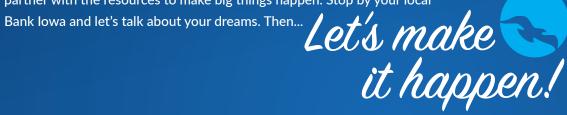


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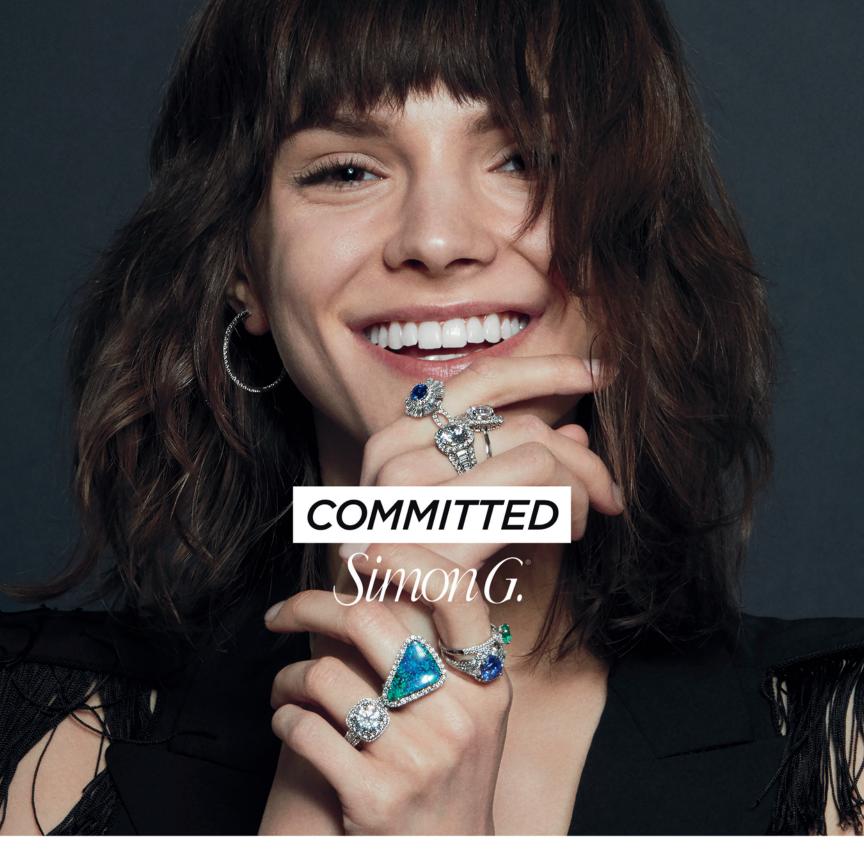
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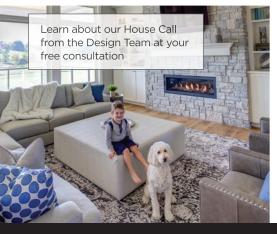
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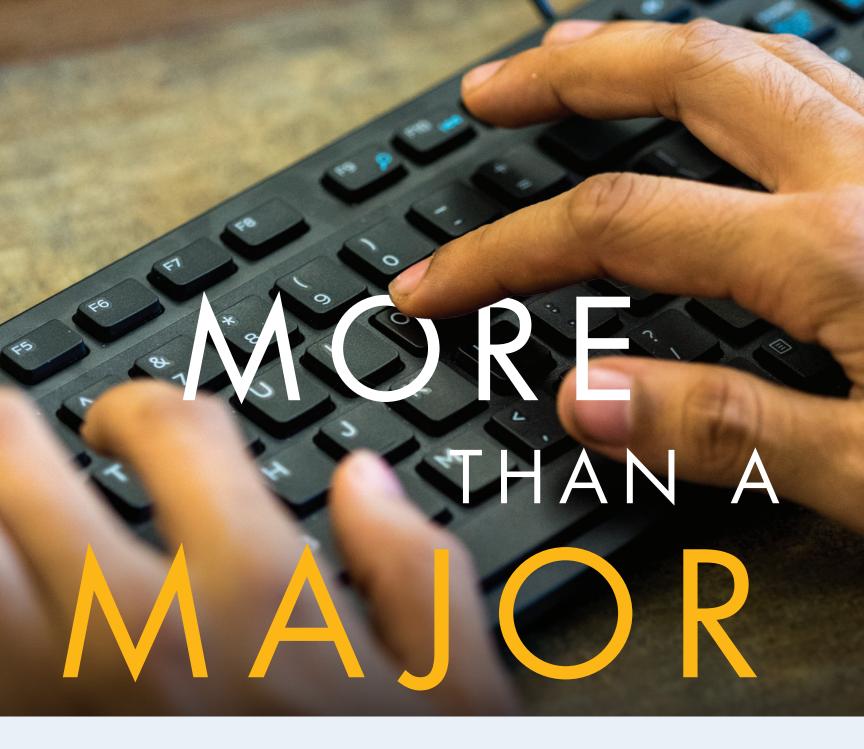
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### You're invited!

Join us June 23 for the launch party of the July/August issue at the Food Bank of Iowa, 2220 E. 17th St.

We'll have food, beverages and fun.
And we'll learn a bit about our host's mission, facilities and services. The party runs from 5 to 7 p.m.; join us anytime. A short program and distribution of the magazines will be at 6 p.m. All events pending COVID-19 guidance.





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Transgender LGBTQ Legacy Leader Award honoree Alexandra Gray. See story, page 100.



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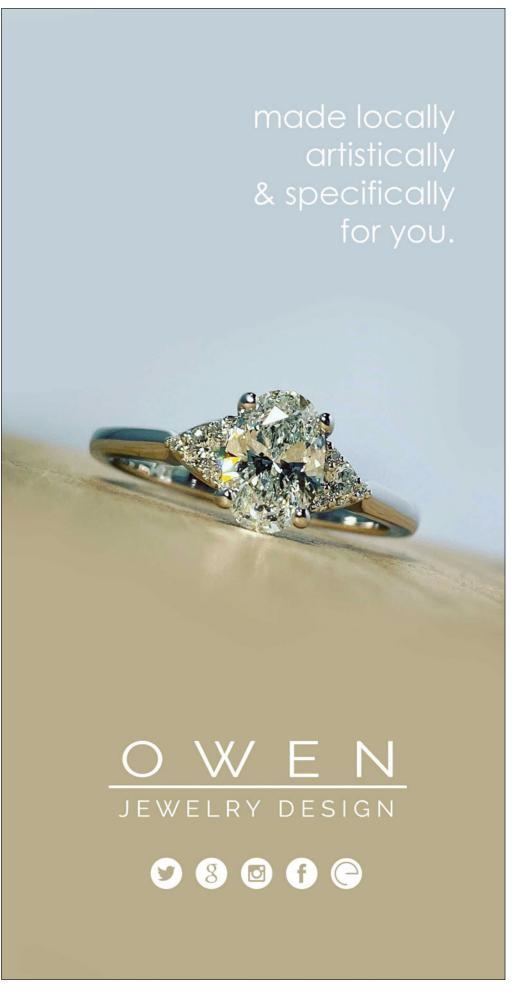
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ia: Discover the best of what lowa has to offer, from engaging destinations to beautiful homes and gardens. on "submit photos" on the top menu bar.







MAY | JUNE 2020 VOLUME 18 NUMBER 3

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# 20 EDITOR'S NOTE CHRISTINE RICCELLI



### **WE'RE IN THIS TOGETHER**

hen we completed the stories and photos for this issue, there were no reported cases of COVID-19 in Iowa, no talk of flattening the curve and no directives to shelter in place. But as I write this, a few days before this issue goes to the printer, the city has experienced a sea change, with attractions, restaurants, salons, and many other businesses shuttered; events, performances and other gatherings canceled; and many companies, including ours, operating remotely.

As I told some of my co-workers, in the past week I've used the word "pivot" more than I have in my entire life. We've pivoted the coverage in our newsletters—dsmWeekly, dsmWealth, dsmWeekend and ia—to include topics more relevant to this strange time, thanks especially to the extra efforts of contributors Steve Dinnen,

Wini Moranville, Karla Walsh, Rachel Vogel-Quinn, the lowa Department of Cultural Affairs' Michael Morain, and colleagues Larry Erickson and Luke Manderfeld. If you don't yet receive these free newsletters, I invite you to subscribe through our website, dsmMagazine.com.

With the long lead time required for print publications, though, such pivoting is more of a challenge with dsm. At this point, I'm hoping that by the time this issue is published, the events we highlight, such as the Des Moines Arts Festival, Des Moines Metro Opera and

charitable fundraisers, will be able to proceed as planned, and the restaurants we feature will be open and serving their grateful patrons.

But whatever happens, I also hope you can find inspiration—and a respite from coronavirus worries-within these pages, from beautiful home design (page 68) to the stirring life journeys of this year's LGBTQ Legacy Leaders (page 97) to Mayor Frank Cownie's perspectives on leadership (page 60). Like many of our readers, I find understanding and comfort can come through the arts, especially in the face of difficulty. In this issue, we spotlight Hannah Sung, an emerging and dynamic local artist (page 76), and also a project by contributing photographer Ben Easter and creative director Julie Severson (page 88). The "Edwina" project, also featured on our cover, may strike you as odd and even a little weird, but how fitting for this decidedly odd and weird time, no?

Throughout this crisis, Business Publications Corp., the parent company of dsm and our sister publication, the Business Record, continues to focus on fulfilling our mission to inform, inspire, elevate and celebrate Greater

Des Moines. I want to echo what our company president, Suzanna de Baca, said in a recent letter published in the Business Record: "We are here for you and with you as we navigate the challenges ahead. Together, we can continue to support our community, and each other, no matter what."

### # yourstylist

LAUREN PATRICK & her spa specialist RIAN



### ONE WORD AFTER ANOTHER JAMES A. AUTRY





So I began to wonder, where do these migrating flocks of lowans go and what do they do once they get to their warmer/cooler destinations? So purely as a matter of scientific research I decided to discern the answers by joining a migrating flock from time to time. Most of the winter flocks go to Florida, Arizona and Southern California. There's also a flock, sometimes called ski birds, that goes mostly to Colorado.

The summer flocks head—you guessed it—north. While some decide to nest in the "Great Lakes" region of lowa, the more adventurous ones keep going, mainly to Minnesota but including a few other places. Then there are the mountain migrants that go to—you guessed it—Colorado.

Once at the destinations, what do the lowans do? My research reveals

that it's no trick to name their warmweather activities; what's surprising is the answer to this question: With whom do they do these activities?

I had expected that these peripatetic Hawkeyes would seek out new and fascinating people from whom they would learn about other places and other cultures. But no. The social

WEATHER GETS
SPECIAL EMPHASIS,
PARTICULARLY
AMONG THE
SNOWBIRDS. BUT
THEY DON'T SEEM
SO INTERESTED IN
THE WEATHER
WHERE THEY ARE.

flocks I studied were composed of—you guessed it—other lowans.

During the great caucus season, some of these snowbirds held caucuses in their winter habitats that drew larger crowds than many caucus sites within the state. And, given that the caucuses come and go, what do all these lowans talk about when not talking about politics? Sports and the weather.

Weather gets special emphasis, particularly among the snowbirds. But they don't seem so interested in the weather where they are. No, they want to know about the weather back in Iowa. And they seem to take special delight in learning that the weather back home is just awful, as if they have been affirmed in their good judgment to migrate. In fact, the worse the Iowa weather, the happier they seem.

Oh, they won't admit it. They say things like, "I'm sorry my neighbors have to go through this." No, they're not. Or, "I miss the beautiful falling snow." No, they don't. They are perfectly happy sipping iced tea or, later, a cocktail, and smilling smugly to themselves.

In trying to explain these migratory phenomena, I have put forward the hypothesis that there is a secret but well-organized movement to develop colonies of settlers that will eventually inculcate the lowa culture into every state, especially the ones that are warm in the winter and cool in the summer.

James A. Autry (jamesaautry.com) of Des Moines is a well-known author, poet, musician and business consultant who has written 14 books on such topics as gratitude, servant leadership and his Southern boyhood.



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### NO FILTER KARLA WALSH



### NO COMPUTER ALLOWED

Tuesday, Sept. 3, 2019. It was one day after Labor Day and I was desperately in need of anything but labor.

Since I had quit my corporate job and become a full-time freelance writer and marketer on Jan. 1 that year, I had taken only one full day off—my birthday in May. And if I'm being honest, I even cheated a bit then, answering emails from my phone while out on a walk around the sculpture park during the unseasonably warm day.

Being productive had quickly become addictive. Creating and accomplishing provided a solid self-worth boost anytime I was feeling down and was a surefire way to feel like I was contributing to society. Plus, I simply and honestly love writing and reporting, answering questions readers are struggling with, digesting the latest scientific research and expert interviews and turning them into one cohesive story, and supporting local businesses through my work.

But I could feel that I was going overboard. Since I could finally see the benefit of "the hustle" in my bank account and had many soul-feeding clients, I'd sacrifice a bit of sleep here or an invitation with friends there for a high-profit story. I could see burnout on the horizon, and it was not a good scene.

So I did what I knew had helped me

run a "hard refresh" on life in the past (see the No Filter column in the March/April issue of dsm for more): I made plans to travel, this time to somewhere with lots of fresh air, adventure and as little cell reception as possible.

As I packed my bags, I included 10 clean pairs of socks, four books, and zero computers for the trip to Peru, where I planned to eat and explore my way through Lima, then complete a 55-mile trek to Machu Picchu. I was honestly worried about the impending anxiety, but I had set myself up for relaxation success: Each of my editors had a four-week warning, a two-week warning, and a one-week warning prior to my departure. I'd completed all outstanding stories and planned ahead for my marketing clients. My family knew how to reach me if any emergencies arose. No one would need me-but could I handle that? And could I hack it peeing in the woods, being out in the elements for a week straight, and trekking up to 15,100 feet?

The moment the plane door closed as we departed from Des Moines, I felt a sense of calm rush over me. With no work emails to respond to and all the time I needed to relax, my shoulders dropped a good inch. They dropped another the moment I reached the peak of the Salkantay Pass on the way to

Machu Picchu. As days flew by on the hike, the natural beauty that surrounded us, the peaceful, solitary steps and the fresh air became the new fuel to my flames—not the quiet ticking of keys on a keyboard or the ping of another email notification. It was almost like my mental web browser, which previously had dozens of tabs open and running all at once, was closed and given a software update by Mother Nature.

By the time I arrived home two weeks later, I was refreshed, rejuvenated and ready to reopen that laptop with renewed energy—and with the mindset that the world will hum along just fine without me always being "on" and plugged in. In the months since, I've been able to give myself a bit more grace for little "treat yourself" moments, from strolls around Gray's Lake to pedicures at a salon.

On the busiest days, a deep breath of clean air or an especially bright ray of sunshine acts as a vibrant reminder anytime I'm in a hustle-hustle-hustle rut. The scenery looks pretty incredible if you just look up from that screen.

Karla Walsh is a freelance writer, restaurant brand manager and spin instructor. Follow her on Instagram @karlawalsh, and contact her at karlawalsh@gmail.com.

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### FOCUS

OUT AND ABOUT // HIGH 5 // BOOKSHELF
DES MOINES MAKER // WHAT YOU'RE LISTENING TO

Florida artist Kirk Miller folds glass like fabric in the innovative work he will bring to the Des Moines Arts Festival this summer. See page 28 for more info on the festival.

### **FOCUS**

### **OUT AND ABOUT**

### WHAT WE'RE DOING IN MAY AND JUNE

A note from the editor: As this issue was going to press, the state was under a directive prohibiting public gatherings of more than 10 people. The events listed here are subject to change.

CITY OF ART It's the most wonderful time of the year. At least that's how we view the end of June, when both Art Week and the Des Moines Arts Festival take place, immersing the city in opportunities to experience all manner of visual and performing arts. Art Week, returning for its sixth year, revs up the celebration starting June 19. As a decentralized and collaborative community platform, Art Week typically consists of more than 60 events, most free, encompassing a range of art forms and activities. The celebration continues through June 26: check the website, artweekdesmoines. com, for details and updates.

The Des Moines Arts Festival is always a star event on our calendar. At the free juried festival, June 26-28 at Western Gateway Park, about 180 topnotch artists from around the country will show and sell their creations. We're looking forward to checking out the works of some of our favorites artists, including Chris Dahlquist, Lynda Ladwig and Ella Richards, as well as both local and new-to-us artists. A film festival, children's interactive activities, musical performances and more round out the fun.

SOUNDS OF MUSIC With the goal of fostering "music everywhere," City

Sounds this summer again will station 10 artful pianos—all freshly painted by local artists—around town for anyone to play at any time. To unveil this year's pianos, the organization will host an opening event May 1 at Mainframe Studios. The free family-friendly event will also include music (of course) as well as an auction. For more details and to find out where the pianos will be located, visit citysoundsdsm.org.

SIS AC Pyra Com seas

SISTERS ACT Pyramid Theatre Company will open its season June 12 with

"Having Our Say: The Delaney Sisters'
First 100 years." Adapted from their
best-selling memoir, "Having Our Say"
tells the true story of centenarians
Bessie and Sadie Delaney as the sisters
reminisce about the challenges and joys
of their lives. The women, whose father
was born into slavery, experienced or
witnessed many of the 20th century's
most dramatic events, such as the Jim
Crow South, the Harlem Renaissance
and the civil rights era. They also both
earned advanced college degrees and
achieved professional prominence,
unusual for black women of the time.

The two actors will address the audience, welcoming everyone to their home as they have a tea party. "We wanted to create an atmosphere that's inclusive," notes Tiffany Johnson, Pyramid's producing artistic director. "Having Our Say," which the Chicago Tribune called "the best-ever dramatization of oral history," runs through June 21 at Stoner Theater in the Des Moines Civic Center. Tickets are \$20, available through dmpa.org or at the box office.





**FUN FINDS** A new event hosted by the Des Moines Founders Garden Club promises to be one treasure hunters won't want to miss. The Founders'

Market and Plant Sale May 29 and 30 at Salisbury House and Gardens will offer new and gently used furniture and decor, housewares, framed art, antiques, jewelry and plenty of plants, including ornamental herbs, topiaries and potted arrangements, as well as wheel-turned terra cotta pots made in Perry.

Hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day. The event is free, but if you want first dibs, you can pay \$50 at the door to attend a one-hour advance sale from 9 to 10 a.m. May 29. Proceeds will help fund local outdoor- and garden-related projects and organizations; in the past, funding has benefited, for example, the Fleur Drive beautification project, the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden and Gray's Lake.

WINEFEST **EXPANDS** What's better than a one-week celebration of wine and food? Why, two weeks, of course. So lucky for us,

Winefest Des Moines is expandingstretching this year from May 26 to June 6. We're especially looking forward to a new event on June 2 that will include a docent-led tour of three artworks at the Des Moines Art Center, followed by a three-course dinner based on those three pieces. A few other highlights:

The elegant prima dinners on May 28 will take place at the homes of Rick Tollackson, Steve and Cathy Lacy, Cory and Jaclyn Gourley, Bill and Pauline Niebur, and Matt and Kim Mausser, as well as at the River Center.

The Iowa Pork Lawn Party on May 31 is moving to Salisbury House and Gardens.

The June 3 progressive dinner will amble through downtown's Western Gateway, starting at Proof and then proceeding to Centro, Malo and Bubba.

For details on these and other events, visit winefestdesmoines.com.

**JUSTIN FAVELA** 

We're eagerly anticipating the Des Moines Art Center's

new exhibit by mixed-media artist Justin Favela, which opens June 13. Inspired by his Mexican and Guatemalan heritage as well as his identity as a queer Latinx living in Las Vegas, Favela creates bold, colorful works drawing from history and popular culture. His large-scale installations and sculptures are made by layering pieces

papier-mâché pinatas. Despite their festive appearance, the works explore a deeper story that challenges cultural appropriation and exploitation. More info: desmoinesartcenter.org.

of cut paper that often look like huge



### 1. SAYLORVILLE AND EASTER LAKES:

I love being near water and finding quiet moments in nature to inspire me.

2. XBK: This intimate performing arts venue on 24th Street near Drake University makes the arts more accessible by being located near an underserved community. Local and regional musicians and other artists perform there.

### 3. FREEDOM BLEND

**COFFEE:** The mission of this coffee shop is wonderful—and the coffee is really good. With the goal to bring

employment training to young people, Freedom of Youth ministry opened the coffeehouse in 2017 in a renovated car wash on Hickman Road.

### 4. SAY WHAT POETRY AT

LEFTY'S: Lenny Bell has been faithful to this poets collective for years, and you can hear some of the most beautiful words ever from the people who take that stage.

### 5. STUFFED OLIVE:

Because, well, who doesn't love a good martini?



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### **FOCUS**

### **BOOKSHELF**

### WHAT YOU'RE WRITING

We've been fans of award-winning writer Tim Bascom ever since he published his memoirs chronicling his childhood years spent in Ethiopia as the son of missionaries ("Chameleon Days" in 2006 and "Running to the Fire" in 2015). Now Bascom, who previously taught at Drake University and is now chair of the English Department at Waldorf College, has a new book that was expected to be released in early April: "Climbing Lessons" (Light Messages Publishing) consists of 40 short, interlinked storiesbased on his own experiences-that explore the bond between fathers and sons. "I am intrigued by what might be universal in the relationship between sons and fathers, and I am intrigued by what has to change," Bascom writes in the book's intro.

Bascom has a deft prose style that immediately draws you into these often-poignant tales, whether he's reflecting on his mixed reactions to Quick Piss, his teenage son's punk band, or describing the "embarrassment factor" he experienced with his father. ("Sometimes my father didn't seem to realize he was embarrassing me. Other times he seemed to know quite well, taking pleasure in the fact. Being embarrassed never killed anyone, he liked to say.")

Tim isn't the only writer in the family; his wife, **Cathleen Bascom**, also has just published a book, her first.

Cathleen served as dean of the Cathedral Church of St. Paul in Des Moines for seven years and last year was elected







the first female bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Kansas. Now she adds novelist to her accomplishments with the publication of "Of Green Stuff Woven" (Light Messages Publishing).

The novel is set in Des Moines at a historic Episcopal cathedral downtown (we think we know where the inspiration for *that* came from). A group of parishioners is restoring the tallgrass prairie on land connected to the cathedral, but when a developer approaches the dean about building a hotel on the land instead, she and the parishioners must choose between

Beaverdale Books will host a reading and book signing for both authors **May 16** at 1 p.m.

nature and the need for money.

Over the years, the nonprofit organization Above and Beyond Cancer, founded in 2011 by oncologist **Richard L. Deming**, M.D., medical director of Mercy Cancer Center, has sponsored adventures to such far-flung locales as Tibet, Peru and Nepal, where cancer survivors have experienced lifeaffirming transformations. "Above and

Beyond Cancer," by Deming and Des Moines photographer Dylan Huey, chronicles the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual journeys of cancer patients and survivors. Each of the chapters begins with insightful and inspiring comments by Deming, followed by first-person narratives and quotes from patients and survivors.

A collaborative project published by Drake Community Press, the fully illustrated book also features Huey's stunning photography, which captures the resilience, courage and hope recounted in the stories. The messages that emerge aren't just pertinent to those with cancer or their loved ones; they're universal. As Deming writes in the introduction: "This book will take you to every dimension of what it means to be human and what it means to live in a world both fraught with suffering and lit with joy. No cancer diagnosis required."

Book signings and events will be held this summer (details weren't available at press time). Check aboveandbeyondcancer.org for updates.

-Christine Riccelli



### **FOCUS**

### DES MOINES MAKER PRINTS CHARMING

John Bosley barely remembers a time in his life when he wasn't doodling.

"I was always that kid that loved to draw. When I was 4, I'd create my own comic characters in the margins of coloring books," says Bosley, who eventually graduated with a fine arts degree from Iowa State. "Fast-forward to the present day—that Iove never left and now I get to make art for a living."

Since 2015, Bosley has been designing prints, posters and shirts using iconic Iowa places (Field of Dreams, Snookies) and events (Iowa State Fair, RAGBRAI) as inspiration. Bozz Prints, which he started in his basement, grew into a brick-and-mortar shop in Valley Junction last June.

True to his childhood hobbies, comic books and vintage Depressionera posters are the biggest influences for the artist, now 37. "I also pull a lot from contemporary artists like Aaron Draplin, Olly Moss, and Chip Kidd," Bosley says.

He starts with an idea, then investigates to find what's already been created related to the subject at hand. "I especially love working on subjects and places that haven't been tackled much before. There's something really satisfying about making a print for a







place that doesn't have much recognition outside of the Midwest," he says, citing his new 2020 series about lowa parks.

After several preliminary sketches to get the composition right, he selects a favorite to polish up in "final art" digitally, using an iMac computer with Photoshop and a Wacom Cintiq digital pen display. This process can take anywhere from a few hours to a few days, depending on the complexity. His workflow is 100% digital, and Bosley relies on apps like Procreate to draw on the go (via his iPad Pro).

With more than 100 designs available on posters, magnets, shirts, coasters, pins and other products, Bosley is vigilant about scheduling enough time away from his workshop, too. Some of his best ideas pop up during trips, while watching Netflix with his wife, or while catching up with friends and family.

"I can get burned out pretty easily, so it's important to just take time off, relax and recharge," he says.

Looking ahead, Bosley aims to continue to add product lines to the mix. "I would love to make an lowa-themed coloring book, write and draw a children's book, and create an animated short film," he says.

Check out Bosley's latest creations at 215 Fifth St. in West Des Moines and online at bozzprints.com.

-Karla Walsh



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## **FOCUS**

## WHAT YOU'RE LISTENING TO

WE'RE ALL EARS. THESE ARE THE SONGS, ALBUMS AND MIXES THAT MUSIC-MINDED LOCALS RECOMMEND FOR YOUR SOUNDTRACK OF SUMMER.



Chase Eslinger, managing partner at El Guapo's Tequila + Tacos in West Des Moines, enjoys listening to blues and funk: "Music is one of the core ingredients in any bar or restaurant-it sets the ambiance. For El Guapo's, I'm currently curating a playlist on Pandora that includes artists like Carlos Santana, Led Zeppelin, James Brown and Charles Bradley during happy hour. We then like to keep a cool, mellow vibe with some old- and new-school blues. When we're cranking out cocktails and margaritas later at night, our staff likes to catch a funky vibe with our guests by playing Rufus and Chaka Khan's 'Tell Me Something Good." "



Max Wellman, well-known jazz vocalist and a co-founder of Noce, considers the album "The Pursuit" by Jamie Cullum a masterpiece and a way to get hooked on the enduring jazz standards and popular songs typically considered to be part of the Great American Songbook. The album is a "wonderful mashup of modern arrangements of standards alongside brilliant originals [Cullum] wrote himself. Cullum bridges the gap between traditional and modern so seamlessly. Whether he's covering Cole Porter or Rihanna-seriously!-you can always expect something profound. Cullum's arrangement of Stephen Sondheim's 'Not While I'm Around' from 'Sweeney Todd' is unique and beautiful and certainly doesn't sound like a decades-

old show tune."



Liz Brown, a photographer who specializes in shooting concerts, loves "Hopeless Wanderer" by Mumford and Sons: "'I will learn to love the skies I'm under': That lyric has stuck with me for nearly eight years. Learning to love implies that love didn't come naturally or perhaps easily. At times, I have [struggled] to love both my physical location and my season of life. This song is like a mantra—a prayer—in those spaces: I am not alone in my wondering and my wandering." ■

-Karla Walsh





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## 40

## **PASSIONS**

## **EVERY RECORD TELLS A STORY**

WRITER: CHAD TAYLOR
PHOTOGRAPHER: DUANE TINKEY

"I don't buy records, I buy stories."

That's Luke Dickens, owner of Vinyl Cup Records in Beaverdale and Marv's Records in the East Village, who doesn't sell records he found at Half Price Books or on eBay or through estate auctions. For Dickens, every record tells a story, both of a moment in time for an artist and of a moment in time for each listener. And those stories—those visceral connections to the music and that record—are the things that Dickens feels like he's really selling. So deep is Dickens' belief in the power and importance of those stories, he's been known to pass them on to an album's next owner.

"I will sometimes write ... little notes on the labels: 'This was John's record and it was the first one he ever bought,' " Dickens explains.

His path to owning two record stores—soon to be three, as a new Vinyl Cup location is expected to open May 1 in Omaha—was not a straight one. The 35-year-old Dickens moved to Des Moines from the Mason City area during his sophomore year of high school. He later joined the Army, returning to lowa in 2008. The next decade saw him spend time working alternately for Aspen Athletic Clubs, Starbucks, Noodles and Co., and as a drug and alcohol counselor, before fate pushed him in a different direction.

"My record obsession started in 2015," he says. Two years later, after becoming irritated at a record store in town, "I went and bought a collection off of a guy just so I wouldn't have to go into that store again."

Dickens began sifting his way through that first collection, pulling out the albums he wanted to keep and posting photos online of the rest, hoping to make enough money to buy another collection and repeat the process.

Dickens' eye for quality, his disarming approach to sales, and his open, friendly personality all served him well. Before he knew it, he was making enough from record sales to go from paying for records to paying for vacations.

In August 2018, Dickens decided to take the final plunge and move his sales from online and collectors shows into his own brick-and-mortar shop, Vinyl Cup Records.

The success of Vinyl Cup has been almost entirely centered on Dickens' approach to changing how people perceive the neighborhood record shop.

There's no counter for employees to lurk behind. When customers enter the store, they're greeted with a loud hello and offered a free water, soda or beer. There's a listening room with large, comfortable seats. Dickens rearranges the store a few times a month, which allows him to engage with customers and keep them abreast of what's new and where things are.

Vinyl Cup's strong sales and populist approach to collecting allowed Dickens to purchase Marv's Records in February 2019, a move that Dickens says was as much about keeping a valuable part of the East Village landscape alive as it was about expanding his own portfolio. And now he is opening his third location, this one a 1,200-square-foot space in Omaha's Old Market district, as part of a collaborative expansion with Raygun owner Mike Draper. The two businesses are operating separate suites in the same building.

But as Dickens' standing in

Des Moines' vinyl-loving community
continues to grow, his core beliefs
remain the same: "Our intention is to be
open and inviting to anyone and
everyone," he says. "I want [record
collecting] to feel less intimidating."



## IMER ZAVINGS **Korean Pork Chops** with Gochujang Marinade

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## **ANATOMY OF A DISH**

## A FRESH CATCH

This unique twist on tuna tartare, the first recipe developed for R I Restaurant, transports chef and co-owner Jacob Demars back to childhood tuna-fishing with his dad.

"A lot of the dishes I make for R I are inspired by the important people and places throughout my life" in Rockport, Connecticut, and Iowa (hence the name R I), Demars says. "So I really wanted the first dish I made for the restaurant not only to taste great, but also to connect personally to me."

As a boy, Demars would fish for tuna with his dad, sharing 12-hour days on a 23-foot Grady-White fishing boat. On their drive to the boat, they would pass under tree canopies and over broken concrete that—if you looked closely—showcased weeds and flowers popping out of the cracks. That scene inspired the plating for the tuna tartare, which was one of the top sellers when Demars opened the restaurant with his wife, Kathleen McGuire, in Windsor Heights last September. The dish will return to the menu this summer. Here's how it's made:

- 1. Rice wine vinegar meringue: You've likely tasted sweet and fluffy egg-white meringues atop lemon and banana cream pies or in crunchy meringue cookies, but Demars is on a mission to prove that they can go savory, too. The lightest of the three meringue styles (the others are Italian and Swiss), Demars whips up a French meringue with a splash of rice wine vinegar, and then dehydrates it to create a nice light "chip" to scoop up the tuna. "I had all the components for this dish pulled together except for the meringue, and it didn't feel quite finished," Demars says. "I thought back to the fishing trips with my dad and the broken concrete with weeds pushing through. That inspired me to add the meringue so it looked like the microgreens on the dish were pushing through the cracks in the meringue."
- 2. Diced tuna: While Demars doesn't dust off the Grady-White boat to catch it himself, the tuna is fresh. "We order wild-caught AAA sushi-grade yellowfin tuna weekly from Empire Fish," Demars says. He tosses the raw fish with homemade hoisin sauce that has a hint more sweetness and slightly less acidity than typical bottled hoisin sauce. "The sweeter flavor helps balance the dish," he explains.

- 3. Arugula powder: Arugula, which you might recognize better in its leafy green, sold-by-the-bag form, is transformed into a dust that Demars sprinkles over the tartare. The dust is also a savvy way R I goes green. "We try to be a no-waste kitchen, and drying the arugula at the end of each week to turn into a powder gets us one step closer," Demars says.
- 4. Fried hominy: For a pleasant crunch, Demars fries hominy. Like puffy, supersized corn kernels, hominy "takes really well to different types of seasoning," he says. Here, he seasons it with salt and cayenne pepper to add a dash of heat to the dish.
- 5. Jam: While the tuna requires zero cooking time, the apple-mint-grapefruit jam is cooked low and slow for four hours with the skins of the grapefruit. The result: a condiment that offers a bitter counterpoint to the sweet hoisin.

-Karla Walsh

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## **SAVOR**

## I SNAGGED THE RECIPE

## **GET ON A ROLL**

WRITER: KARLA WALSH

PHOTOGRAPHER: DERA BURRESON

STYLIST: SAMMY MILA

Perhaps the obsession started when she was in grade school, when cafeteria chili always came paired with cinnamon rolls and carrots. Or maybe it's related to the fact that when any recipe calls for cinnamon, her philosophy is "just double it!"

Whatever the cause, when my mom has a say, cinnamon rolls are pretty much mandatory for any family holiday or bakery visit. Or any chili night, obviously. "The pairing just works," Mom swears.

Since I'm very much my mother's daughter, I perked up the moment I spotted this recipe for Overnight Nutella Cinnamon Rolls on the blog Ally's Sweet and Savory Eats. A double dose of chocolate-hazelnut spread (in the filling and the frosting), plus an easy prep-ahead strategy that makes these tender, fluffy rolls ideal for Mother's Day breakfast in bed and Easter brunch? Sold.

"I'm a Midwestern girl through and through," says Ally Billhorn, a Wilton, lowa-based recipe developer and the creator of Ally's Sweet and Savory Eats. "My recipes will never be complicated or intimidating, and they will not require a run to a specialty grocery store. I want people to feel at home when reading my site."

Billhorn started her blog in 2009, after having the first of her three

children and deciding to stay home.

More than 10 years later, she says,

"all three of my kids are in full-time
school and I'm devoting more time than
ever on Ally's Sweet and Savory
Eats. I get to develop recipes for
brands, hold fun contests, interact daily
with my readers—and best of all, cook
and bake."

Billhorn tried her hand at DIY rolls a few years ago. After that first foray into homemade cinnamon rolls, she realized the results are so worth the extra effort beyond the store-bought canned version. From there, Billhorn expanded her roll repertoire with creative mix-ins and toppings, including Pumpkin Cinnamon Rolls, Strawberry Cinnamon Rolls and this chocolate-hazelnut variation.

"I love Nutella and I love cinnamon rolls. Why not marry the two?" Billhorn says. "I don't think people realized cinnamon rolls can be stuffed and layered with anything—jam, chopped nuts, Nutella, almond paste—there are so many options. Sometimes, my readers and friends are nervous to make a recipe their own. My philosophy: 'Just go for it!'"

Which is exactly what I aim to do to surprise my mom this Mother's Day. Now to round up the ultimate chili recipe to pair it with.

Continues on page 48



## **CHEF'S TIPS**

Check the expiration date. "Don't be afraid of or intimidated by yeast. It's actually quite easy to work with as long as you always keep it fresh," Billhorn says. Before you begin preparing these rolls, make sure your packet is not expired so it will rise to the occasion.

Splurge on a stand mixer, especially if you bake frequently. "I love using my standing KitchenAid mixer to work any type of bread dough," Billhorn says. "It just makes everything easier."

Use your space wisely. "When recipes tell you to let the dough rise in a warm spot in the home, it doesn't need to get complicated and you certainly don't need to invest in a special proofing drawer. I set my dough on the dryer while it's running or in a random spot in the house where the sun is shining through a window," Billhorn says.

## Allow the rolls to rest while you do.

Placing the rolls in the fridge overnight allows the yeast more time to work and results in a fantastically light texture.

Double up. While you're at it, make a batch for yourself and for your neighbor or a loved one. "I always double this recipe," Billhorn says. "Food is way more fun when it's shared."





Ever notice how you can't seem to get a table at the hottest restaurants on Open Table from about 6:15 to 8 p.m. on weekends? Here's the deal: Restaurants have to pay Open Table about a dollar for every diner delivered to them through Open Table. So, sometimes restaurateurs block out their busiest stretches of time: after all, why give Open Table a cut when the venue can fill up without them? So, before you give up on a favorite spot on a Friday or Saturday night, it's always worth a telephone call to the restaurant to see if any tables are yet

-Wini Moranville

available.

Continued from page 46

## OVERNIGHT NUTELLA CINNAMON ROLLS

Yield: 12 to 14 rolls

## **INGREDIENTS**

## For the dough:

1 packet dry active yeast

4 tablespoons warm water

1 cup warm milk or heavy cream

1/4 cup sugar

1 beaten egg

3 1/2 cups flour

1/2 teaspoon salt

6 tablespoons melted unsalted

butter

## For the filling:

4 tablespoons butter, softened

3/4 cup Nutella

## For the frosting:

4 tablespoon butter, softened

8 ounces cream cheese, softened

2 cups powdered sugar

3/4 cup Nutella

1/4 cup milk or heavy cream

## DIRECTIONS

Make the frosting: Using a stand or hand-held mixer, combine the softened butter, cream cheese and Nutella until smooth. Add in the powdered sugar to combine. Refrigerate until morning. Set out one hour prior to frosting.

Make the dough: In a large bowl combine the yeast and warm water to dissolve.

Add in the warm milk, then stir in the sugar and beaten egg.

Add in 2 cups of the flour and salt. Mix well.

Pour in the melted butter and combine.

Add in the remaining flour and mix until sticky and pulling away from the bowl. Cover and allow to rise for 90 minutes.

Flour your counter and turn out the dough. Add more flour to the dough and the rolling pin so it does not stick. Roll out 1/4-inch thick into a rectangle shape.

Spread the softened butter over the dough, followed by the Nutella. Roll up the dough from the long edges.

Using a serrated knife, cut the dough into 12 to 14 1-inch slices.

Place each piece into a greased 9-by-13-inch baking dish. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

In the morning, remove from the fridge one hour prior to baking. Allow the pan to proof, or sit in a warm area of your home, for 60 minutes.

Heat oven to 350 degrees.

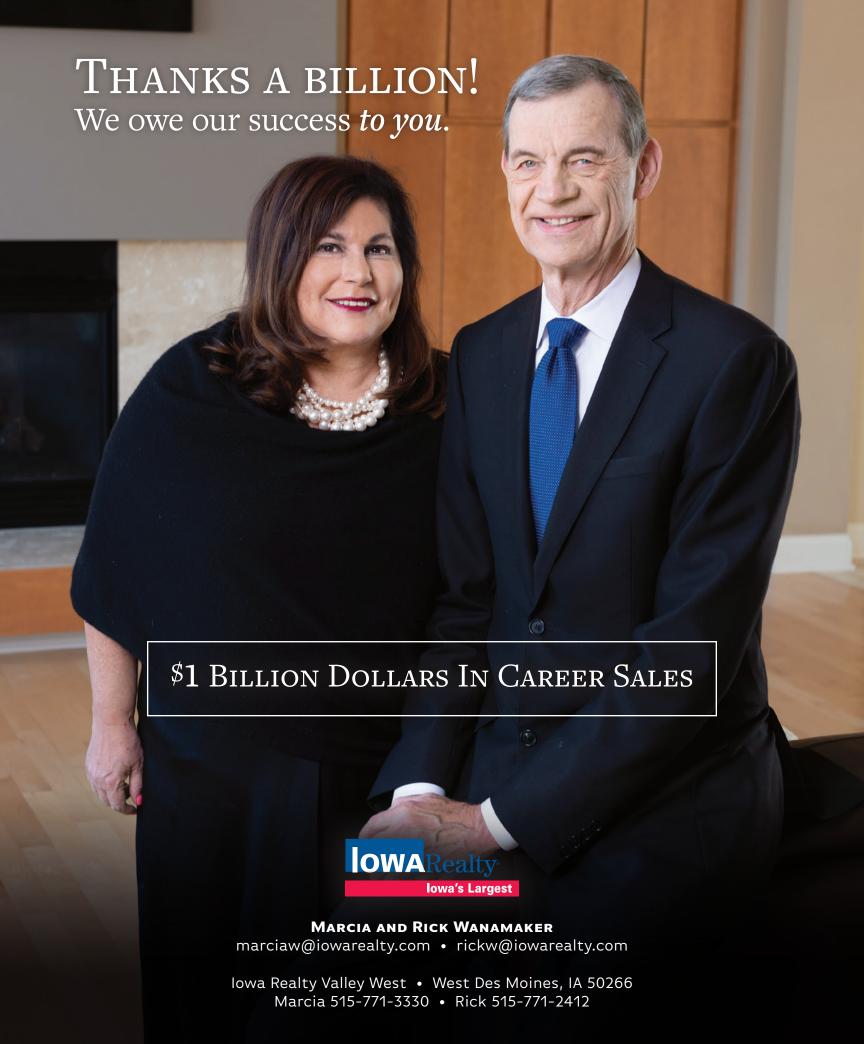
After the hour of proofing, bake the rolls for 25 minutes or until golden brown.

Allow to cool, then frost.

## **TOOLS OF THE TRADE**

9-by-13-inch baking dish/pan
Mixing bowls of various sizes
Stand mixer or hand-held mixer
Rolling pin
Serrated knife

Rubber spatula or offset icing spatula for frosting





## **REDISCOVERED**

## LUCCA'S 'FOUR-COURSE ART'

Generally speaking, restaurants in this town either serve small plates or very big plates. To come away from the table feeling sated but not gorged, you must either nibble through numerous little bites of this and that or order one large entree bookended by appetizers and desserts shared by the table.

Whatever happened to the multicourse dinner, wherein each course is sized exactly right for the diner to enjoy a meal of three or four courses of their own choosing (no table-wide consensus or sharing needed)? It's an immensely satisfying way of dining that follows a classic dramatic arc—the rising action (the appetizer/salad or salad/pasta), the climax (the main dish) and the falling

action/denouement (dessert and an after-dinner coffee or drink).

If you think that sounds too unhip and yesteryear for words, please know that there's a crowd of people who don't care. When we were at Lucca, the room was jampacked with diners who, like me, must have longed for such a complete dining experience.

My four-course arc started with a small Greek salad, with the vegetables and garnishes finely diced and the greens delicately dressed; there was a finesse here that you don't always see in the salad course. For my second course, a sane-sized plate of pasta with clam sauce—a garlicky, herb-flecked dish with a sensible dusting of Parmesan—delighted.

The main dish brought three fat, luscious scallops angled atop a dashing paprika aioli for one of those simple-yet-unforgettable dishes you think about for days. Dessert was a selection of mini-confections (served on one plate per two diners), including a featherweight chocolate torte.

Other diners at the table were delighted with their completely different choices in each course; only one dish—a solid-but-prosaic chicken Parmesan—underwhelmed. (P.S.: The gnocchi never fails.)

The four-course dinner at

Lucca costs \$42. (420 E. Locust St.;

luccadsm.net) —Wini Moranville



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# PHOTOGRAPHER: DUANE TINKEY

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## **SAVOR**

## WHAT WE LOVE

## LUA EXCELS AT QUAFFS AND CUISINE

Ten years ago, Whitney and Scott Selix met as co-workers at Reds Alehouse in North Liberty. One law degree (Scott), one big move (to Minnesota), one marriage and two kids later, the duo decided to move back to Iowa and open Lua Brewing on High Street, just west of A Dong.

"lowa is closer to family—I was raised in Decorah and Scott was raised in Ankeny," Whitney explains. "Plus we just love the state and the people.

Minnesota Nice just doesn't compare."

Scott and Whitney opened Lua
Brewing (named after the couples'
Staffordshire bull terrier) with their
friend Zack Dunbar last November.
They were initially planning to focus
mainly on beers, with just a few snacks
on the side, but that all changed when
chef James Arbaugh (who has flexed
his culinary muscles at Michelin-starred
restaurants including Alinea in Chicago
and Plumed Horse in the San Francisco
Bay area) answered a Craigslist ad for
a chef and flipped the script.

The products change with the seasons, but the Selixes aim for a consistent experience: fun, upbeat, welcoming and community-focused. That's one of the main reasons why the space at the base of Sherman Hill was so appealing, Whitney says.



"We have people come in suits and others who come in sweatpants," she says. "We get craft beer connoisseurs as well as people just looking for a bite who also order a beer."

Those bites are prepared with the best available ingredients—local whenever possible, Arbaugh says, adding that he makes everything from scratch. The beers on tap change frequently, but always include the two flagships: Loud as Hope Hefeweizen and Gil's Pils pilsner.

This summer, the Lua team plans to get their patio up and running. Expect live music, parking lot festivals and a Lua Luau in the warm weather months, plus upscale beer-pairing dinners. (1525 High St.; luabeer.com)

-Karla Walsh















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## LESSONS ON LIFE, IN MY OWN WORDS ONE FOR ALL

BY FRANK COWNIE AS TOLD TO CHRISTINE RICCELLI

AST DECEMBER, DES MOINES MAYOR FRANK COWNIE narrowly won an unprecedented fifth term, beating challenger Jack Hatch by 289 votes in a runoff election. First elected to the City Council in 2002 and now the longest-serving mayor in the city's history, the 72-year-old Cownie has earned national recognition for his sustainability and conservation initiatives and has served in leadership roles on a number

of national committees and boards, including the International Council for Local Environmental Issues, Mayors for Peace, Mayors Against Illegal Guns, and the U.S. Conference of Mayors' Task Force on Hunger and Homelessness. The Des Moines native also owns Cownie Furs, which has been in his family for more than 100 years. He and his partner, Christine Manbeck, live in the Ingersoll Park neighborhood; Cownie has four children and seven grandchildren. In an interview condensed for publication, Cownie reflects on everything from the brother he never knew to the election he almost lost.

## **FOCUS ON SERVICE**

My Scottish ancestors settled in Hancock County in the 1860s, and in the 1880s my grandfather and his brother left the farm and moved to Des Moines. In 1888 they started a business and in about 1905 they split it. My grandfather's part of the operation eventually became Cownie Furs. My grandfather died in 1928, and my dad, who was going to Harvard at the time, came home to take over the business.

My oldest brother and sister were born in '30 and '31, then my other brother was born in 1940 and I was born in '48, so it's almost like my parents had three families. At age 19, my oldest brother, Chuck, was killed in a car accident on Christmas Eve. I was only a year old at that time and don't remember him, but when I was young, I never understood why Christmas Eve was more like a séance than a celebration. I used to think, "Why are we burning candles underneath my brother's picture?" My parents never talked about it; the only thing my mom ever said was, "Our children are supposed to bury us, not the other way around."

My parents strongly believed in community service. My dad believed that when you have a business, it's your duty to give back to the community and to try to improve it. He believed we were all in it together—and that if you improve your community it would help expand employment and opportunities for all and ultimately improve business. My parents emphasized volunteering

beyond your day-to-day business, whether it's for your church, United Way, the YMCA or whatever.

## CONSIDER UNEXPECTED OPPORTUNITIES

I graduated from Roosevelt High School, then went to Iowa State on a swimming scholarship. The Vietnam conflict was going on then; every day, you'd watch TV and see those body bags coming back home. I couldn't understand why we were sending Americans over to die, but I still wanted to serve. I got into the Iowa Army National Guard, and in 1968 I went on active duty and served for about a year at Fort Gordon, Georgia.

After serving, I spent a semester at Drake and then returned to Iowa State. In my senior year, my dad called and said he wanted to come up to Ames and take me to lunch. We go to a greasy spoon, we're talking about everything under the sun, and then he asks, "What are you going to do with your life?" I tell him that I think I'd like to go to law school. And he turns about as red as the chairs we're sitting in, leans over, grabs onto the edge of the table and says, "We're businesspeople; we hire lawyers, we don't become them." Fast-forward all these years, and my two oldest children. Katie and Charlie, are both lawyers!

At any rate, he then said, "Why

## **62**

## HOW I GOT HERE

don't you come back to Des Moines and let's see whether you like working in our business." At the time, my brother Bill was working in the business and I said, "I love my brother, but there's no way that I'm going to be able to work with him." Then my dad told me that Bill was leaving to take a job in Nebraska. He said, "You can decide if you like the business and if this could be a career for you."

I said, "OK, I'll try it and see how it goes." I came back to Des Moines ... and I'm still trying it to see how it goes!

## **WALK IN OTHERS' SHOES**

Now I'm at an age— about the same age my dad was when he and I had that conversation—to see whether any of my offspring want to be involved in our business. My oldest son and daughter are lawyers. My youngest son, Frankie, has ADHD and suffers from a depressive disorder. He lives in a group home and has trouble getting from Tuesday to Wednesday, let alone being able to think about running a business.

Parenting a child with mental health challenges certainly gives you a much broader and deeper perspective. It's not like you can say, "Oh, take two aspirins and everything is going to be fine." So this issue is important to me not only because it's important for the community but because of my personal experience.

We're trying to figure out how to set up a Youth Emergency Mental Health Response Team to hopefully quell some of the disruptive activity that's been taking place in our schools. Some people say we need more police officers in the schools, but I don't think a kid who's in trauma and acting out will have their life enhanced by a yet another traumatic

experience, facing someone who's carrying a Taser and handcuffs.

Law enforcement isn't who should be taking care of kids' mental health issues. As a community, we need to work together and involve all providers—whether they're hospitals or organizations like NAMI or Optimae—as well as parents and educators to figure out how to support the school district so it can deal with these issues and promote strong mental health.

An awful lot of people who are homeless suffer from mental health issues. Often, addictions or traumatic life experiences have made them end up on the street. I'm always astounded when I hear people say, "Well, those free meals that are being given away—those people ought to just get a job." And I think, "Have you ever spent even five minutes with a homeless person?" You're never going to hear the same story.

You can't just expect people without any kind of support to permanently improve their situation. As mayor, I've discovered that if there aren't services in place to help and follow up with them, like making sure their medication is refilled and that they're getting proper counseling, they end up getting picked up by the police or an ambulance and taken to a hospital or jail. We need to focus on providing the right services so at some point they can get back on their feet and begin to become productive members of society.

## **CHANNEL ANGER INTO ACTION**

For a while in the 1970s, I became a concert promoter—John Denver, Mason Proffit, Commander Cody and His Lost Planet Airmen, Peter Frampton. We also did the concert promotions for the Des Moines Grand Prix when it was here [1989-1994]. I thought it was pretty cool, and it motivated me to get more involved with the city.

I joined the board of the then
Des Moines Convention Center and
when I got off of that board in about
1995, I was appointed to the Planning
and Zoning Commission. I became chair
and decided that we ought to write
a new comprehensive plan; it was a
vision for 2020. One hadn't been written
since 1965, and we were functioning off
of a set of zoning ordinances that were
almost 35 years old.

All 15 members of the Commission were engaged to look at everything from streets to sewers to zoning and neighborhoods. We reached out to the broader community, holding neighborhood meetings to get input. We worked on it for over two years. I took it to the then city manager, as we were going to have to rely on the city staff to follow through on the recommendations. He looked at it and said, "There's no way this is going to pass. I've got seven [City Council] votes against it." And I said, "What? Why?" And he said, "Because it involves too much citizen input." And I said, "You don't want to listen to the people you serve? What are you talking about?"

The community development director thought we'd have to start over and develop an entirely new plan. I said, "No, I'm going to take it to the neighborhoods." So, we proceeded to have about 30 meetings all over town. I took people from the planning department, a police officer and a public works guy to the meetings as well.

It ended up that all seven City

Council members voted for it. But then
the city manager laid off half the





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## 64

## HOW I GOT HERE

community development department that would've seen to its implementation. We had done all that work and gotten all that input on how to move the city forward and the plan ended up on a shelf.

I was angry enough that I wanted to change what was going on. I was like that guy in the movie "Network" who said, "I'm mad as hell and I'm not going to take this anymore." So I decided that I would resign from the Commission and run for a City Council at-large seat. Somehow or another, I got elected in 2002 in a very contentious race—almost as contentious as last year's race.

## BE TRANSPARENT

In lowa, you don't really lose your opportunity to participate in any aspect of business because you're in elected office. But I have always tried to be very careful and make sure that I avoid any perception of conflict of interest.

For example, I want it to be clear that even though my cousin [developer Jim Cownie]—we shared a great-grandfather—has done development in Des Moines, I've never been involved in any of his business deals. I don't even want there to be that perception; because we share a last name, I recently abstained from a couple of votes that involved his company.

## **LISTEN AND CONNECT**

When I was growing up, my parents drilled into me the importance of openness and honesty. They were very good to all their employees, and they always had the attitude that you should listen to the customer, that the customer is always right and that you build relationships over a long period of time.

My dad taught me that the purpose of being in business is to find out what the customers' needs are and to serve them and to stand behind our products. That's the approach I take as mayor too. Sometimes folks have unreasonable expectations, but whether their sewer needs to be fixed or something else is going on, I always go back to that training I got from my dad on satisfaction, always.

I take my cellphone everywhere and answer the call right there. Rather than taking their name and number so someone else can return their call, I like to connect them right then, while I'm on the phone, and have a three-way conversation. I think it's important to take care of those calls as expeditiously as possible and to be open and honest.

## FOCUS ON THE "WE"

We've been working on the new PlanDSM Comprehensive Plan for several years. We've looked at who we are today and what we'd like to be in 30 to 40 years-where will people live and work, what are the corridors that connect people to places, what will transportation look like. Out of the comprehensive plan came LiveDSM [parks and recreation], InvestDSM [neighborhood revitalization] and Move DSM [transportation]. We're putting \$300 million into repairing and replacing streets and \$145 million into working on our flood protection, sewers and levies, among other investments.

I wanted to run for mayor again because I felt like it was my responsibility to make sure that we deliver on that plan. And I didn't like the thought of handing it off to people who haven't been to neighborhood meetings or haven't contributed to the process. I go to hundreds of meetings all across town every year; wherever people have a voice and want us to participate, I try to be there.

When I was first elected, I quickly discovered that the mayor's seat is not a dictatorial one. You have to build relationships, build trust, collaborate and give others the credit. I've defined my job more as a convener. One of the lessons I learned early on was that the job is not about me; it's about leading the way and everyone working together. That's the only way to move the city forward. When people feel they're part of the process, that's when we make progress.

Planning is a dynamic process. We have to be thoughtful. We have to adjust to new circumstances to meet the needs of citizens and to continue to make Des Moines that No. 1 place to raise a family, get a job, start a business and even retire.

## **NEVER GIVE UP**

When my daughter, Suzanne, was in high school, she made a little pin for me that says "never give up." I still have it up on my refrigerator. That's what we did in this most recent race, even though there were a lot of false claims and negative advertising. We dug in and we didn't give up.

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# A CAN-DO CONDO A DES MOINES COUPLE RIGHT-SIZES WITHOUT SACRIFICING SUBSTANCE OR STYLE. WRITER: LAUREL LUND PHOTOGRAPHER: DUANE TINKEY STYLIST: WADE SCHERRER A live-edge walnut table, which once served as a desk in Patrick Jury's office, has been transformed into a dining table. **68 DSM** MAY JUNE 2020





hen semiretired professionals Cathy and Patrick Jury decided to downsize in 2018, their challenge was not if or when, but where. Cathy desired a metropolitan lifestyle in downtown Des Moines while Pat

preferred a quieter venue.

Problem solved when the couple found the perfect place for both—a condo at the Barbican, located on the south side of Grand Avenue near 39th Street. The 11-story Barbican places Pat well above any urban commotion. For Cathy, "the view is spectacular," she says. "It's like living in a treehouse." Yet they are just minutes away from all the cultural activities the city has to offer.

The couple's new home also is conveniently located for their ongoing work. Pat recently retired as CEO of the lowa Credit Union League but still travels internationally, working with credit union executives. The condo is 10 minutes from the airport. And Cathy, who has had a history in local politics since the age of 17, is about the same distance away from the Capitol, where she continues her legislative work.

In fact, it was politics that brought the couple together 30 years ago. Pat was a lobbyist for the lowa Association of Realtors while Cathy served as an assistant to lowa's speaker of the House. Although the two had never met, they discovered they had lived across the street from each other for several years. While dating, "we did lots of walking back and forth," Cathy says with a laugh.

They still do lots of walking, taking their beloved French bulldog, Emmy Lou, with them. After a stroll, rather than return to their former five-bedroom ranch in West Des Moines, they



now come home to their 1,880-square-foot sanctuary. The condo was designed by Doug Wells, founding principal of the architectural firm Wells+Associates, with creative input from the Jurys. Dan Schaefer, co-owner with Brett Bunkers of Oakwood Builders Group, implemented the design.

The redesign could have been fraught with challenges due to exacting commercial building codes and condo restrictions. However, it was not. "The challenges afforded us the opportunity to arrive at some unique and surprising solutions," says Wells, such as a revolving wall that helps define the office/guest suite.

To begin the redo, the condo was gutted. The original footprint that defined Pat's study, adjacent guest bath, laundry room and foyer was given new life when the design and construction teams installed opaque, custom-glide, glass doors that kept the space light and provided design continuity without sacrificing much-needed space.











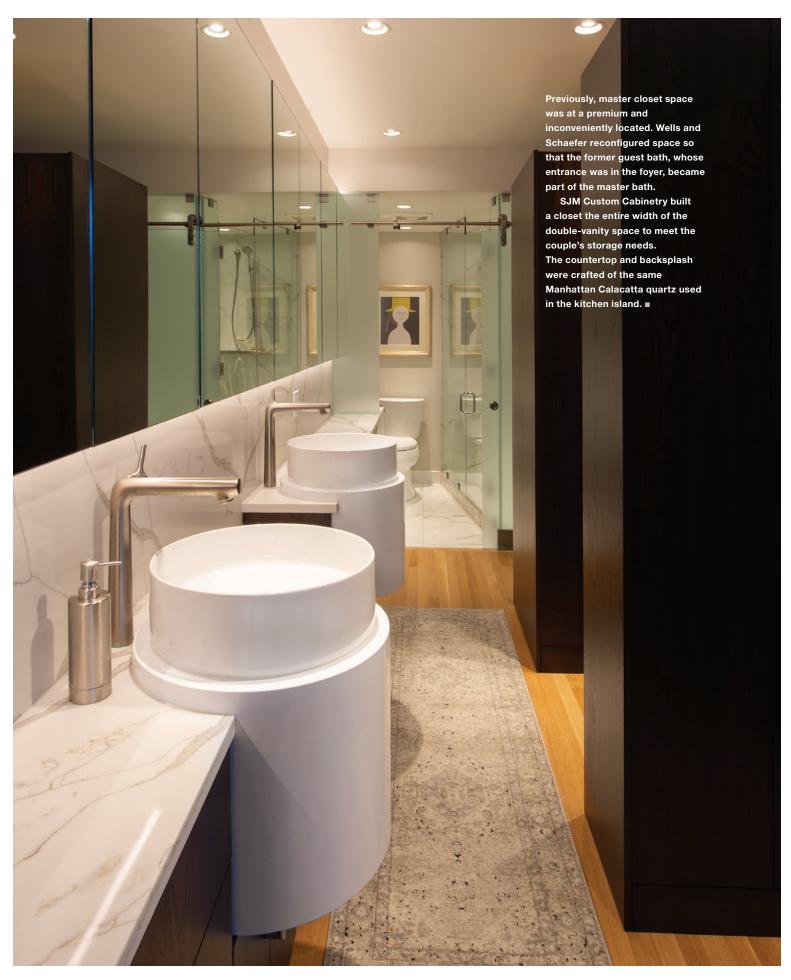
Other than the original load-bearing wall, all others were reconfigured to create the open space the couple wanted—all while packing in cleverly designed, double-duty storage solutions.

And storage solutions abound. The Jurys wanted a home office, an entertainment area and a guest room, but the lack of space was a problem. Wells, Schaefer and metalworker Jim Russell overcame that obstacle by designing a rotating wall that accommodates all three needs.

On one side of the ash-paneled rotating wall is a Murphy bed whose facade is enhanced by a a work of art. This side of the wall defines Pat's study. Built into the opposite side is a bookcase with TV, which faces two contemporary chairs where avid reader Cathy can relax in solitude.

However, when the couple's 27-year-old son, Max, visits, the wall is rotated so that the bookcase/TV wall becomes part of Pat's study and the opposing Murphy-bed side creates a comfortable guest space.







Standard sofa by Francesco Binfaré.

"Smart" backrests and armrests, which can be modeled as desired, offer maximum comfort. The seating system is modular to meet every need.

**Brasilia** table by Fernando and Humberto Campana. A mosaic of mirror splinters. Each piece is unique and handmade.



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# Body of Work

EVOLVING ARTIST SEEKS TO "EMBRACE MY WEIRDNESS."

WRITER: BRIANNE SANCHEZ PHOTOGRAPHER: KARLA CONRAD



# HANNAH SUNG HAD HAD ENOUGH OF LOS ANGELES.

Creating illustrations for movie promotions, she was becoming burned out and bitter by the churn of production in the marketing side of the industry. Colleagues like the artist J.A.W. Cooper were branching out to create their own fine art, but Sung felt compelled to take on any commercial job that came her way.

"I realized that if I don't appreciate myself as an artist and I don't value myself, who is going to?" asks Sung, 31.

Although she was born in Seattle, Sung lived most of her childhood in South Korea. The family settled back stateside in California when she was 15, and cartoons were her first English teachers. She loved Sailor Moon and SpongeBob SquarePants, and ultimately studied illustration and animation at California State University, Long Beach.

Illustration "was more of an obsession than a passion back then," Sung says. "I was very driven to get into the animation and cartoon studio industry. I was trying to impress my parents, who felt that if you don't make money as an artist, then you're a loser."

When she met her husband, Brad Podray, in 2015, it was a turning point from what Sung describes as a repressive, abusive childhood.

"I never knew how to be brave about being OK with not pleasing everyone," Sung says. "I started to feel the necessity of having self-love and to really embrace my weirdness."

The couple traveled to lowa for Podray's work as an orthodontist, and Sung was attracted by the slower pace and affordability—a combination that would allow her to focus more on creating for herself than on simply satisfying clients.

"I decided I should move somewhere else to find my own peace," Sung says. "I thought Des Moines was perfect. I see how much happier people are here. I see people have time for themselves."

Although she still works remotely for some of the same Los Angeles-based studios, Sung quickly found plugging into Des Moines' art scene was a matter of scouting opportunities on social media, then showing up at events and talking to people. She became friends with the artist Monica Cohen, a New York transplant to lowa, and

they collaborated on Cohen's second Limited Space show, a pop-up art and dance event.

"It was a party," Sung says. "I saw there was a lot of traction there."

Her initial exhibition came when someone suggested Sung to Mainframe Studios' executive director, Siobhan Spain, for a "game art"- themed First Friday show at the venue.

"For some reason I just wanted to make a lot of boobs out of papier-mâché," Sung says. "I made a whole installation piece out of it."

Spain was supportive, and Sung's "booble" body of work was born. Soon she was sewing giant boobs, embroidering beaded nipples onto T-shirts and making abstract boob-themed pins.

Sung is "just very different and yet brings out things in everyone," says Scott Berry, who met Sung at her Mainframe debut and has since become a friend. "She's sensual without being overtly sexual. She is an attractor, and she has a clever sense of shocking reality."

Sung even carried the booble work on a trip to Korea for performance art where she stood blindfolded and covered in plush boob-shaped pieces in a political square.

"I felt empowered and I felt like I was empowering other women," Sung says.

Whereas her previous art was more private and inspired by sadness and regret, her current passion is body positivity.

Beyond boobles, Sung has been experimenting with henna. Taye Anne Rose, a friend and collaborator, recently offered herself up to Sung as a canvas for temporary tattoos on her face and chest that celebrated womanhood and the concept of desexualizing body parts.

In a time-lapse video posted to the Instagram account @pinkmeowface, Sung applies her work while chatting with Rose. The video is intimate and raw, and the photos from the session at Whistler Studio (a rentable photo studio in the East Village) celebrate the dimples and stretch marks and curves and skin tones of her models as much as the art adorning the bodies. Art, it seems, is as much a way for Sung to touch and connect with people to unlock what's in them as it is for her to express herself.

"Hannah has traveled so much and gets perspectives from so many different people, and she takes those to grow her art," Rose says. "Her energy is beautiful and amazing."









The Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs supports art, history, film and culture throughout our state. We bring Iowans together, with the creative sector, to plan and build communities where people want to work, play and live.

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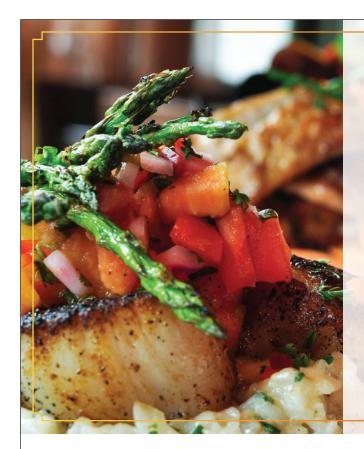
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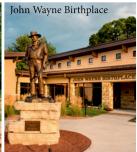








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# SLICES HEAVEN

WHY SETTLE FOR A SUBPAR PIZZA? THESE LOCAL EATERIES SERVE UP TOP-NOTCH TOPPINGS AND CRAVE-WORTHY CRUSTS. THE RESULT: PIZZAS WITH BOLD FLAVORS THAT ALWAYS DELIVER.

WRITER: KARLA WALSH
PHOTOGRAPHER: DUANE TINKEY



ou'd be hardpressed to find a more perfect food than pizza. A well-seasoned sauce, a just-crispy-enough crust, plus ooey, gooey cheese? Sold. Italian legend places the origin of the modern pizza in 1889, and since then humans have been on a quest to perfect it. While we'll continue our hunt for the absolutely perfect slice (tough research, we know), we've narrowed down our current favorite pies in Central lowa, including the biggest, the brunchiest, and the most off the beaten path.

# BEST USE OF LOCAL INGREDIENTS GUSTO PIZZA CO.

"Divine pies" are what Gusto promises, and they deliver, now more than ever, on that promise. New for 2020: Four crust options (Chicago deep dish, Detroit pan, New York thin and Gusto original) are now offered at both locations. They come crowned with local toppings like house-made "vegan sausage," Graziano's hot Italian sausage, Gusto Pizza Seasoning (sold by the jar at AllSpice Culinarium and Gusto locations), and Russ & Frank's Sassy Barbecue Sauce. Deal-lovers, listen up: 2-4 p.m. weekdays, signature pies are half price, and 4-6 p.m. weekdays, beer and wine are 50% off. (1905 Ingersoll Ave. in Des Moines and 2800 University Ave. in West Des Moines; gustopizzaco.com)

# MOST UNIQUE PIZZA MASH-UPS MAMA MIA'S

Mama Mia's has recently relocated (from Southwest Ninth Street to the Equitable Building), but the creative menu remains. Available on New York or Chicago thin crust, nearly all toppings on their unique combos are prepared from scratch, including the sauce, dressings and sausage. When you can't decide between pizza and curing another craving, this is the parlor for you. Steak de Burgo, buffalo chicken, shrimp scampi and baked PoTOTo (sour cream, potato tots, bacon, cheddar, mozzarella, chives) pies can all be ordered online and delivered to your door. (604 Locust St.; mamamiasdsm.com)

### MOST FILLING

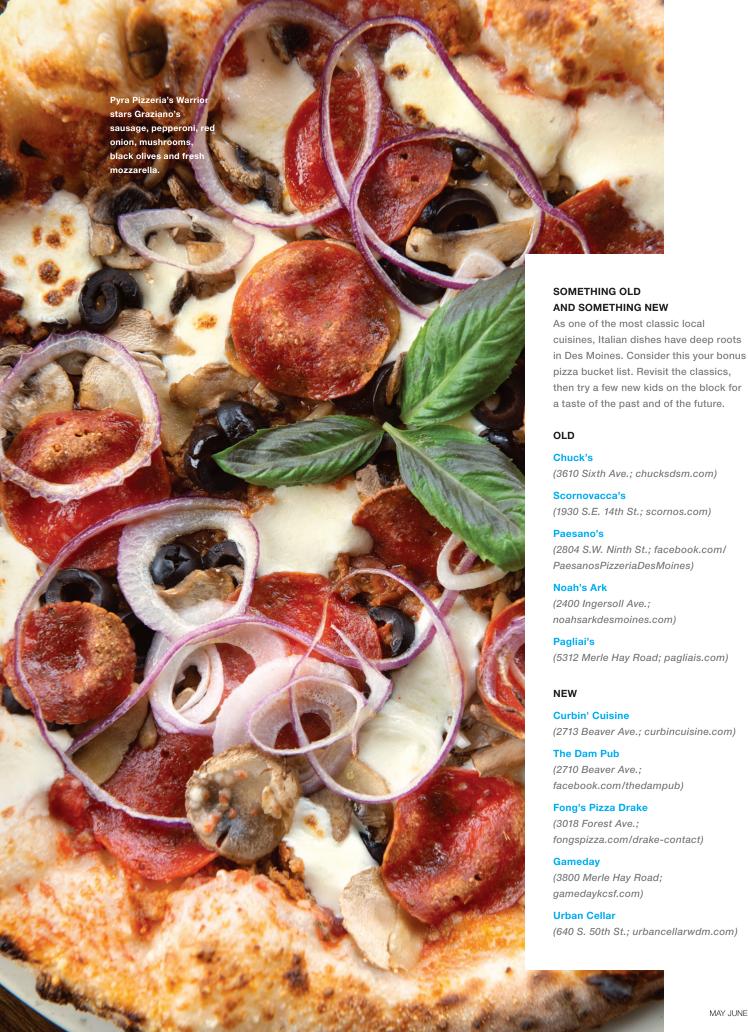
### **PAPA KENO'S**

With pies spanning up to 26(!) inches, you won't leave this Drake destination hungry. Watch from the dining room as the pizzaiolos get a workout handtossing the oversized crusts. Then devour a slice-or more, if you dare-of one of the specialties. Melvin (Canadian bacon, pineapple, Maytag blue cheese, spinach, jalapenos) and Tuskeno (cream cheese, roasted chicken, sundried tomato, basil, Romano) are among the more distinctive options. It might be best to split a slice, though, because you're going to want to save room for a warm, buttery cinnamon stick for dessert. (2330 University Ave.; papakenosdesmoines.com)

## MOST WORTHY OF A DRIVE

PYRA PIZZERIA (pictured, right)
You'll feel like you've stepped onto the set of a classic sitcom after entering this tucked-away small-town gem. Part "Cheers," part "All in the Family," everyone will know your name after one visit—and you'll feel like part of the brood thanks to a warm welcome from owner Steve Taylor, his wife, Deb, and their daughter, who just might be your server. Open since late 2018, they follow all the official rules for a classic Neapolitan pizza: Italian "00" flour, San Marzano tomatoes, fresh mozzarella

Continues on page 86



Continued from page 84
cheese and a cook time of 90 seconds
or less in an 800-degree oven. If you're
a white sauce fan, try their namesake
pie, the Pyra, with garlic white sauce,
Romano, prosciutto, artichokes,
kalamata olives, mushrooms and fresh
mozzarella. If red's more your style,
root for the home team in Norwalk with
the Warrior, featuring tomato sauce,
Romano, bacon, Graziano's sausage,
pepperoni, red onion, mushrooms,
black olives and fresh mozzarella.
(729 Main St., Norwalk;

## **BEST BY-THE-SLICE**

pyrapizzeria.com)

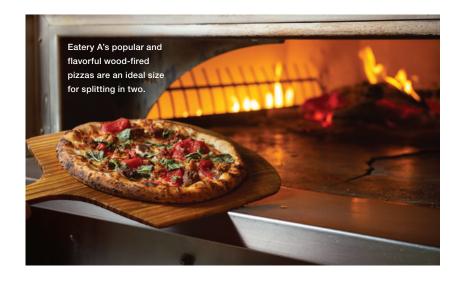
### **TASTE OF NEW YORK**

"It's actual New York pizza, not
New York-style. Our pizza cook is from
New York," the Taste of New York team
would like to clarify. So step right up
and get a bite a la the Big Apple at this
West Des Moines strip mall spot. Grab
a lasagna or chicken bacon ranch slice
and add a side of garlic knots with
marinara. After one bite, you'll swear
you're standing under the Brooklyn
Bridge. (165 S. Jordan Creek Parkway,
West Des Moines;
tasteofnewyorkmenu.com)

# **BEST PIZZA TRUCK**

# 515 PI

These pies fly all across town from a beer hall and West Des Moines parking lots to weddings and backyard parties. Monitor the truck's whereabouts on their website or via the Klickle app (find it in the iTunes App Store or Google Play). Track 515 Pi



down and you'll be rewarded with wood-fired crusts adorned with bacon, blue cheese and caramelized onions (Bacon 'n' Bleu) or slow-roasted pork, red peppers and salsa verde (Carnitas). (Serving at the Hall, located at 111 S. 11th St. in West Des Moines; select businesses; and private events. See 515pi.com for the full schedule.)

### **BEST DATE NIGHT PIZZA**

### EATERY A (pictured, above)

Eatery A is our go-to for a casual yet chic date night when we're craving pizza. Elevated toppings like those found on the No. 5 (lamb gyro, feta, pickled onion, tzatziki) and the No. 6 (figs, prosciutto, greens) are joined by more traditional picks such as the No. 2 (tomato, mozzarella, balsamic reduction, basil) at this Ingersoll hot spot. If you can't agree, keep the peace by ordering a half-and-half for \$2 more.

As always, pizza, beer and wine are half price from 3 to 6 p.m. daily.

(2932 Ingersoll Ave.; eateryadsm.com)

## BEST BRUNCH PIZZA

# **CENTRO**

While they don't come on an all-youcan-eat buffet, you won't regret waking up your taste buds with a Centro woodfired pie. The greatest hits from the dinner menu can be yours during brunch (Saturday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.). But we're especially fond of pairing a Bellini with a slice or two of Centro Breakfast Pizza, which comes piled high with scrambled eggs, Graziano's Italian sausage, green pepper, mushroom, red onion and cheese sauce. If you prefer a suppertime slice, swing by on Mondays when pizzas and Peronis are 50% off. (1003 Locust St.;

centrodesmoines.com)







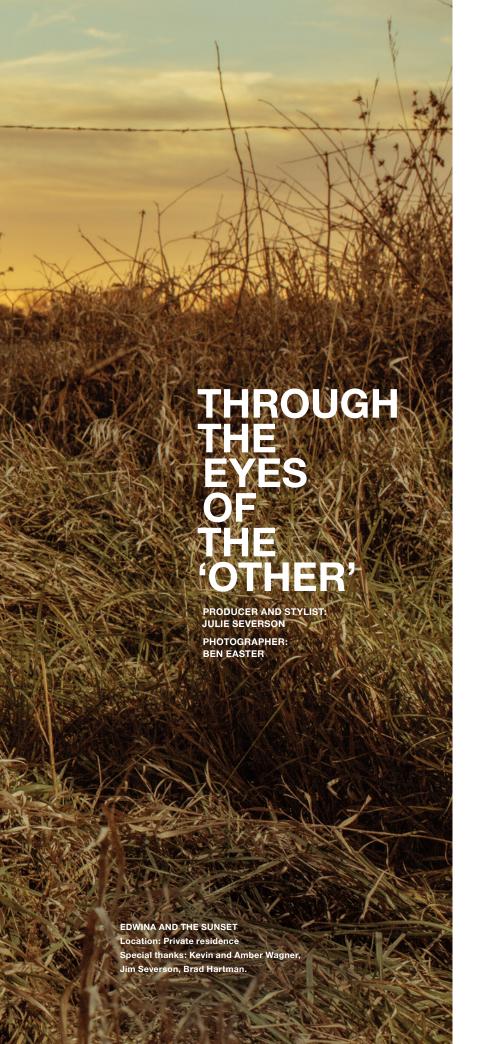
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IT ALL STARTED with a mask Julie Severson saw as she strolled by the window of Tandem Brick, a framing and specialty shop on Ingersoll Avenue.

Mesmerized by the pigeon head staring back at her, "I knew I had to have it," says the Des Moines creative director. "And I've always liked odd and weird things," she adds with a laugh.

Her creativity spun as the intriguing character she named "Edwina" formed in her imagination. To Severson, the pigeon-headed Edwina represented a way to see the world through a different pair of eyes, whether exploring local landmarks, having tea with newfound friends or reflecting in quiet solitude.

Severson teamed up with photographer Ben Easter to bring the fairy tale of Edwina to life. It was a perfect match: "I've always wanted to do a shoot with masks—something that was whimsical yet could be viewed at a more meaningful and deeper level," says Easter, a longtime contributor to dsm. "We all wear masks to some extent."

Easter adds that pigeons have a symbolic meaning to him. "They're pests and represent the underdog, the outcast," he says. "Our perfection-obsessed society doesn't want to support the outcasts, yet they are the ones who can contribute the most. ... For many years, messenger pigeons were highly valued for serving an important purpose."

Severson and Easter have spent the past two years doing shoots across the city, including at Greenwood and Water Works parks, locales featured on the following pages. Their work continues, with Edwina exploring a growing list of local spots (the lowa State Fair, Saylorville Lake). As Severson puts it: "Ben and I hope to continue creating more magic with Edwina in the future."













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LAURA BERMAN ORIGIN 5 (DETAIL) COLLAGE 20 X 20



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Justin Favela (American, born 1986) Detail from La Cañada de Metlac, after José María Velasco, 2018 Paper and glue on board / 41 x 63 inches

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For information on how to support One Iowa visit oneiowa.org/donate today.



# LGBTG LEGACY LEADERS

WRITER: LUKE MANDERFELD
PHOTOGRAPHER: DUANE TINKEY

e at dsm magazine are proud to stand with our diverse neighbors and present the second annual LGBTQ Legacy Leader Awards. Once again, we have partnered with the

advocacy group One lowa to honor the civic contributions and achievements of lowans who have persevered despite prejudice to make our state a better place for all. We also have selected one

individual from outside the LGBTQ community to honor as an Ally, someone who has embraced and promoted LGBTQ lowans as friends and colleagues.

Learn about the honorees on the following pages, and join us in honoring them at a public reception this summer (because of COVID-19, the event is being postponed from the original June 4 date; a new date hadn't been determined by press time). Also at the event, the 2020 graduates of One lowa's Leadership Institute will be presented.











# EILEEN GEBBIE FIGHTING FEAR

Christmas Eve is typically a day of happiness. For Eileen Gebbie, the 2019 celebration began with disappointment.

It was an unseasonably warm morning in Ames, where Gebbie is the pastor at the United Church of Christ. Already she was dreading what faced her: Just a few days before, the man who had set the church's rainbow-colored LGBTQ flag on fire early that year had been sentenced to 16 years in prison. The blowback was swift and severe. The punishment was too harsh, dissenters said, despite the fact it was a hate crime and the man was a repeat offender.

They directed their anger at the church, which is inclusive to people regardless of sexuality. Hate messages flooded in, and many of them carried anti-LGBTQ sentiments.

"The backlash was substantial and unrelenting. It was eye-opening," Gebbie says. "I don't believe there's a world in which God condemns anyone to death or suffering. Being gay is a biological reality, and this made me dig in even more."

Gebbie has long been a proponent of inclusivity and acceptance. She was born in St. Louis but spent her formative years in Portland, Oregon. In high school, Gebbie lived with her openly gay aunt and partner for a year. Her experiences made it easier for Gebbie to come out as a gay woman when she was 23.

Gebbie, now 46, was raised in a religious household, but left the church in her early 20s because of the vitriol some Christians expressed toward the LGBTQ community. By her late 20s, however, she felt a pull back to the church. It took her 10 years to finish seminary while working in the nonprofit field, but by 2012, she found a role as a church minister in California. In 2015, she and her wife, Carla Barnwell, moved back to the Midwest to serve the church in Ames.

From the outset, Gebbie emphasized acceptance of all and became a mentor to many, both within and outside the LGBTQ community. In addition, she serves as the founding board member of the Story County Housing Trust Fund and

has frequently written guest editorials for the Ames Tribune on social justice issues. She also has worked with the Ames Public Library to expand programming for LGBTQ youths.

"Eileen consistently uses her voice, her platforms, her institution and her leadership to practice inclusivity," says Ben Schrag, a member of the congregation. "She creates places of safety and gives relief to those who struggle with the challenge and pain of being [an outcast]."



# ALEXANDRA GRAY SEARCHING FOR THE STAGE

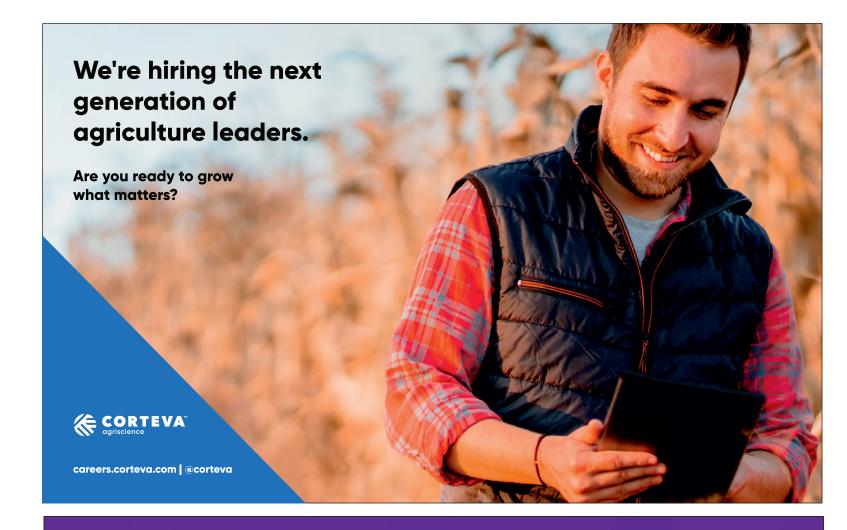
Alexandra Gray grew up on the southwest side of Chicago in a family of accomplished singers in the local African American music scene. As a youth, Gray sang, danced and was enthralled with musicals. She started to take the stage more seriously in her teenage years, first performing professionally in the Houston Grand Opera version of "Porgy and Bess" in the mid-1980s.

At the same time, Gray was finding herself. Living as a man, Gray knew from an early age she was gay, but by her early 20s, she started to understand herself as a transgender woman.

"You get up every day, and someone says that you're supposed to be this one day, and you know in your heart of hearts that you're not," Gray says. "For me, being creative was my outlet. I had a lot of people who called me [names] and bullied me in school. But they couldn't take away that I was a damn good singer."

Gray came out in 1997, but her performing career took a hit. At the time, transgender people of color couldn't find work in the theater industry, Gray says. By her mid-20s, she started working in gay bars to make ends meet. She wouldn't return to the stage for two decades.

Five years ago, Gray moved to Des Moines after struggling to find housing and employment in Chicago. Iowa was familiar to her as she had friends in the area and had attended Luther College in Decorah. She immediately became involved with the local LGBTQ community and also



# DIVERSITY MEDICINE & HEALTH SCIENCES CREATES OPPORTUNITIES

The University is proud to recognize the important value and influence Iowa's LGBTQ community has in our region.

The Iowans recognized by these LGBTQ Legacy Leadership Awards are models of compassion, helping to solve problems and advance our state's support of an increasingly diverse population. DES MOINES



serves on Primary Health Care's prevention advisory council.

Mentorship has long been a passion for Gray. About 25 years ago, she lost her two grandmothers and several other family members in the span of about a year. That sparked her desire to connect and help others, particularly drag performers, transgender individuals and LGBTQ people of color.

Gray is acutely aware of the threats that face transgender women of color and is an outspoken advocate for LGBTQ rights. According to the Human Rights Campaign, 26 transgender or gender-nonconforming people were killed in 2019 in the United States, the majority of whom were black transgender women.

"Alexandra captures the attention of every person she ever interacts with," says Daniel Hoffman-Zinnel, CEO of Proteus Inc. and former executive director of One Iowa. "Alexandra fights each day to stay alive and speaks at public events to put a face to transgender women of color."

After 20 years, Gray, now 47, returned to the stage in 2016, playing the lead role in the Des Moines Community Playhouse's "Sister Act." Since then, she has dived backed into theater.

"This is what fuels my spirit, and so I've been pursuing the arts more," Gray says. "I had to come to grips with who I was before I was able to pursue what I wanted to do and be genuine about it."



John Harper has heard the heartbreaking stories, even if he hasn't lived them himself. He spent several years on panels for the Governor's Conference on LGBTQ Youth, listening as attendees poured their hearts out. Many had been kicked out of their homes. Others had been disowned by their families. Some were afraid to come out publicly.

It's these stories that inspire Harper, 79, to be a steady force in the lives of young LGBTQ individuals. He's owned that mindset since he was a young boy himself.

Harper grew up in Des Moines, where his parents routinely helped those less fortunate and impressed on him that with privilege comes a responsibility to give back. In the 1950s and early 1960s, being openly gay was almost an impossibility—it was criminalized in most states, and role models were not readily apparent.

By the time Harper acknowledged to himself that he was gay, in his mid-20s, he had already seen a number of his closeted gay friends marry women and have children.

Harper started working as an administrator with the University of Iowa in 1966, and he came out just a few years later. Unlike other gay individuals at the time, being open didn't hinder Harper, who became a professor of English in 1976. He worked at a university that has long been inclusive to LGBTQ individuals, in a city that was progressive for the times. In addition, Harper was active in the local theater scene, a largely accepting community.

He remained relatively protected from discrimination until the early 1990s, when he returned to his religious roots. As young as 9, Harper felt a calling to the church but turned away from religion after a bad experience during his college years at Stanford University. After turning 50, though, he wanted to make a change and in 1995 became the first openly gay cleric in the Episcopal Church of Iowa.

Religion is often a reason LGBTQ youths are afraid of coming out, fearing they'll be alienated by their family and church, Harper says. He wants to change that narrative. For a number of years, Harper wore his clerical garb on National Coming Out Day, prepared to help anybody who needed it.

"I feel I'm in this privileged position, having faced almost no pushback or discrimination on this journey," he says. "But at the same time, I listen to the stories of people around me and feel the price they've paid for trying to come out. For me, it's an obligation."

Harper retired in 2002 after 36 years with the University of Iowa. He's still involved in the community, including with the ACLU of Iowa and Planned Parenthood, and has mentored hundreds of LGBTQ individuals.

"John is a generous and socially conscious booster of numerous causes," says Ryan Crane, director of charitable giving for the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines. "He doesn't just check the box—he lives it."



# HONORING AN ALLY AND ADVOCATE

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THANK YOU, JOHN, FOR BEING AN ALLY, ADVOCATE AND INSPIRATION.
IT'S OUR PRIVILEGE TO HONOR YOUR LEGACY.







# JAN JENSEN FORGING AHEAD

Quitting seemed like the right choice—maybe the only choice. It was the late 1990s, and Jan Jensen was just understanding her sexuality as a gay woman. As the assistant head coach for the women's basketball program at Drake University, Jensen worried that coming out would be a detriment to her team. At the time, there were few, if any, openly gay college coaches.

She walked into head coach Lisa Bluder's office and offered to resign. Bluder didn't accept.

"I didn't want to let everybody down and hurt the program," Jensen says. "Just like in every profession, there was homophobia. There were people using that as a reason to not send their daughters to play for your team. But thankfully, I had a great support group that helped me forge ahead."

Jensen followed Bluder to the University of Iowa in 2000, where they turned the program into a perennial powerhouse. Jensen, associate head coach, became a highly regarded recruiter and coach, helping countless players improve their skills while serving as a mentor on and off the court.

Success is nothing new to Jensen. Growing up in the western lowa town of Kimballton, Jensen averaged 66 points per game for her six-player high school basketball team. She became one of the most celebrated athletes in the area and played collegiately at Drake, eventually competing professionally overseas.

When Jensen returned to lowa after her playing career ended, she had time to reflect. Away from the daily grind and dedication of an elite athlete, Jensen looked inward and realized she was gay. The first person she told was Julie Fitzpatrick, a former teammate at Drake, in 1997. They became lifelong partners and later married.

Coming out to her family and hometown was more difficult. Jensen was the homegrown star and revered in the area, and although her relationship with Fitzpatrick was accepted, it wasn't openly discussed there. Then in 2007,

Jensen and Fitzpatrick visited Kimballton with their newborn son, Jack (they also now have a daughter, Janie). In a crowded local dinner theater, a line formed to greet them and welcome the baby. It was one of the first times their relationship was embraced on such a deep level.

There were people of all ages, Jensen says. "I was in tears the whole night. I will never forget it. So much was said without saying anything at all."

Over the years, Jensen, now 51, has worked with numerous charitable organizations, including the United Way of Johnson County, where she and Fitzpatrick co-chaired a record-setting campaign; and the Shelter House, which operates an emergency shelter and also permanent supportive housing units. She speaks throughout the state on leadership and team-building topics.

Jensen "has been a great mentor to the women on our team and the rest of the athletic department," Bluder says. "She has been a sounding board and an ally to many of her peers and student athletes. Her leadership is unparalleled."



# TRACY LEWIS A ROLE MODEL FOR MANY

In northwest Iowa's Woodbury County, farm acres outnumber people. Row crops and gravel roads stretch to the horizon and beyond. This is where Tracy Lewis grew up in the 1960s and '70s, the son of farmers and the youngest of three children.

He has fond memories of his childhood: Long days on the farm honed his work ethic and 4-H taught him invaluable skills. It was early in that upbringing that Lewis realized he was gay. But in his rural community, there were no LGBTQ role models. He remained closeted.

"It wasn't a horrible existence, but I felt like there was no one like me," he says.

Lewis attended Iowa State University, then began a human resources career at Principal Financial Group in 1984. On his first day, he met his life partner, Rick Gubbels. They kept the relationship a secret, but by 1989, Lewis



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thought the relationship would have to end if they couldn't come out. The facade was too much to keep up.

"I was sick to my stomach, but one day I thought, 'Why does it have to end?'" Lewis says. "I want it to go on forever."

Lewis came out to his family, who were accepting. Principal, long a proponent of inclusivity, accepted him as well. It was a weight lifted for Lewis, who could now live openly and honestly.

Today, Lewis is passionate about mentorship and community service. He and Gubbels have mentored dozens of LGBTQ individuals, serving as the role models Lewis never had. He also is a fixture among Central Iowa LGBTQ organizations and has served as a board member for the Des Moines Public Library Foundation, the Des Moines Arts Festival, the former StageWest Theatre Company, and the Iowa 4-H Foundation, reflecting his passions for the arts and for agriculture.

"Tracy has passion for many causes but more so for the LGBTQ community," says Lynn Graves, a former co-worker and community volunteer. "Tracy never hesitates ... to share his time, talent and treasure."

Lewis, 59, is retired now after a successful career. He's battling stage 4 prostate cancer and knows he has a fight ahead of him. As he crosses off bucket list items with Gubbels, Lewis wants his legacy to be about the lives he's touched.

"You get very reflective when you're told you have a certain amount of time left on this earth," Lewis says. "I'm struggling in a lot of areas, but this honor shows me that maybe my life wasn't for nothing."



Bragging isn't John Forsyth's strong suit. That became immediately evident in a recent interview in his window-clad corner office on the top floor of the downtown Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield building.

A few Wellmark team members joined him for the interview. In telling his own story, he was quick to credit them at every turn, exhibiting the type of modesty that has

made him an effective leader in moving Wellmark to the forefront of inclusivity in the workplace, including for LGBTQ individuals.

Forsyth, 72, has been the CEO of Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield, the largest insurance provider serving Iowa and South Dakota, for 24 years. Throughout the past two decades, Forsyth's vision has been to create an organization accepting to all.

In the late 1990s, Wellmark became one of the first organizations in Iowa to establish insurance benefits for same-sex couples. Forsyth oversaw the creation of the company's Inclusion Council, which brings a wide range of voices to the decision-making table. Because of Forsyth, Wellmark supports only nonprofit organizations that agree to the company's inclusion statement.

Forsyth was raised north of Detroit and studied engineering at the University of Michigan before transferring to Michigan State to finish his bachelor's degree in economics—"I hated [engineering]," he says with a laugh. He worked with the University of Michigan in the 1970s and '80s and joined Wellmark as CEO in 1996.

As a leader, Forsyth has embodied his parents' teachings of acceptance. "It's all about how you grow up, right?" he says. "I was raised that you should treat everybody how you want to be treated."

He also realized how much sense inclusion makes from a business standpoint: "As a leader, if you want to get the maximum value, then you have a very diverse population that really should [foster] all kinds of different views and different ideas."

Forsyth seeks to have open communication with his employees, which made an immediate impact on Tony Khuth, who lost a friend in the 2016 Pulse nightclub shooting in Florida. Khuth, an employee and member of the LGBTQ community, reached out to Forsyth, who promptly announced Wellmark would donate \$5,000 to the One Orlando fund and match employee contributions.

"That single act has forever shaped what being an ally means to me," Khuth says.

Khuth's story and others like it are one reason why Forsyth enjoys what he does. "It makes my day. I mean, that's what it's all about, right?" he says. "You want to have a great company, you have to have great employees. I just get excited each time I hear somebody that says, 'This has made a difference in my life.'"

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Pending COVID-19 Guidelines

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#### **LEGACY LEADER AWARDS**

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#### **2020 LEGACY LEADER HONOREES**

The Rev. Eileen Gebbie, Alexandra Gray John Harper, Jan Jensen, Tracy Lewis

#### **2020 LEGACY LEADER ALLY**

John Forsyth

June 4, 2020

Date subject to change pending COVID-19 guidance. Please visit dsmMagazine.com for the latest details.

Venue: Embassy Suites by Hilton - Des Moines Downtown

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#### **GIVING CITY**

#### MEETING UP FOR MEALS

WRITER: RACHEL VOGEL QUINN

When Natalie Lynch's son, Caden, reached an age where he could stay home alone during the summer, she faced worries familiar to many parents: What would he eat at home? Would he spend any time with other kids? How much would it cost to replace the food he had been getting at school and summer camps?

Four years later, her job is to help parents in similar situations. As program coordinator for OpportUNITY, Lynch manages Summer Meal Meet-Ups, which provides free meals and activities to anyone age 18 and under at 59 sites in Polk, Dallas and Warren counties.

During the summer months, each site—often a school, park or church—offers a combination of breakfast, lunch, dinner and snack Monday through Friday. In 2019, the program served nearly 160,000 meals, averaging about 3,000 kids a day.

Formerly known as the USDA's Summer Food Service Program, the meal sites aren't new to Central Iowa. But when United Way's OpportUNITY initiative took over the program in 2017, it was rebranded to raise awareness and to reduce the stigma associated with free meals.

"We've had a great group of community members coming together to help promote the program," Lynch says. "The collaboration among the different sectors is truly incredible."



During the school year, about 41% of Central lowa students receive free and reduced-price lunch through the USDA. But when summer hits, the school cafeteria is no longer an option. According to Feeding America, more than 1 in 7 children in Central lowa were food insecure in 2017, meaning they lacked reliable access to enough nutritious food.

In Waukee, a school district with a relatively low poverty rate of 4%, the program markets itself as a safe space for kids to interact and play outdoors. Although the USDA reimburses them for the food, as it does at all meal sites, the school district provides the staffing and activities, with teachers and counselors acting as volunteers.

Kaitlyn Scheurmann, a dietitian with the Waukee Community School District, says the adults create a sense of belonging and community for the kids. Relationships now deepen throughout the summer. Last year, a delivery driver

made friends with a student recently arrived from Egypt, buying him a bike and teaching him to ride.

Waukee's meal sites are located near pockets of poverty. Although the community seems economically secure on the surface, Scheurmann recognizes a hidden need—families that are stretched too thin, especially with high mortgage costs.

Because the meal sites follow strict nutritional guidelines from the USDA, parents can count on their kids receiving a healthy meal, as well the chance to play and talk with other children in a safe, structured environment. This social interaction is key, as many don't have a parent at home during the day.

United Way's OpportUNITY initiative, the community's collective plan to fight poverty, tackles barriers for the one-third of Central Iowans who are not financially self-sufficient. Luke Lynch (no relation to Natalie), OpportUNITY director, says many work two or three jobs. Summer Meal Meet-Ups is an essential stopgap when their kids are out of school.

"People are working hard and doing their best to get out of poverty," he says. "But because of the circumstances they are in, through no fault of their own, they are having a tough go of it. So it's our role as a community to them."



# DISASTER RECOVERY FUND ACTIVATED

#### IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Questions? Contact the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines at (515) 883-2626

THE DISASTER RECOVERY FUND COORDINATION TEAM CONSISTS OF the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines, United Way of Central Iowa, Polk County Emergency Management Agency, American Red Cross- Central Iowa Chapter, IMPACT, Polk County and Community Family and Youth Services- Polk County.

**GIVING CITY** 

#### **EVENTS**

Editor's Note: As this issue was going to press, a directive was in place prohibiting gatherings of more than 10 people, including fundraisers. The events listed here are subject to change.

#### MAY

#### Strands of Strength ANNUAL SPRING LUNCHEON

When: May 13, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
Where: Glen Oaks Country Club
Details: Features a lunch and silent and

live auctions. Proceeds benefit Strands of Strength's mission, which is to provide wigs free of charge to cancer patients in need throughout lowa. \$300; \$2,400 for a table of eight; strandsofstrength.com.

#### Des Moines Pastoral Counseling Center

#### WOMEN HELPING WOMEN LUNCHEON

When: May 15, 11:30 a.m.

Where: Embassy Suites Des Moines

Details: Jackie Servellon, a local
business owner and human services
provider, is the keynote speaker,
discussing her personal experience as
a victim of domestic violence. \$75; \$50
for young professionals under age 40;

dmpcc.org.

#### Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines

#### **CELEBRATION LUNCHEON**

When: May 20, 11:30 a.m.

Where: Community Choice Credit Union

Convention Center Ballroom

Details: Network and learn about the Community Foundation's mission during this celebratory event. A program will take place over lunch. \$30; or \$300 for a table of 10; desmoinesfoundation.org.

#### **Principal Foundation**

#### PRINCIPAL CHARITY CLASSIC

When: May 26-31 Where: Wakonda Club

Details: This event brings top-tier professional golfers to Des Moines while raising money for local charities that serve children. \$20; higher ticket packages vary in price; principalcharityclassic.com.

#### JUNE

#### Alzheimer's Association of Des Moines PURPLE SOIREE

When: June 5, 6:30 p.m.

Where: The Meadows Events and

**Conference Center** 

**Details:** Includes a reception, gourmet dinner and late-night live entertainment.

Tables of 10 are \$2,000; purplesoireeiowa.org.

#### **Easterseals Iowa**

#### **ADMIRAL'S WHITE PARTY**

When: June 10, 6:30 p.m. Where: Camp Sunnyside

Details: Live musicians play over a cocktail-style dining experience featuring a custom menu, specialty drinks, and live and silent auctions.

\$150; easterseals.com.

#### Boys and Girls Clubs of Central Iowa GREAT FUTURES GOLF TOURNAMENT

When: June 15

Where: Des Moines Golf and

Country Club

**Details:** Supports 2,000 teens and kids in achieving success. Includes fun hole contests, lunch and a premier tee gift package. \$1,500 for a foursome;

bgcci.org.

#### **Hoyt Sherman Place**

#### GRAND OPENING CONCERT AND EVENT

When: June 17

Where: Hoyt Sherman Place

**Details:** Legendary performer Gladys Knight in concert, followed by tours of the newly opened Center for Artists and Education. \$79-\$140; hoytsherman.org.

#### MercyOne Des Moines Foundation

#### **HOUSE OF MERCY GAME SHOW**

When: June 18, 6:30 p.m.

Where: Community Choice Credit Union

**Convention Center** 

Details: This game show-style fundraiser is a mix of fun and philanthropy, benefiting MercyOne House of Mercy. \$150; \$75 for young professionals under 40; \$1,500 for a table of 10; MercyOne.

org/houseofmercy.

#### Meals From the Heartland

#### **MORSEL COMBAT**

When: June 25, 6 p.m. Where: Ron Pearson Center

Details: Chefs and restaurants from Central Iowa create and present a smallplate menu item. Attendees and celebrity judges determine their favorite dishes. \$100; \$75 for young professionals under

40; \$1,000 for a table of 10; mealsfromtheheartland.org. ■

dsm invites nonprofit organizations to submit events for possible inclusion in this calendar. Please include the following information: name and a brief description of the event, date, time, location, ticket price, and a link to additional details. Send to dsmeditor@bpcdm. com. The deadline for the September/October issue is June 15.





bgcci.org

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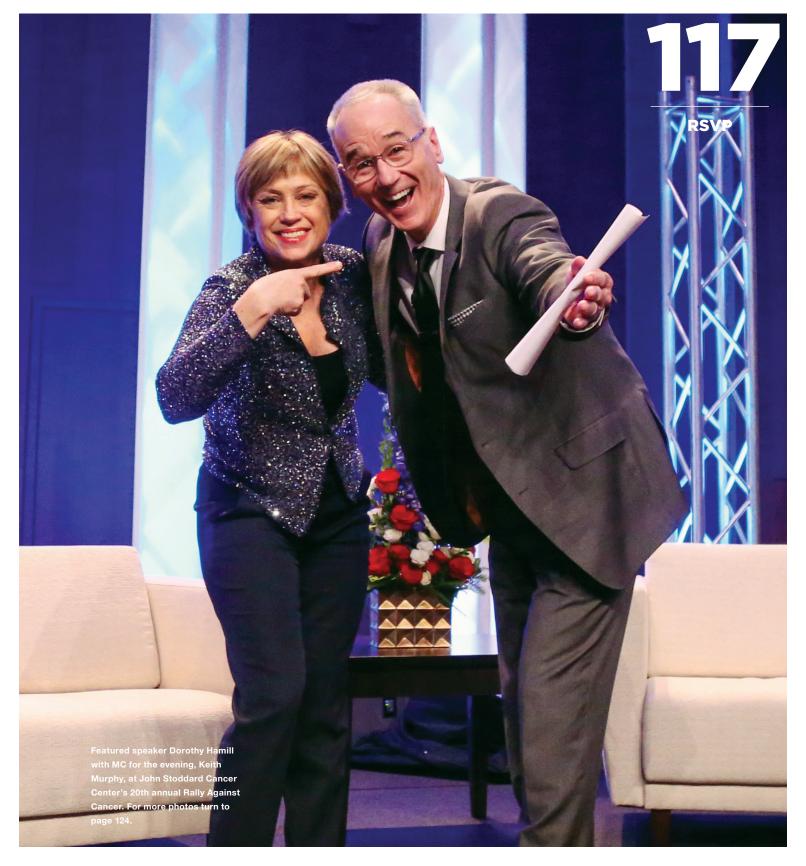








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#### **RSVP**







#### **BRAVO AWARDS GALA**

Organization: Bravo Greater Des Moines

Date: Feb. 1, 2020

Venue: Hy-Vee Hall at the Iowa Events Center

Main Attraction: The 15th annual presentation of awards for arts patrons and programs, with more than 1,500 guests. Recipients included Don and Margo Blumenthal, the After School Arts Program and City Voices.

**Photography:** Ann Elizabeth Photography and Christopher Maharry, Maharry Photography







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#### WINE, FOOD & BEER SHOWCASE

Organization: Des Moines Metro Opera

Date: Feb. 21, 2020

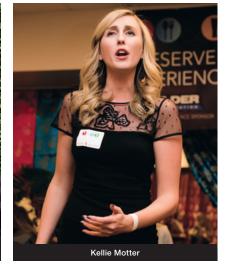
**Venue:** Des Moines Marriott Downtown

Main Attraction: Food and drink from 48 restaurants, wineries, breweries, caterers and distilleries, all in support of Metro Opera's education and community

engagement programming.

Photography: Ivory House Photography









### CVI 20/21

Brooklyn Rider: Healing Modes Sat, Oct 10, 2020

Georgia on My Mind: Celebrating the Music of Ray Charles

Thur, Nov 12, 2020

Canadian Brass: Making Spirits Bright Sat, Dec 5, 2020

Sean Jones Quartet Fri, Jan 15, 2020

որկրա

Yefim Bronfman: Lauridsen Great Piano Series Fri. Feb 26, 2021

Bessie, Billie, Nina: Pioneering Women in Jazz Fri. Mar 5, 2021

Tessa Lark & Michael Thurber Fri, Apr 16, 2021



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### IOWANS CELEBRATING IN SCOTTSDALE

**Organization:** Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines

Date: March 3, 2020

Venue: The Scottsdale home of Sunnie Richer and Roger Brooks.

Main Attraction: A gathering in Scottsdale, Arizona, of Community Foundation donors.



Melanie Campbell, Paige Yontz, Kristi Knous, Lynne Yontz









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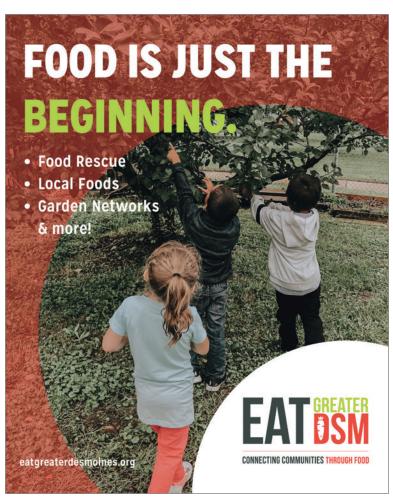


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#### **EMERALD CITY BALL**

Organization: Ballet Des Moines

Date: March 6, 2020

Venue: Willis Automotive

Main Attraction: A fundraiser for Ballet Des Moines, with more than 200 people attending. The evening featured performances by Dueling Fiddles and Final Mix; aerial performers from Cirque Wonderland; and a sneak preview of the ballet company's 2020-2021 season.

Photography: Christopher Maharry, Maharry Photography

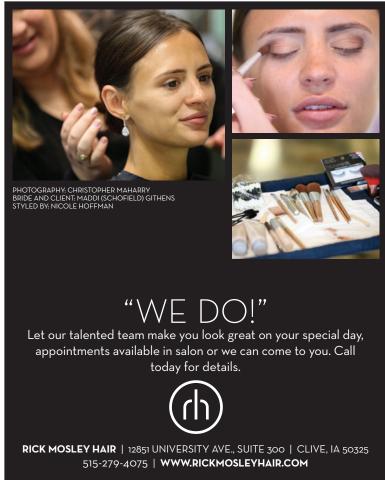














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#### **RSVP**





#### **PEOPLE ISSUE UNVEILING**

Organization: dsm magazine

Date: Feb. 11, 2020

Venue: Barnum Floors

Main Attraction: Barnum Floors hosted a lively party to celebrate *dsm's* inaugural People issue, a new specialty publication.

Unique Touch: Dancers from Ballet Des Moines performed

a scene from "The Wizard of Oz."

**Photography:** Duane Tinkey







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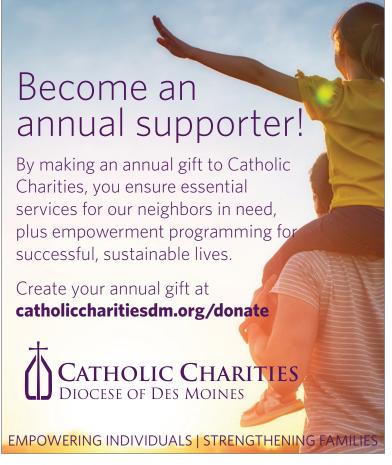
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DSM MAGAZINE
MARCH/APRIL
ISSUE
UNVEILING

We had such fun with about 400 of you on March 3, when we celebrated the arrival of our March/April issue in the spectacular new showroom of **Royal Flooring**, now at 11801 Hickman Road in Urbandale. Thanks to our gracious Royal Flooring hosts, including owners Nick Fiala, Scott Sullivan and Johnnie Kennell; to Trostel's Dish for the outstanding food; and to Juniper Moon for the specialty cocktails. And thanks to all who came out to join us for a lively evening. Let's do it again in a couple months—this time at the Food Bank of Iowa on June 23. See page 12 for details.



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SUPPORTING STRONG AND GROWING COMMUNITIES

BPC is dedicated to enhancing and shaping the community, and that means being involved in more than just our work. This vision stems from the leadership of Connie Wimer, the trailblazing founder of our company, who has been a role model through her community service, philanthropy and leadership.



# DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SAYING

— and —

DOING

Ashlee extends her passion for financial literacy to her community, serving as a volunteer income tax preparer with United Way's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program which offers free tax preparation to low and middle-income households in Central Iowa. Each year, the program brings approximately \$9 million back into the local community.

Ashlee doesn't just say she helps people with their personal finances – she delivers value to her clients and gives back to the community. **That's the difference between saying and doing.** 

Ashlee Vieregger, JD, CFP®, CTFA, VP - Managing Wealth Advisor

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