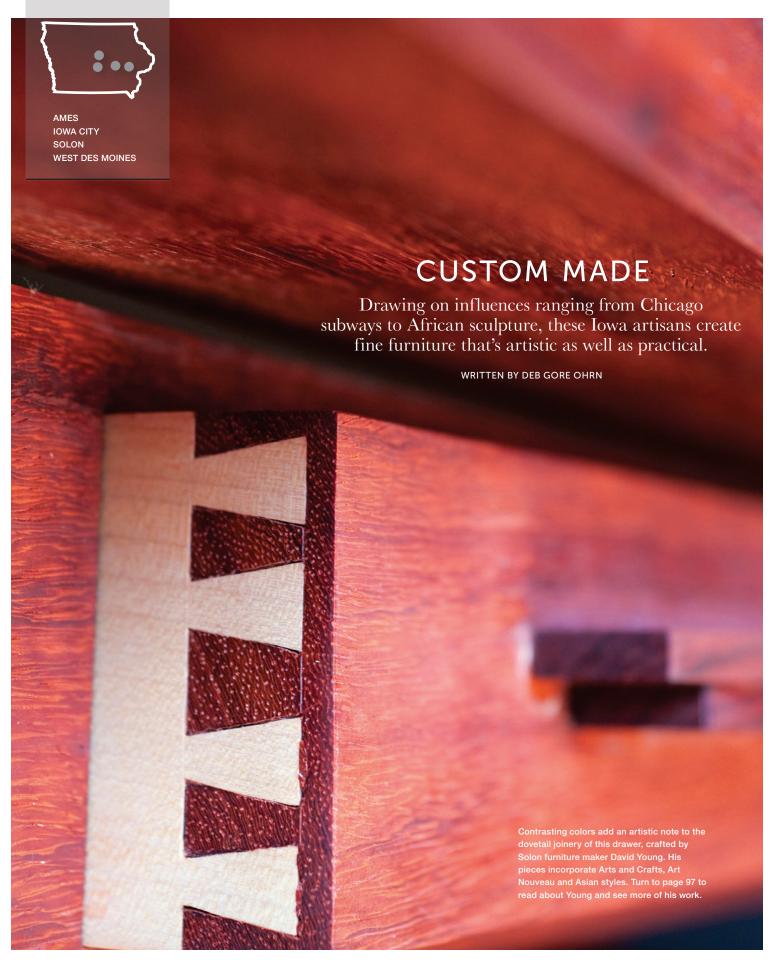
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### NANCY ROMALOV ARTFUL BODGER WOODWORKS IOWA CITY

A former University of Iowa English and women's studies professor, Nancy Romalov is now a full-time furniture maker who's part of a woodworking co-op in Iowa City. She named her business the Artful Bodger and splits her time between Iowa City and Montana. ("Bodger" is a late 19th-century word for itinerant woodturners in England.) "I do whimsical, one-of-a-kind" pieces, she says. "My work is asymmetrical, quirky."

Romalov enjoys designing beds, tables, chairs, music stands and even banjo ukuleles. When she's at Flathead Lake in Montana, Romalov uses only Japanese hand tools for the precision work on her smaller pieces. Stones from the lake appear in tables and cabinets. When she's in lowa, she turns her attention to larger works using the co-op's more industrial tools. She often hand-selects downed cherry and maple trees for her furniture. "Wherever I am, I am true to local woods as much as possible," she says. Find out more at artfulbodgerwoodworks.wordpress.com.





# CHRIS MARTIN CHRIS MARTIN FURNITURE AMES

A Modern furniture artisan who also is an associate professor at Iowa State University's College of Design, Chris Martin has a varied background in engineering, metals, architecture and fine arts. He fine-tuned his furniture-making skills while earning an MFA at the Rhode Island School of Design, then worked for a furniture maker in Aspen, Colo., before returning to Ames.

When he and his wife, Tammi
Martin, moved to Ghana in 2008 to
serve as Peace Corps volunteers, he
became motivated to make furniture
based on Ghanian sculptural stools and
chairs. "I'm moved by tribal aesthetics
and the experience of place," says
Martin, who also views furniture as
interactive art. His passion now focuses
on creating sustainable links between
U.S. furniture makers and artisans in
Africa and Southeast Asia. Go to
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# DAVID YOUNG ► DAVID YOUNG FURNITURE DESIGN SOLON

A custom furniture maker for 15 years, David Young creates prairie-style pieces incorporating Arts and Crafts, Art Nouveau and Asian styles. Similar to Mission furniture, his work features "gentle curves, Asian elements, negative space and flair," he says. His designs often follow the grain of the wood. Young makes cabinets out of cherry and maple as well as exotics such as lacewood and wenge. He studied with two master craftsmen in the Northwest and follows their focus of viewing furniture as art. "I typically work with clients individually," he says. "We create original art through collaboration." Visit davidyoungfurnituredesign.com for more information.







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- Signature craft cocktails are a popular attraction at Cobble Hill in Cedar Rapids.
- The aged Pekin duck breast involves a multitude of ingredients, not one of them superfluous.
- The grilled romaine salad is graced with just enough char-grilled flavor to add depth to this bright, fresh dish.
- 4. The atmosphere delivers a modern vibe in a historic downtown building.



hen talking to chefs about their cooking approach, I often hear a variation on this theme: "I start with great ingredients and don't mess with them too

It's an admirable ethos—after all, the best cooking starts with the best ingredients. Still, when we go out for a splurge at a chef-driven restaurant, most of us want more. I love a chef who brings twists and turns to the plate that I would have never thought of, that I would never try to recreate at home, and that I might never taste again. Indeed, I even appreciate the ephemeral nature of imaginative, market-driven combinations; what came together gorgeously at this point in time might never meet up on the plate in exactly the same way again. Some dishes are revelations to be enjoyed once, like a site-specific sculpture.

That's why I was thrilled with my meal at Cobble Hill in Cedar Rapids, a restaurant owned by husband-and-wife Andy and Carrie Schumacher. The duo met at the University of Iowa, where, upon graduating with a B.S. in biology, Andy was destined for medical school. That is, until Carrie, realizing that Andy's passion for cooking merited more than just hobby status, nudged him to attend the French Culinary Institute in New York City. The couple spent four years in Brooklyn, where they soaked up the vibrant food scene in culinary-hotbed neighborhoods such as Red Hook, Carroll Gardens and Cobble Hill (the latter gave their Cedar Rapids restaurant its name).

Certainly, there are a number of fine arts majors who become chefs; switching from one iffy career to another is hardly a stretch. But abandoning a sure thing, like medical school, for the long shot of standing out in the crowded field of the culinary arts? Who does that?

Indeed, "Who does that?" was a resounding refrain in

my head as I tasted each one-of-a-kind, risk-taking dish on a recent visit.

It started with the cocktail. I asked the staff to bring me an aperitif—which (I knew they'd know) is different from a cocktail. I wanted a light, refreshing drink to ease me into the evening with a lift, not a buzz.

The waiter came around with the Rain or Shine, which combined Moscato d'Asti, Riesling and sauvingon blanc, with a little Aperol and lemongrass.

Three wines in one cocktail? Who does that?

Yet it was a perfect balance of fruity and refreshing, with a lightly bitter edge. The combination did what aperitifs do best: It prepared my palate—and readied my spirit—for the pleasures to come. My dining companion had an equally joy-inducing rosé-based cocktail energized with a touch of Campari. All the cocktails I sampled—creations of the restaurant's cocktail directors, Josh O'Connell and Ryan Manka—were wrought with the restaurant's signature combination of invention and expertise.

My first bite at Cobble Hill continued in this striking vein. Hollandaise on cooked oysters is nothing new, but hollandaise on a raw oyster? Who does that?

But it soared. Because somehow, the civilized richness of the hollandaise underscored—rather than undermined—the raw wonder of the sea creature.

I've had grilled romaine salad before. This version, however, was not about anything so obvious as the smoke and char I've encountered on these salads in the past. Rather, the dish showcased the more delicate depth that a judicious turn on a grill can bring. A dill-lemon dressing added spark, and the shavings of cured egg yolks brought something akin to graceful slivers of velvety sunshine.

Tapping into the idea of "eating the whole farm," an ancient-cum-contemporary idea of cooking with every edible scrap of the animal that you can, the restaurant serves *testa*. Also known as head cheese, this is a pâté-esque loaf made of the bits of meat attached to the skull of the animal.

Continues on page 108











- Owners Carrie and Andy Schumacher spent four years in New York before returning to Iowa with a fresh approach to preparing meals.
- Cobble Hill's signature cocktails include (from left): Campari-Rosé Cocktail, Rain or Shine, and The Missus.
- 3. Decorative touches, such as fresh flowers, brighten the dining experience.
- Dessert combines French savoir-faire (in the form of buttery financier cakes) with a nod to the Quaker Oats plant, an enduring Cedar Rapids landmark.







### MORE CEDAR RAPIDS HIGHLIGHTS

Cobble Hill is definitely worth a road trip; stretch your visit into an overnight trip with these added favorites I discovered on a recent visit.

#### The Hotel at Kirkwood Center

This chic, ultra-modern hotel is a part of the Preferred Hotels & Resorts collection of independent luxury lodgings that span the globe. Though it looks and feels like a plush, world-class hotel, the prices are reasonable, as the property also serves as a teaching facility for the Kirkwood Community College's hospitality arts students. Stay overnight here, then enjoy an expert weekend brunch in the Class Act Restaurant before you head home.

7725 Kirkwood Blvd. S.W. 319.848.8700 thehotelatkirkwood.com

### **Newbo City Market**

Time your visit to Cedar Rapids so that you can arrive for lunch, and head to this indoor market to find food stalls selling handcrafted, locally made specialties, from Caribbean and Mediterranean cuisine to chocolates and cupcakes. The market is part of the Czech Village/New Bohemia Main Street District, a historic neighborhood that was revitalized after the floods of 2008.

1100 Third St. S.E. 319.200.4050 newbocitymarket.com

### Next Page Bookstore

Rediscover the pleasures of the small, independent bookstore. Find a great selection of well-purveyed books and a passionate staff that will point your way to something you'll love (they did so for me, anyway). Conveniently across the street from Newbo City Market, this is one of the tidiest, most charming bookstores I've ever seen.

1105 Third Street S.E. 319.247.2665 debsnextpagebooks.com Continued from page 104

Never mind that I personally have never gotten the hang of head cheese, if offal is your passion, this version is worth a drive across the state. Our waiter, a thoroughly engaging professional, mentioned that enthusiasts hail this as the restaurant's best dish. As for me, I mostly adored the dish's bright, vivid accompaniments of arugula, pickled ramps and a crazy-fresh ramp-pistachio pesto.

Cooking with morels is almost cheating—what's not to love? But pairing morels with lemon? Who does that? Sure, Google it, and you'll come up with a handful of recipes that do, but Schumacher's pasta dish of morels, freshly picked sweet peas and fava beans veered into the extraordinary, thanks to that unexpected lilt of lemon-butter sauce amid the earthiness of the mushrooms.

When the aged Pekin duck breast arrived with oyster mushrooms, lime cipollini onions, hominy, candied sunflower seeds and a black mole, I thought it sounded like about two ingredients too many. Yet each brought its own distinct pleasure to the dish; foregoing any one of them would have been like cutting the woodwind section out of an orchestra.

Dessert moved me almost beyond words. Long before I became a Francophile and decades before I became a food writer, I lived in Cedar Rapids. I spent the first six of years of my life there. The smell of oats being processed at the city's Quaker Oats factory will always be the smell of my early childhood.

And so, when the *financier* (a buttery French cake), graced with sparkling black currant and strawberry preserves, arrived with a little pool of puffed oats in a lightly sweet and milky sauce and an ice cream infused with Quaker Peanut-Butter Crunch cereal, well, no wonder the dessert stole my heart: France and Cedar Rapids on same plate, with insanely good effects.

Still. Puffed oats in a dessert sauce? A sophisticated gelato flavored with a kids' cereal? Who does that?

Certainly, any number of chefs can put seemingly disparate ingredients on a plate and call themselves cutting edge. The trick is making strange bedfellows taste like they have been soul mates forever. And that's exactly what Andy Schumacher and his team do, from the first sip of the aperitif to the last bite of dessert.

Cobble Hill
219 Second St. S.E.
Cedar Rapids
319.366.3177
cobblehillrestaurant.com



### STOREY KENWORTHY

ased in Des Moines, Iowa, Storey Kenworthy provides you with everything for your workplace. Providing office products, workplace furniture, design services, commercial flooring, installation services, promotional products, corporate apparel, and printing services, Storey Kenworthy has everything you need to do business.

Founded in 1936 by Arthur G. Kenworthy and Charles R. Storey, they are now lowa's largest family-owned office products and interiors company. Storey Kenworthy has grown from an entrepreneurial idea, to a statewide family

of companies with 11 locations throughout lowa. Storey Kenworthy celebrates its 80th year in business in 2016, and is proud to have its fourth generation of Kenworthys helping customers in the years to come.

Storey Kenworthy provides lowa companies a competitive solution to buy local for office interiors and products. Storey Kenworthy has partnered with lowa based manufacturers, service providers and organizations to keep business dollars in the local economy.





# The store was small.

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Over the years, that dedication to service never changed. From introducing in-store dietitians to offering online shopping and more, we have always looked for ways to better serve our customers.

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For the last 85 years, we've made it our priority to take care of our customers first. In fact, we encourage every one of our more than 78,000 employees to do whatever it takes to live up to our promise of a helpful smile in every aisle.

And that's one thing that will never change.





DES MOINES
GARNAVILLO
ORANGE CITY

# FLYJOY

QUINOA + OATS FLAX + CHIA ENERGIZING SNACK BAR

In Orange City, Curtis Bomgaars sells thousands of Flyjoy snack bars through e-commerce as well as traditional grocery stores. His whole-grain bars are Koshercertified and vegan, with no gluten or genetically modified organisms.



### BON ENTREPRENEUR

Eager to serve up their signature flavors, Iowans share big dreams in small batches.

WRITTEN BY TOM PERRY

An entrepreneurial spirit nurtures lowa's food scene. From the bluffs above Dubuque to the suburbs of Des Moines and beyond, lowans are forming small companies and entering the marketplace of specialty cuisine.

### **FLYJOY SNACK BARS**

Orange City 712.707.5996 flyjoy.com

The future of "eating between meals" may well embody the characteristics found in snack bars that recently originated in Orange City. "Clean, convenient, a little sweet but healthy," is how Curtis Bomgaars, founder of Flyjoy Snack Bars, describes the bars. In just a little more than a year, his fledgling company has sold thousands of 1.4-ounce snack bars online and at lowa and Kansas City Hy-Vees. The company also has committed to donating 10 percent of its profits to charity.

Snack bars are proliferating, especially in health-food aisles, Bomgaars acknowledges, but "there aren't a whole lot using as many high-quality ingredients." His whole grain bars are gluten-free, Kosher-certified, non-GMO and vegan. A featured ingredient in the Flyjoy product line is quinoa, an age-old superfood grain that has become a new-age celebrity. Fruits, oats, nuts, flax and chia also are rolled into the bars, which carry a suggested retail price of \$2.39 each or \$19.99 for a 12-bar box.

"It was a slow process" to get up and running, says Bomgaars, who spent considerable time testing recipes. But now he's happy with the six different flavored bars being produced. His personal favorite is the blueberry almond bar. But he's also proud of Flyjoy's newest offering, the cashew cookie dough bar, which sounds as decadent as anything that could be eaten between meals.

#### **GREAT RIVER MAPLE**

Garnavillo 563.964.9139 greatrivermaple.com

A quest for sweetness begins every winter with the tapping of some 6,000 trees on the bluffs of the Mississippi River in Clayton County. About 900 gallons of maple syrup can be harvested in a decent season, says Dan Potter, who operates Great River Maple with his wife, Dorinda. Rarely associated with lowa, maple syrup has trickled from trees at the Potter family farm since the early 1900s. Back then, Dan's great-grandfather made just enough syrup to give as a gift to family and friends. Today, Great River Maple is in the third season of a commercial venture that produces enough to sell syrup and maple cream at their Garnavillo farm, online and at farmers markets in Cedar Rapids, Decorah, Dubuque, Des Moines and Omaha, Neb.

Great River Maple sells only pure maple syrup for \$8 to \$26 per jug, depending on the grade and amount. "A lot of the maple syrup that you can buy at the store can be blended with corn syrup or sorghum," Potter says, explaining that nothing is added to Great River Maple's syrup. The purity of the syrup and the fact that it doesn't have to travel from Canada or New England contribute to a taste that's smoother, feather light and a bit buttery. So far, the syrup and cream have been a hit, Potter says. "It sells nicely," he says. "We're usually sold out by July."





### **EASTERN POLK COUNTY**

COMMUNITIES THAT INSPIRE GREAT BEGINNINGS

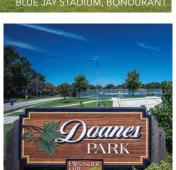


















Eastern Polk County is where families grow, businesses thrive, and developers want to start a new business. Bondurant, Mitchellville, and Pleasant Hill are thriving communities that are located adjacent to major transportation corridors including; Interstates 80 and 35, U.S. Highways 65 and 163, and the U.S. Highway 65 Bypass. Within Eastern Polk County, we are always looking to grow existing businesses and promote future development to inspire residents to grow, live, work, and play within their community.











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tanding at the entrance of the labyrinth at Prairiewoods Franciscan Spirituality Center, I could hear the words of philosopher Lao Tsu: "The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." I knew that this single step onto the sandy, brick-lined path would influence my own journey. In a prayer before moving forward, I asked for wisdom and insight, and with each deliberate step toward the labyrinth's center, I felt the release of the grief I'd been carrying since my father's

Designed as a transformative walking meditation, the labyrinth is based on a 5,000-year-old ritual practiced in many cultures throughout history. Prairiewoods' founders constructed the labyrinth brick by brick to help people connect with nature and with their faith.

death. As I retraced my steps to the beginning of the

labyrinth, I knew that my journey had changed.

The labyrinth is just one of the amenities that can be experienced at Prairewoods. Nestled on 70 acres of wooded land and reclaimed prairie in Hiawatha, the retreat center focuses on ecology, spirituality and holistic health, beckoning visitors to explore and deepen their relationships with themselves, other people, the Earth and the universe. No matter what your cultural background or spiritual

beliefs, you may find a stay at Prairiewoods to be relaxing and rejuvenating, whether you decide to spend your time indulging in spa services, hiking, meditating or working with a trained spiritual director. Each time I've visited, I've left with a renewed sense of balance and a commitment to creating daily soul-nourishing times of solitude.

Prairiewoods offers private getaways, retreats, workshops, classes and events. What's more, a visit is budget-friendly; the price for overnight lodging with meals ranges from \$50 to \$95, and the spa services cost \$55 per hour. Of special interest is "A Day of Self-Renewal." For \$90, you get a private room for the day, lunch, a group session of guided meditation and two 40-minute holistic services.

### **FOUNDING NUNS**

Marking its 20th anniversary in 2016, Prairiewoods was founded by six pioneering Franciscan sisters who were influenced by the teachings of eco-theologist Thomas Barry. These women were able to persuade the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, their faith community in Wisconsin, to purchase the land and sponsor an ecologically based ministry on it.

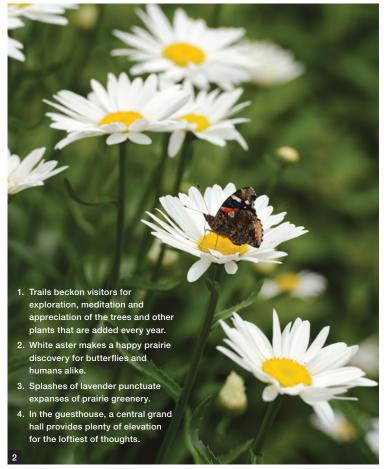
"The idea was to teach the new story of the universe and the sacredness of all living things on Earth," says founding sister Betty Daugherty. "We were planting the

Continues on page 128

A cross bears testimony to the variety of faiths and beliefs expressed by visitors to Prairiewoods' 70 acres of native plants and wildlife. Walks through the prairie terrain encourage contemplation as well as good health.

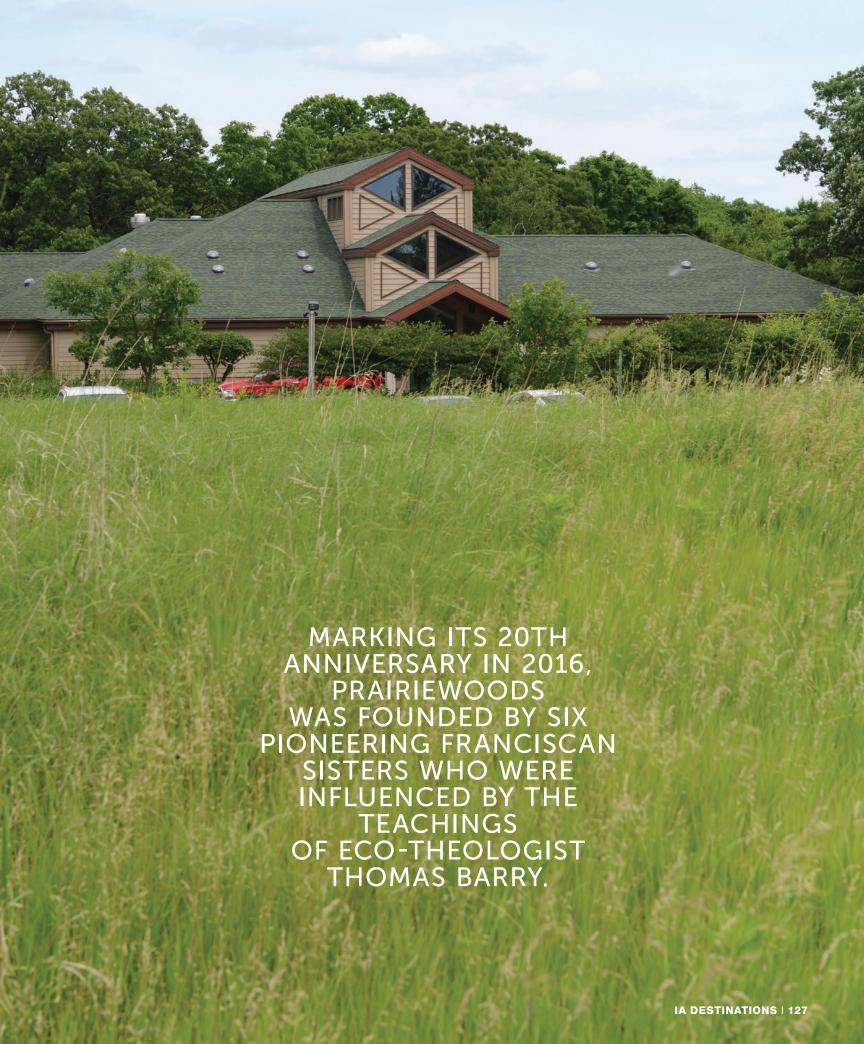












### "THE IDEA WAS TO TEACH THE NEW STORY OF THE UNIVERSE AND THE SACREDNESS OF ALL LIVING THINGS ON EARTH."

BETTY DAUGHERTY

Continued from page 124

seeds of this new story. Something was calling us to this land—waking us up! We wanted to inspire the waking up of others, too."

The six Franciscan sisters spent two years laying the foundation of their vision by walking, praying and "listening" to the land. Working with architects, builders and volunteers to move the vision into reality, Prairiewoods opened its doors in 1996. "People just came to help us do things," recalls founding sister Nancy Hoffman. "They became our friends. It all just came together so beautifully."

Built around the key principles of sustainability,
Prairiewoods in 2014 became the first nonprofit organization
in lowa to receive a gold LEED certification (Leadership in
Energy and Environmental Design), awarded by the U.S.
Green Building Council. A hundred solar modules fuel almost
50 percent of the electricity in the main conference facility.
A campuswide practice of recycling, composting and using
renewable products reduces the use of natural resources.

### **GUEST ROOMS**

The guesthouse is built according the highest ecological standards, including a solar-powered hot water system. Each of its 20 simply furnished guest rooms has a sink, although most bathrooms are shared. If you prefer more privacy, you can stay in one of two hermitages, or small cabins, on the edge of the woods facing the prairie. Built from sustainable straw bale construction, each one-person cottage has a stove, refrigerator and small bathroom. Whatever lodging you choose, you're bound to glimpse

wildlife such as deer, fox and an occasional wild turkey outside your window.

The accommodations may be simple, but the dining experience is not. One of my favorite things about visiting Prairiewoods is feasting on the flavorful and organic meals, made from local ingredients. Chef Diane Welp also accommodates her guests' dietary needs. The mac and cheese is such a favorite that it became the centerpiece of the 2011 "Prairiewoods Cookbook."

Having visited spas and retreat centers across the United States, I can honestly say that the best massage I have ever received was at Prairiewoods. I melted into the table as I enjoyed a full hour-and-a-half session. The many choices include both Swedish and shiatsu massage, reflexology, healing touch, foot spa treatment and guided meditation.

You also can spend time in quiet contemplation in the conference center's meditation room, where floor-to-ceiling windows provide inviting views of nature. One visitor told me that she loves to sit in this room and "get lost in time" by watching the birds on the feeders, the squirrels and the deer. "I feel so connected with nature by watching the animals," she said.

### SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE

If you're seeking one-to-one guidance, you can schedule a private session with a spiritual director (\$45 for an hour). Prairiewoods has eight certified spiritual directors. Different from therapists, these directors focus on providing spiritual

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### RETREAT CENTERS IN IOWA

### Prairiewoods Franciscan Spirituality Center

Hiawatha 319.395.6700 prairiewoods.org Private and directed retreats in a multifaith setting.

### **New Mellery Abbey**

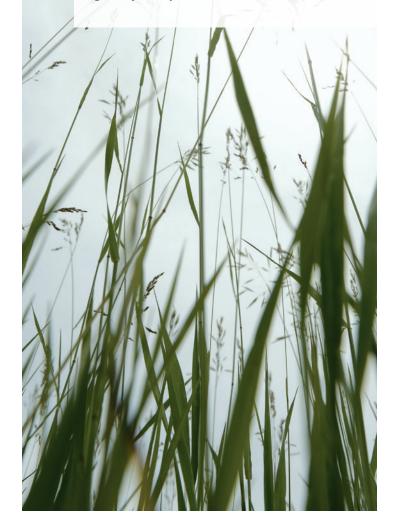
Peosta 563.588.2319 newmellery.org Private and themed retreats in a Trappist setting.

### **Shalom Spirituality Center**

Dubuque 563.582.3592 shalomretreats.org Private retreats and programs offered in the hospitality of the Franciscan tradition.

### The Raj

Fairfield 641.472.9580 theraj.com An Ayur-Veda medical center offering treatments in a spa setting.



guidance in how to meet the challenges of life. Many people have found that talking confidentially and freely with a trained spiritual director in a serene setting can promote healing on many levels.

Prairiewoods is an inviting getaway even during the wintertime. During a visit last winter, Sister Nancy Hoffman knocked on my door wearing a winter coat, big hat and heavy boots. She invited me into the woods to visit her favorite tree, which she calls the "Grandmother Tree." She said that she has a notebook filled with details on all of the trees on the property—over 500—including their species, when they were planted and what she has named them.

"Just think about it," she said. "If we all just planted one new tree each year—what an impact we would make on the world. The trees here at Prairiewoods give me hope for a bright future for the Earth."

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### AN IOWAN'S SUPREME COURT

A WIMBLEDON OF THE WEST GROWS FROM A FARM FIELD.

WRITTEN BY BELLE DU CHENE PHOTOS BY AMANDA MEAUX

- The court's rural surroundings are decidedly un-Londonlike.
- 2. Elegant accessories enhance the impression.
- Pickets for the surrounding fence were styled and handcrafted to evoke a sense of an English garden, then painted in the signature green of the All England Club.
- 4. Wimbledon's preferred Slazenger balls add a bounce of authenticity.



n a farm in northern lowa, there's a small patch of land outlined by wind turbines and nearly concealed by acres of corn—where on the right day you can hear the sounds of a sporting event amid the cornfields.

"Is this heaven?" one might ask. No, and it's not baseball, either.

The patch of land just southwest of Charles City is the All lowa Lawn Tennis Club, conceived by lowa farmer Mark Kuhn as a whimsical duplication of Centre Court at the All England Club in London, where the Wimbledon Tennis Championships—the oldest tennis tournament in the history of the game—are played. When asked why he went to such great lengths to build the lawn court, Kuhn chuckles and quips, "If you grow it, they will come," before delving into the story of how he came to love the game and of his fascination with, specifically, grass tennis courts.

As a young boy in the early 1960s, Kuhn would sit with his grandfather and listen to short-wave BBC broadcasts of Wimbledon on an old radio, dreaming of one day traveling to watch the prestigious tournament and of building his own court on his family's cattle feedlot. More than 40 years later, on Sept. 6, 2003, Kuhn (now 64) broke ground on the 9,000-square-foot court to bring his boyhood dream to reality.

"You take a string to mark the lines with chalk, put up a net, bring out an umpire's chair, and presto! You have a court," Kuhn says jokingly. In reality, creating the court was no small feat: After prepping the land with truckloads of sandy soil, mastering the science of various fungicides and painstakingly plucking by hand the weeds and dandelions that grew in the space, Kuhn was able to harvest the special bentgrass that makes up the court today.

But that was just the beginning. Every April, Kuhn and his wife, Denise, start the process of grooming the area from the ground up. They overseed any bald patches that have developed over the winter and use a 1,000-pound roller to pack in the seedlings. Once those have germinated, they use a special mower to keep the blades of grass at the precise height of three-eighths of an inch and plot out the dimensions using the same line marking system that the groundsmen use at Wimbledon.

"We mow at least every other day, sometimes every day, from spring until the middle of September," Mark Kuhn says. "We also have to maintain and mark the lines every

Continues on page 140





















Having welcomed visitors from 38 states and from as far as England, Mark and Denise Kuhn continue to add little enhancements each year to make their court more authentic or just more fun. Through online reservations, some visitors get to play; others stop just to marvel.

Continued from page 136

four to five days." They do this until the harvest begins, at which time they reseed the court and wait to start the process over again the following spring.

The maintenance, though intense, is worth it for the Kuhns, who allow the public to play by reservation and free of charge. "When we built this, it was just a unique curiosity

for my family and friends, since most people have never played on a grass court," he says. "But in the last 10 years, it has grown to be so much more and we have had quite a few visitors." To date, curious travelers from 38 states, South America and England have journeyed there to hit a few ground strokes. One man from Texas even makes an annual trip to Iowa just to play on the court.

Each year, the couple adds one new element to make the court more resemble Wimbledon, whether it be a flag, specialty net posts, a knockoff wrought iron fence and gate, or the tournament's courtside tradition of serving fresh strawberries and cream. "It's a whimsical replica," Kuhn says. "Our colors are purple and green, very similar to the official colors you'd see over there, and we even have some official decals. It's not exactly like Wimbledon, but I do my best." (To find out more, go to alliowalawntennisclub.com.)

Kuhn is a dreamer who believes in making the seemingly impossible possible. "As long as I can, I will dress the court for champion play," he says. "Long after I'm gone, my family will look at this patch of grass, and I hope they remember one thing—to never forget your dreams, because you never know where they'll take you."

### PASS THROUGH OUR DOORS and leave the world behind.

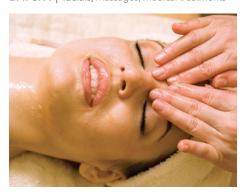
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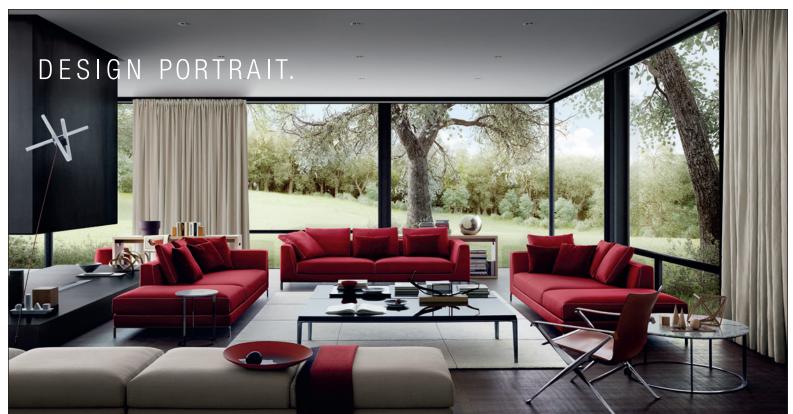
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## WEEKEND ON THE WABASH DELIGHTS AND DISCOVERIES ALONG THIS WESTERN IOWA TRAIL KEEP BICYCLISTS ON TRACK. WRITTEN BY BRIANNE SANCHEZ WITH JOE JAYJACK PHOTOS BY AMANDA MEAUX IA DESTINATIONS | 143

Something about arriving by pedal power adds value to scenes and experiences along the way. You have a more personal investment in each discovery, from the silly to the sublime. Iowa has a wealth of bicycle trails, where surprises await you just around the next bend.

W

hether you take to the trail for challenge, contemplation, communion with nature or companionship, it's often a beautiful option because it's so simple. The path is preset, and

decision-making is reduced to rest-and-go and out-andback. The trail gives you latitude to refocus, or un-focus, the mind. The sights—map-able landmarks mixed with unexpected encounters—break up the miles and make each journey its own.

We chose the Wabash Trace Nature Trail in western lowa for a quick weekend bicycling trip, well-suited for a more serious cyclist (my husband, Joe Jayjack) and for another who thinks of a long ride as a means for justifying all of the things she will eat at the end (yours truly). And with family in Council Bluffs, we wouldn't have to tow a toddler.

A rails-to-trails project spanning 63 miles, the Wabash Trace is mostly flat and passes through a handful of small towns and communities, each with something to stop and see. We covered about half the Wabash on our weekend journey, but if you're ambitious (especially if you plant a car at one end), you should be able to squeeze in the entire trail.

As magazine deadlines would have it, our ride was set in late spring, when morel hunters were more abundant than bicyclists on the crushed limestone trail. This was also the weekend of the Wabash Trace's annual spring kickoff, a ride along the northernmost 9.6 miles of the trail that ends in a fundraising buffet dinner and auction.

Despite a soggy start to Saturday, by midafternoon the weather was cooperating enough for dozens of cyclists to

congregate at the Council Bluffs trailhead and set off for Tobey Jack's in Mineola, a steakhouse that's well regarded by local riders for its Tuesday night taco special.

The more industrial landscape of Council Bluffs' outskirts quickly gives way to pastures, pumpkin patches and rural backyards. The trail here offers many resting spots, some nicknamed by local residents. There's Night Train, a huge handmade chaise lounge-style bench perched on a high bank; and Margaritaville, with picnic tables, a fire pit and bike racks that practically instruct you to stop, crack open a cold one, and celebrate that you're halfway to dinner. The rest of the first leg gently slopes downhill, and before we knew it we were in line for fried chicken and helping ourselves to chocolate cake.

Many of the riders we met are volunteers who've dedicated decades of their lives to building the Wabash. Speak with them and the ride becomes more than the sum of amenities and vistas. Suddenly you're part of a project that brings people together to build bridges and clear trees so others can experience their communities. The trail is a grass-roots tourism endeavor spearheaded by people with a distinct sense of pride in their hometowns. People like Rebecca Castle, 31, the Southwest Iowa Nature Trails board president.

"I remember being 4 years old and riding parts of the trail when it was just down to the ballast," Castle says.

Her father, Terry Castle, was one of the founders of the trail. Now she's pouring her energy into the area, as a volunteer and as the owner of the Emerald Isle, a restaurant and bar in Imogene that we set as the final destination for our trip. Before we could make it there, though, we had two other pass-through towns to explore: Silver City (population 237) and Malvern (population 1,142). The trail extends

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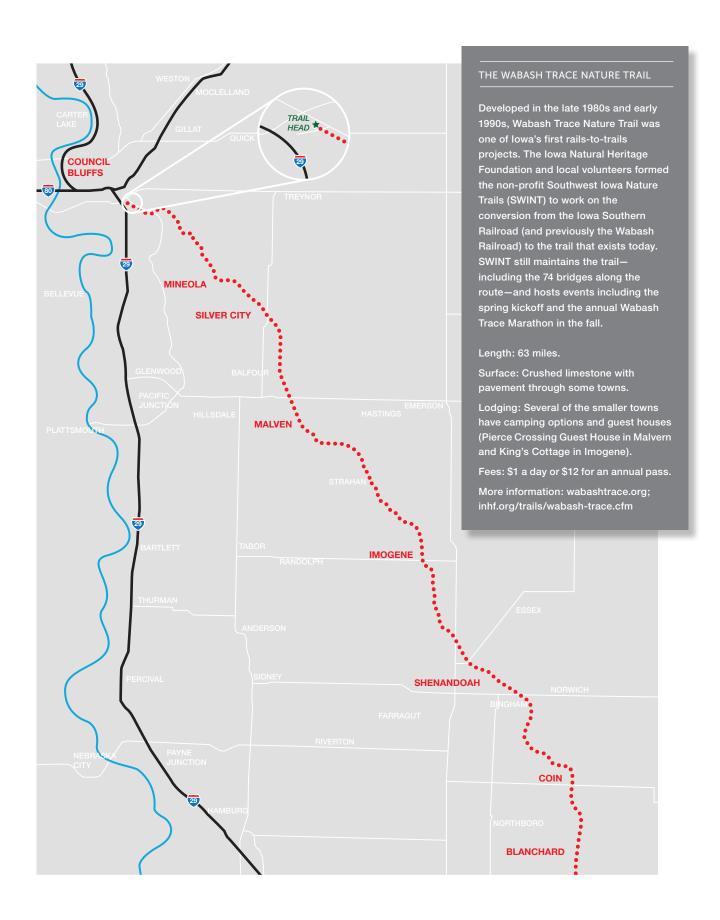






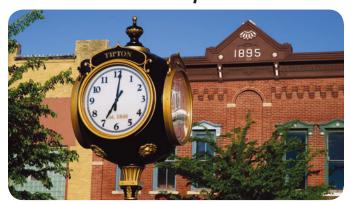






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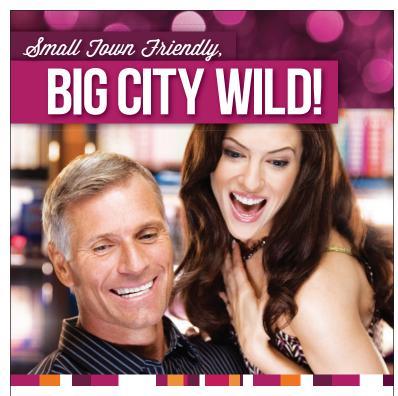
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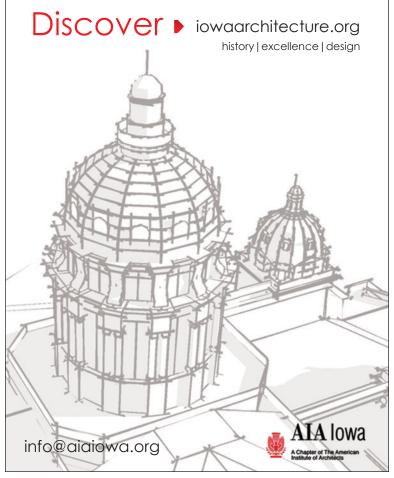
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Continued from page 144

beyond Imogene through Shenandoah, Coin and Blanchard; we just didn't have the grease to get all the way down on this trip.

Sunday, we started back up in Mineola. The trail was still soupy in spots, sucking at our tires and making for slower going, but the sun was shining through the budding tree canopy. It was a short stop in Silver City, where the town watering hole, the Hood, was just opening up for the day. Instead, we munched on snacks we'd packed, enjoying them in a gazebo alongside the trail. We then dodged a mutt that seemed to have appointed himself sheriff of the restored, and comically small, 1911 Silver City Jail.

Just when we felt like the trail was getting lonely, a wild turkey flew from its roost and swooped down a few yards from our front tires, nearly sending me over my handlebars in fright. We picked up the pace to make it to Malvern before lunch, and had enough time to do a quick loop of the Main Street before sliding into a booth at the Classic Cafe.

The vibe there, as with the rest of the town, was artistic. A forest mural with a Bob Ross quote fills the back wall, and our pulled pork and club sandwiches were more than enough to fuel us for the long final leg to Imogene.

Before leaving town, we walked our bikes up the hill to the "Art Church," a 140-year-old church that's been repurposed into the home, gallery and studio space of artist Zack Jones. The hours are irregular, and the doors were closed, so we pedaled on.

There aren't many benches or bathrooms in the 13.6 miles between Malvern and Imogene, so best to take care of any, ahem, business in town. We broke up the long leg into three sections, resting on bridges and counting down the miles using the old train markers that told conductors how far it was to Saint Louis along the Wabash Railroad.

Before we knew it, the green water tower proclaiming the proudly Irish town of Imogene was visible from the trail. Although we didn't stay in the campsite at the trailhead there, we had to make a faux pit stop to snap photos of some uniquely rustic rural plumbing—a grain bin repurposed as a restroom and shower house.

Living up to its Irish heritage, Imogene's main attractions are a pub, the Emerald Isle, and St. Patrick Catholic Church. As luck would have it (perhaps brought on by crossing the giant shamrock painted on Railroad Street?), the Catholic youth of the community were hosting a fundraiser and serving up generous slices of homemade pie (which isn't always on the menu) at the Emerald Isle. Key lime for Joe and Snickers for me; pie is the perfect dessert to satisfy any cyclist's sweet tooth and reason to celebrate spandex pants.

Castle stopped by our table and talked us into a quick tour of the church, which is celebrating its 100th year in 2015. The labor of love of a wealthy priest who brought a marble altar from Europe and commissioned stunning stained glass from a contemporary of the famed Charles Lewis Tiffany, St. Patrick remains a sight to behold.

Spend a weekend riding the Wabash Trace, and you'll cross through communities that care not only about preserving their past but also about celebrating the future of small-town lowa.

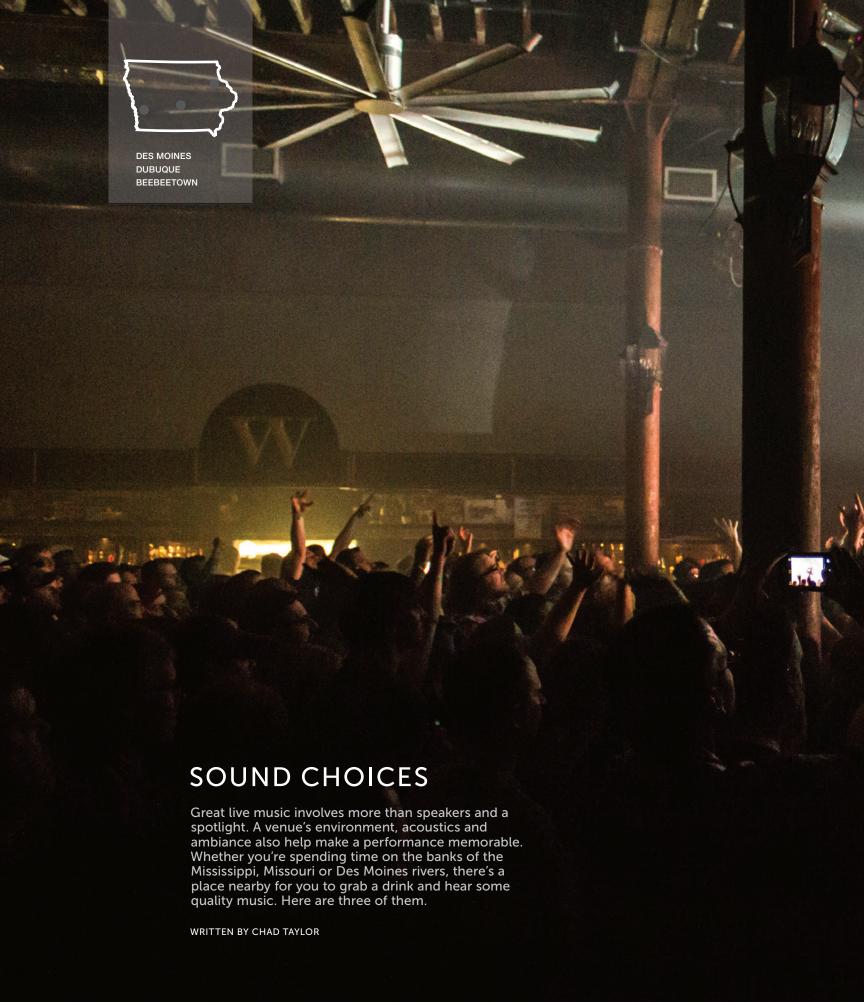


## INPROVE YOUR BOTTOM LINE

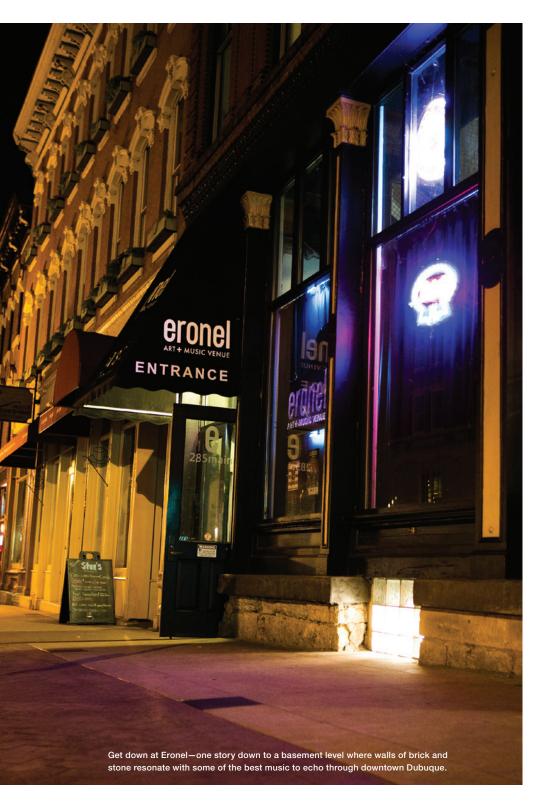
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## **DUBUQUE**

## **ERONEL**

As the 20th century entered its final decade, Dubuque had lost much of its industry, and that, in turn, sapped much of the city's energy. That started to change in the '90s, first through casino money, then thanks to companies like IBM coming to town. Now, Dubuque has been restored to its place as a jewel along the Mississippi, and there may be no establishment in town that embodies the city's joyously unexpected resurgence more than Eronel.

Opened in 2013, Eronel is located in the basement of the 120-year-old Copper Wagon Works building in downtown Dubuque. The space features 6,000 square feet of bare limestone and brick, as well as a dedicated stage, space for local art, a room-length bar and tunnels leading to secluded spots away from the main floor.

"It had been a couple different things, but when we took it over, it had been vacant for a couple of years," co-founder Drew Bissell says of the space. "The building owners came to us and said 'Hey, we've got this space.' We took one walk-through, and it was no doubt."

But while Eronel is visually stunning, the real meat of the place is in the entertainment. Bissell had experience booking acts in other establishments around town, so when it came time to open his own joint, a lot of the phone calls were easy ones to make.

"The night we opened, (Iowa Citybased Americana legend) Dave Zollo came in and played," Bissell says. "Before we even opened, we had the first three months booked."

Since then, Eronel has developed a strong reputation among the Dubuque

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music faithful, and the bands that tour the state. With its gorgeous aesthetic and excellent sound, Eronel is a space that caters to the music lovers on both sides of the monitors.

"It's pretty easy to pitch (to bands)," Bissell explains. "We're three to five hours from every place they're traveling to. Even bands from Des Moines, going to Chicago. It's like 'Dude, give yourself two three-hour drives, and come play here. We'll give you a show.' We've got the room, we've got the space, and there are people who love live music in this town."

285 Main St. (The business doesn't have a phone number.) eroneldbq.com

## DES MOINES WOOLY'S

As Des Moines worked throughout the early 21st century to revitalize its downtown, the extreme east and west ends of the corridor became points of concentrated effort. Western Gateway Park has become an art lover's paradise, while the East Village has become home to some of lowa's most out-of-the-ordinary businesses and venues.

Established in the East Village in 2012, Wooly's burst upon the Des Moines music scene seemingly devoid of the growing pains that often plague first-year businesses. This is in no small part due to the pedigree of the man behind the curtain, Sam Summers. Long before Wooly's graced the neighborhood, Summers was making his stamp on the capital city's music scene with his promotion company, First Fleet Concerts. After years of putting quality touring acts into other people's venues, Summers decided he wanted a place of his own, and Wooly's was born.









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Taking its name from the space it occupies (the building formerly housed a Woolworth's), Wooly's is an 8,000-square-foot space with a completely open layout that gives the venue a clean, uncluttered feel. Wooly's also fits a much-needed niche in Des Monies' music scene: Most of the other traditional music venues range in capacity from 100 to 350 people, before making the jump to the 1,200-seat Hoyt Sherman Place. With a maximum capacity of 700, Wooly's can host acts that would outsell other venues downtown but would feel lost in the 16,000-seat Iowa Events Center.

Additionally, Summers constructed Wooly's with an eye toward the artist. The most visible testament to this is in the sound system: Wooly's boasts one of the best sound systems in town, and it all comes through a gigantic speaker rig that formerly belonged to AC/DC. But the most important artist perks can't be seen from the front of the house. Wooly's features two green rooms, so headlining and supporting acts can have their own space, and the backstage area includes showers and a washer/dryer, both of which can go a long way toward making an act feel human again after three weeks on a bus.

It's all of these things—Summers' experience, Wooly's size and the quality of the amenities and experience—that explain why Wooly's has been one of the must-hit venues in central Iowa. In the past three years, Wooly's has hosted acts as diverse as Matthew Sweet, Jakob Dylan, Karmin, Motion City Soundtrack and Shakey Graves, as well as Iowa acts ranging from Stone Sour to William Elliott Whitmore.

504 E. Locust St. 515.244.0550 woolysdm.com

## BEEBEETOWN

## THE TWISTED TAIL

Off of I-80's well-beaten path, in one of the more secluded reaches of lowa's western wilds, lies Beebeetown. Google it; I assure you it will show up. Type it into your GPS, however, and it will list your final destination as Logan; a town that is, in fact, 10 miles to the north. It is also, with a population of 1,534, an order of magnitude larger. In fact, that very same Google search will do its level best to convince you that the only reason Beebeetown exists at all is to be the home of the Twisted Tail.

Opened in August 2012, the Twisted Tail's tagline is "Middle of nowhere, close to everywhere." Aside from being clever, it's also not far from the truth. While it's not on any major thoroughfare, tiny Beebeetown sits just 35 minutes from Omaha, an hour and a half from Des Moines, and three hours from Kansas City. Though smaller than Eronel and Wooly's, the Twisted Tail's 2,000 square feet can play host to 400 people. In the summer months, the festivities move to an outdoor stage that bumps the venue's capacity to 1,000. But why, comes the obvious question, Beebeetown?

"My parents actually live in the original Beebee house, which Beebeetown is named after," says Hannah Spencer Johnsen, who acts as the Twisted Tail's booking agent. "My family works in real estate, and we have several investments in town."

The space at 2849 335th St. doesn't have the century-old pedigree of the buildings in Dubuque or Des Moines, but it still has strong ties to the community, having been the longtime home of a feed store.

"We took it all down to the studs and remade the entire place," Johnsen explains. "Right at the beginning we put a stage outside. We have live music there most Thursday through Saturday nights."

The rural setting and large outdoor space have worked in the Twisted Tail's favor, as the stage has hosted musical acts as well as wrestling shows, and the adjacent lot frequently holds tractor pulls in the summer. But musically, the Twisted Tail holds its own with any spot in the state, hosting lowa-based acts such as Brother Trucker and Randy Burk & the Prisoners, as well as nationally recognized acts like platinumselling country artist John Michael Montgomery. However, because of its off-the-path location and relatively small size, the Twisted Tail has had to adopt a more direct approach when booking touring acts. Many venues located in larger cities can get by with giving bands a cut of the door as payment, with an 80/20 split in favor of the bands being fairly standard.

"We've been more of a flat fee,"
Johnsen says. "So we'll call an agent and
they'll say, 'It takes \$20,000 to get this
person,' and we'll work with that. We've
never tried to make a lot of money off
the shows; we're just trying to stay
afloat and bring good music to town."

2849 335th St. 712.644.3942 twistedtailbbtown.com ■

## GLOBAL FRONTIER

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Our state's brain trust of scientists and farmers, rich topsoil and cutting-edge agricultural research institutions have positioned us to compete in the ever-growing agbioscience field. In 2014 alone, the Ames-Des Moines metropolitan area drew \$1.8 billion in investment, including new capital projects and jobs from more than twenty agribusiness ventures. Companies such as Boehringer Ingelheim, Kemin Industries and DuPont Pioneer are making groundbreaking contributions in our backyard. We want these investments to continue to grow in lowa.

To foster and attract bioscience investments, area business and community leaders founded the Cultivation Corridor, a public-private partnership meant to develop a dynamic approach to scaling lowa's agriculture economy. Over the last 18 months, the Corridor has collaborated with many of the state's most influential agriculture organizations and promoted lowa's agricultural ecosystem to new domestic and international markets. There is still much work to be done, but the Corridor is off to a strong start.

We are proud to serve as founding co-chairs of the Cultivation Corridor, and we are excited to welcome the Corridor's next generation of leadership. We believe the future of lowa's agriculture economy lies in rising to meet the challenges presented by a growing world population. Now is the time for lowa to seize the position as the global leader in agbioscience and biotechnology.

Dr. Steven Leath

President, Iowa State University

Cultivation Corridor Founding Co-Chair

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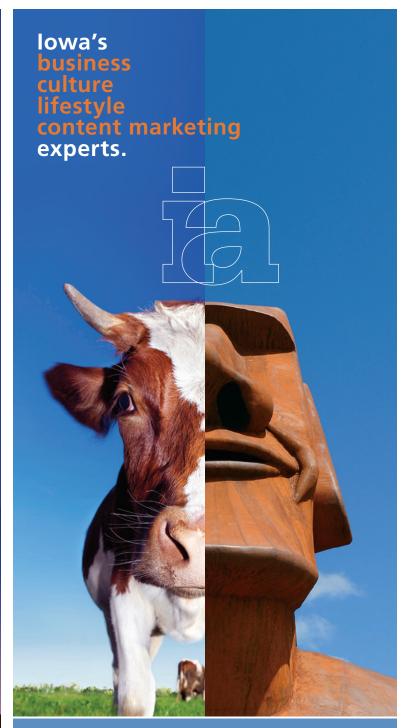


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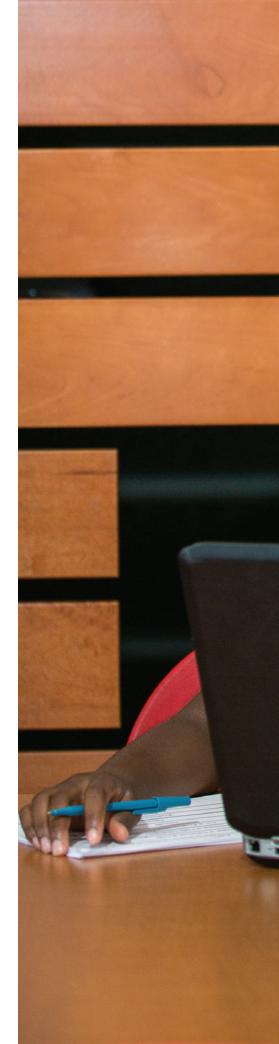




## CAREER PATHS BLOOM ATOP WELL-ROOTED STEM

Iowa is a national leader in mentoring girls to consider fields in science, technology, education and math.

WRITTEN BY COLLEEN BRADFORD KRANTZ





ttl m s E c d

s a fourth-grader, Vanessa Koffi thought she might want to be a nurse. One year later, the student at Waterloo's Lou Henry Elementary has her sights set on being an engineer.

Vanessa's views shifted after participating in a Waterloo School District program that

connects young girls with female mentors working in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields.

"When I started the STEM program, I got the feeling that I wanted to be in engineering," says Vanessa, 11, of Waterloo. She not only grew close to her mentor but also to other like-minded girls, which gave her the support of peers.

Vanessa isn't the only lowa girl who's gaining ideas and inspiration for a STEM-related career. In September 2014, lowa government and business leaders vowed during a gathering at the state Capitol in Des Moines to find mentors for girls in certain careers where women are underrepresented. Within six months of that press conference, more than 1,800 lowans had stepped forward.

Those behind the statewide public-private initiative hope to identify by 2018 at least 5,000 STEM mentors.

The lowa effort is part of the national Million Women Mentors (MWM) program, which was launched in January 2014 and aims to recruit 1 million STEM mentors for girls and women in middle school through college.

lowa was the first among 29 states to join the national initiative. "If we are going to be competitive not only as a state but as a nation, we need to make sure our students have these skills," says lowa Lt. Gov. Kim Reynolds. "It's absolutely critical."

Reynolds led lowa's early efforts and spread the word to other states through her role as vice chair of the National Lieutenant Governors Association. "The state of Iowa has been a trailblazer for Million Women Mentors under the leadership of Lt. Gov. Kim Reynolds," says Julie Kantor, a vice president at STEMconnector, the Washington D.C.-based company that launched the national MWM initiative. "She is an incredible champion of girls and women in STEM, and she and her team are some of the hardest-working state leaders in the whole initiative." Kantor adds that other states, such as Tennessee and Montana, have credited Reynolds

"THE JOBS OF TODAY
AND TOMORROW ARE REALLY
DEPENDENT ON PEOPLE
HAVING THESE THINKING
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STEM BRINGS THEM."

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only 24 percent of those in STEM-related fields," says Lt. Gov. Kim Reynolds. "There is a huge discrepancy we need to address." Reynolds was an early advocate for the national mentorship program. Photo by Duane Tinkey.

"Women are 48 percent of the workforce, but

with encouraging them to add MWM to their STEM efforts.

Reynolds "got behind it from a leadership position to send a letter to all 50 states," says Jana Rieker of Des Moines, who serves as a co-chair of Million Women Mentors-Iowa.

Calls from other states have continued to come in to Reynolds' office. "We are a national model," Reynolds says. "We have other states that are looking to lowa to see how we set it up."

## "A HUGE DISCREPANCY"

Specifically, the lowa program's goals are to increase the percentage of high school and college females pursuing STEM degrees and the percentage of women staying in

STEM fields after graduation. "Women are 48 percent of the workforce, but only 24 percent of those in STEM-related fields," Reynolds says. "Right now, there is a huge discrepancy we need to address."

Debi Durham, director of the Iowa Economic
Development Authority (IEDA), says strong participation
in STEM fields by both men and women will help ensure
Iowa's success in a world economy. STEM-related
employment in the United States is projected to increase
by 16.5 percent between 2010 and 2020, to more than
8.5 million jobs, according to the White House Council on
Women and Girls. And a shortage of 230,000 STEM
employees is projected.

"The jobs of today and tomorrow are really dependent on people having these thinking skills ... and in order for our youth to succeed in the marketplace, they need to have the skill sets that, quite frankly, STEM brings them," says Durham, who has served on the board for Girls Inc., which offers mentoring through affiliates across the United States and Canada.

Million Women Mentors-lowa sets up new mentormentee relationships as well as ties into existing mentoring programs for girls, helping these programs find more volunteers. "One of the things we wanted to do was bring a platform for Million Women Mentors to bring all the other efforts around the state in," says Rieker. "There's great



## CENTRAL COLLEGE



## **ADAM BARTELT '08**

Des Moines, Iowa

Marketing Project Manager at Orchestrate Hospitality

Adam handles marketing and promotions for Des Moines restaurants like Centro, Django, Zombie Burger + Drink Lab, Gateway Market & Café, Malo and more.

MAJOR: Art MINOR: Visual Communication

**INTERNSHIP:** Hatch Creations, graphic design firm in London, England, while studying abroad

WHY HE LOVES HIS JOB: "On any given day I could be working on special events and menus for a fine-dining restaurant, editing photos for the world's premier zombie-themed burger joint or facilitating a charitable partnership with a local food-related nonprofit. That variety is one of the best things about working at Orchestrate."

WHY CENTRAL: "The financial aid package I received at Central made tuition nearly comparable to attending a state university. Coupling that with Central's prestigious study abroad program, it was a pretty easy decision."







Debi Durham (left) is the director of the Iowa Economic Development Authority. Jana Rieker (above) serves as a co-chair of Million Women Mentors in Iowa. Photos by Duane Tinkey.

curriculum and wonderful programming, but we needed to get mentors to encourage young women and girls."

Million Women Mentors-lowa hopes to locate volunteer STEM mentors in all of lowa's 99 counties. Its website, mwmia.org, allows individuals to volunteer 20 hours a year over the next three years or companies to pledge time from their employees. It also has information for girls wanting to find a mentor.

"We aren't inventing volunteerism for STEM mentoring. We are just emphasizing the importance of it," Rieker explains.

## **TEAMMATES IN WATERLOO**

Gabrielle Egli, the plant engineering manager at ConAgra Foods in Waterloo, volunteered to mentor through TeamMates, the Waterloo School District mentoring program. Egli is now volunteering for a second year with Vanessa Koffi, the fifth-grader who once planned to become a nurse.

Egli leaves work once a week during her lunch break to meet with Vanessa at school. They also meet separately with the other mentors and mentees to talk about the year's project. Last year, the pairs each built self-propelled cars. This year, they are working on designing small-scale earthquake-proof buildings, which they test on shake tables.

"When I first started working with her last year, my mentee was interested in nursing because that's what she had been exposed to, but now she is talking about engineering," Egli says. "Now, maybe she won't do it—it's not for everyone—but it's an option she feels she can think about now. And that's progress, right?"

Kantor, with the national MWM program, says research







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## WOMEN IN STEM CAREERS MAKE 92 CENTS FOR EVERY DOLLAR A MAN MAKES. THAT COMPARES TO ONLY 77 CENTS IN OTHER FIELDS.

shows that girls often decide their futures by middle school—not necessarily what they will be but what they won't be.

"A lot of times, they are deciding to walk away from math and science. They think that's for boys, and it impacts the whole pipeline," Kantor says. Women in STEM careers in the United States make 92 cents for every dollar a man makes, but make only 77 cents for every dollar in other fields, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Vanessa agrees that being in a STEM-mentoring program has helped her become more aware of career options. "If you say something about engineering, most girls might think it's something a guy would do," she says. "But I think it doesn't matter what gender you are, because engineering would be a nice job to have."

Born in Africa's Ivory Coast, Vanessa was just nine months old when her family brought her to the United States. Her mother grew up in Liberia, a place she has never visited. The two like to imagine, however, that Vanessa might someday work to improve conditions in Liberia or other parts of Africa. "I'm not really in it (engineering) for the money," she says. "I'm in it for the betterment of the world's future. I would go back to Africa and help those in need."

## PROVIDING ENCOURAGEMENT

Despite having a strong childhood interest and ability in math, Egli says she wasn't introduced to engineering as an option until late in high school. Today, she says, it is important to think about how engineering is presented to girls versus boys.

"I think all children should be encouraged to look at STEM fields, but girls inherently are sometimes directed socially to other realms," says Egli, who has a daughter and three sons. "And it's not because they aren't smart enough or can't do it, but it just comes across as something not interesting for many girls. So I think it's important to show them that it can be fun. It's not just numbers, but relate it to how you can problem-solve."

That nurturing attitude can work in mentoring relationships too, says IEDA's Durham: "There is nothing more powerful, I think, than women helping women. Women by nature tend to have a more nurturing spirit about them, and when they come alongside and help other women," it opens doors.

However, among people with STEM degrees, women are more than twice as likely as men to work in non-STEM fields, according to the federal government. Specifically, 14 percent of STEM-educated women work in other areas, compared with 6 percent of STEM-educated men.

"For women, it's more of a time issue because maybe I'm starting a family or I have other things I want to do," Durham says. But it's important for women to not only embrace that ability to choose, but also support other women in the choices they make, she adds.

"Five years from now, if you and I were having this conversation, I think we (would) see a much different landscape than today," Durham says. ■



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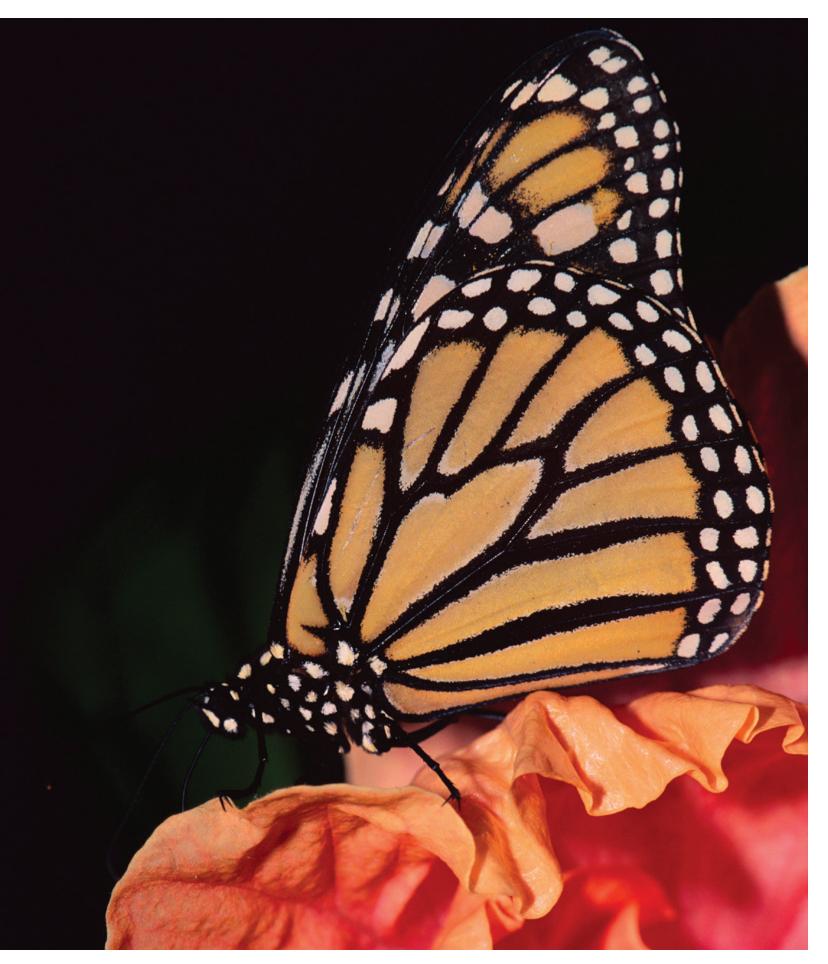




## PROTECTING THE MONARCHY

A new group is devoted to saving the majestic monarch butterfly in Iowa.

WRITTEN BY MARY CHALLENDER



eep in a lab at Iowa State University, dozens of little white dots cover the leaves of a small orange-flowered milkweed plant.

Under a microscope, the dots are revealed as tiny cream-colored monarch butterfly eggs, clinging to the milkweed leaves like delicate

jeweled Christmas ornaments.

"They even start out beautiful," says an admiring Richard Hellmich, an assistant professor at Iowa State. Hellmich, who holds a doctorate, is also a research entomologist with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service.

Hellmich is part of a new group that is trying to save the beauty of the monarch for future generations of Iowans to enjoy. Called the Iowa Monarch Conservation Consortium, the group is bringing together scientists, farmers, conservationists, corporations, state agencies, college students, university researchers and homeowners across Iowa in an effort to halt an alarming decline in monarch populations.

A migratory species, the monarch once occupied about 45 acres in the Oyamel fir forests in Mexico, where they live through the winter, with an estimated 20 million butterflies per acre. Monarchs covered the trees in a blanket so thick

the trees appeared orange when seen from the air. This past winter, they occupied less than three acres.

## LONG JOURNEY

Illegal logging in the Mexican forests has ripped away hundreds of acres of firs, and drought in Texas has threatened the monarch's annual migration, which spans some 3,000 miles and takes three to four generations. But a root cause of the monarch's decline may lie in lowa, smack in the middle of the monarch's summer breeding range.

That monarch butterflies love milkweed is no secret. It is the only plant on which the female will lay her eggs, and the leaf of the milkweed is the sole food source for the larvae. Adult monarchs also rely on milkweed nectar for sustenance.

Milkweed was once so ubiquitous in lowa that if you had cut the land, it probably would have bled milkweed sap. Then herbicide-tolerant Roundup Ready corn and soybeans arrived, making it easy for farmers to target the unwelcome invaders hiding within their corn and soybean fields. Milkweed plants started to become more scarce in lowa. So did the monarch butterfly.

The Iowa Monarch Conservation Consortium believes bringing milkweed back to the Iowa landscape will help reverse the decline in monarch populations. They're not asking farmers to turn back the clock to the pre-Roundup Ready days, though. "We don't expect growers to allow



MONARCH NUMBERS ARE SO LOW THAT ONE BAD WINTER STORM IN MEXICO COULD MAKE THEM A RARITY IN IOWA.

weeds back into their fields," Hellmich says. "We are asking them to look at the land they're not using, maybe along field edges or odd-shaped pieces or land that's too wet. Can that land, the marginal land, be used for habitat?"

## HABITAT PROTECTION

Although the monarch butterfly is the flagship species that everyone can rally around, there are larger issues fluttering around the edges of the "save the monarch" campaign. Habitat for other butterflies, bees, songbirds, pheasants and eagles is also being squeezed in lowa's agriculture-dominated landscape, and water quality and soil erosion issues are constantly in the news.

This is why the lowa Monarch Conservation
Consortium is planning a research-based approach that
simultaneously studies the agronomy of establishing
habitats and the entomology of how monarchs respond to
those habitats. In addition to the butterfly breeding colony
at lowa State, thousands of milkweed seedlings from nine
species of milkweed that were grown in a university
greenhouse are being transplanted to research farms
around the state to be used in studies this summer.

Watching a young monarch emerge from its chrysalis may be nearly a rite of passage in lowa, but the truth is we don't know much about meeting its needs, says Sue Blodgett, chair of the department of entomology at lowa State, who holds a doctorate. What kind of milkweed do

monarchs prefer? Should the plants be spread out or clumped together? How much milkweed is enough?

"What we're trying to do ... is establish what the baseline is," Blodgett says. "We need to know what the milkweed population is. The same way with monarch populations."

## **FARMER SUPPORT**

The ag industry is often painted as the villain in the monarch's decline, but Blodgett says the support of farmers, farm organizations such as the Iowa Corn Growers Association and the Iowa Soybean Association, and ag-related corporations such as DuPont Pioneer and Monsanto has been pivotal to the formation of the Iowa Monarch Conservation Consortium. The consortium has also partnered with groups such as Monarch Watch and Monarch Joint Venture to establish monarch "way stations" in residential backyards and on corporate lawns.

Hellmich, who has put in a monarch way station at his home and is challenging his entire family—he has 10 siblings—to do the same, says the goal is to push the monarch population in Mexico to occupy about 15 acres, roughly five times the current area. There's a real sense of urgency about the consortium's work. Currently, monarch numbers are so low that one bad winter storm in Mexico could leave them too decimated, unable to migrate, meaning monarch sightings would become a rarity in lowa.

From an ecological standpoint, Hellmich admits, you would have a hard time arguing that the monarch butterfly, despite its orange- and black-veined majesty, plays a critical role in the ecosystem.

lowa, though, would be diminished without them. "We need them for their beauty," he says, "and for our children to enjoy."

For more information, visit monarch.ent.iastate.edu.





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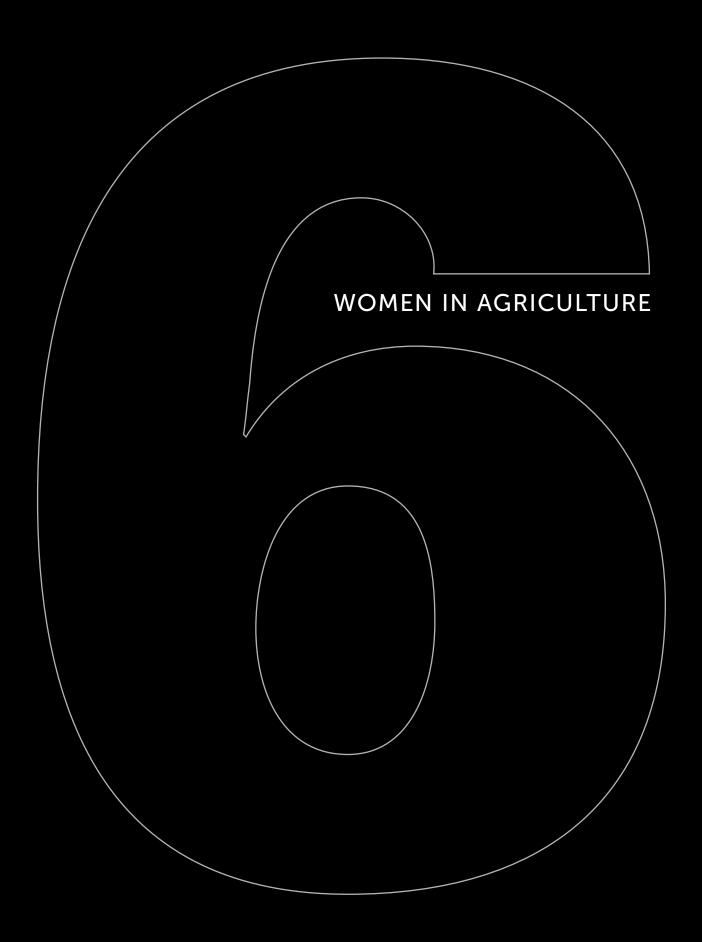
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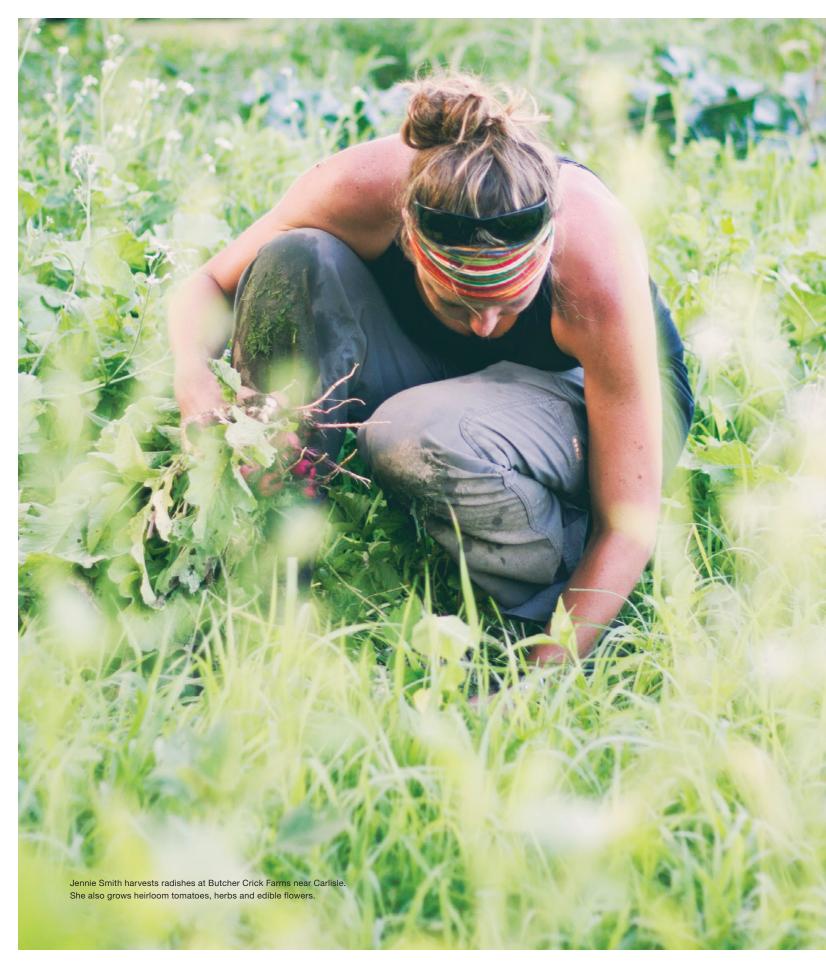


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## **FARMHER**

Where were the women?
When a tribute to America's farmers focused only on men, an Iowa photographer set out to correct the record and change perceptions.

WRITTEN BY LARRY ERICKSON
PHOTOS BY MARJI GUYLER-ALANIZ

ike much of America, Marji Guyler-Alaniz was watching the 2013 Super Bowl as the Ravens and 49ers clashed in New Orleans. An ad for Ram trucks featured a narrative from legendary broadcaster Paul Harvey, a tribute to American agriculture called "So God Created a Farmer." Under Harvey's narration, viewers saw images of

hardworking farmers—tough, rugged, manly ... men. It was touching, but incomplete.

The Des Moines Register was first to question the ad. Where were the women?

Guyler-Alaniz, 35, took the question to heart. A veteran of 11 years in corporate work, most recently in the insurance field, she yearned for a meaningful way to use her training in graphic design, journalism and photography. She sensed a calling, a need to document the hardworking and too-often invisible women of agriculture.

The result is FarmHer, an unvarnished pictorial project showcasing photos of often-gritty, industrious, unheralded women making their way in agriculture. In fact, Guyler-Alaniz says, census figures claim that 30 percent of farm operators are women.

"I think it's easily higher than that," she adds quickly. The statistics don't consider all of the quirky ownership structures of family farms, she explains, insisting that these women deserve to be seen as well as counted.

Guyler-Alaniz grew up in a rural area near Webster City, where she watched the farming operations of her neighbors and her grandparents, whose farm is now run by her uncle and cousins. Today she lives in Urbandale with her husband and two children, ages 6 and 4.

"My calendar is all backed up," she says, with photo shoots, exhibitions and speaking engagements. Her

Continues on page 192

















Above: Ranch dog Rosie waits for Shanen Ebersole to wrap up business at their local co-op. From here, Ebersole and Rosie will return to Ebersole Cattle Company in southern lowa to check on a herd of pastured beef cattle.

Left: Landi McFarland checks on calves at her family's Hoover Angus Farm in southern lowa. Representing the fourth generation to manage the farm, Landi works alongside her parents and grandfather.



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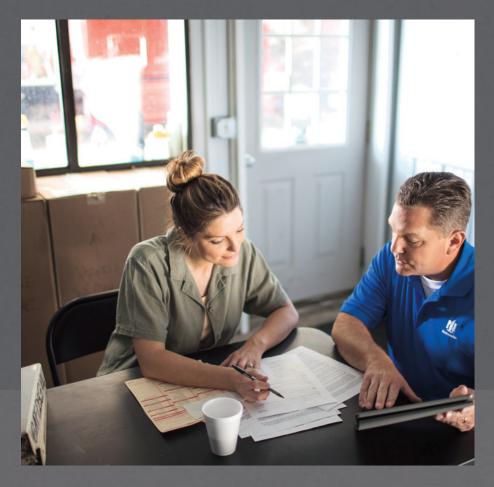
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Left: Anne Bohl hefts a bale of hay to spread in the chicken coop at Sweet Earth Farm, which she and a friend operate on the edge of Decorah.

Below: Sharon Krause and her sheep dog, Bo, take a break from checking pastures at Dalla Terra Ranch, an organic sheep operation in the rolling hills near Farlham





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MARJI GUYLER-ALANIZ



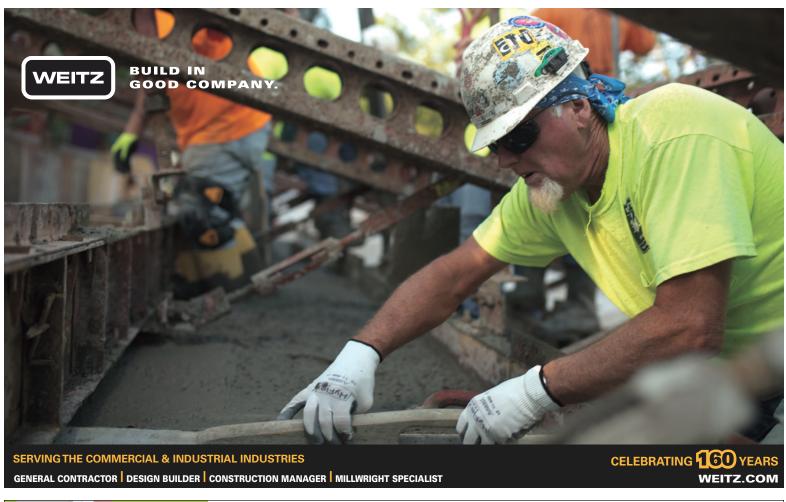
Packing her trusty Canon camera, Marji Guyler-Alaniz pauses in the Iowa countryside for a photo by her husband, Antonio Alaniz.

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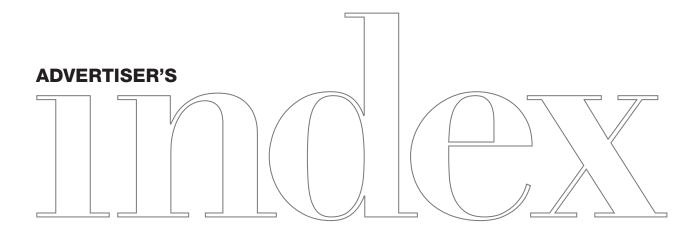
message is consistent and clear: Perceptions of the beauty of women are too often confined to the features of a face; the beauty in Guyler-Alaniz's women is in *how* they face the work of farming. From the joyful to the resolute, from merely gritty to downright grueling, the women she photographs present farm life in full—challenging, satisfying and not exclusively masculine.

The idea has caught on, as she had hoped, taking on a social media life of its own. "Hundreds and hundreds of women online share their own photos and are proud to be FarmHers," Guyler-Alaniz says. Some communicate through a FarmHer Facebook page and her website, farmher.com, where she promotes the mission and a line of clothing adorned with the FarmHer logo and spinoffs (RanchHer and GardenHer, for examples). Others seize on the idea and proudly identify themselves as FarmHers through their own social media, which delights Guyler-Alaniz, who believes they are at the forefront of a movement to raise awareness and ultimately lift the stature of farm women in American culture.

Armed with determination and a Canon camera, Guyler-Alaniz sees the bright beginnings of that change. This past summer, she was featured at the lowa State Fair and other fairs, and she participates in various conferences of Women in Agriculture, a national group that shares her commitment to elevate the role of women in ag careers. At press time, her photos were scheduled to be shown in September at the Polk County Heritage Gallery and will be displayed throughout the month of November at the Warren Cultural Center in Greenfield. Check the calendar on FarmHer.com for future exhibitions.







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