

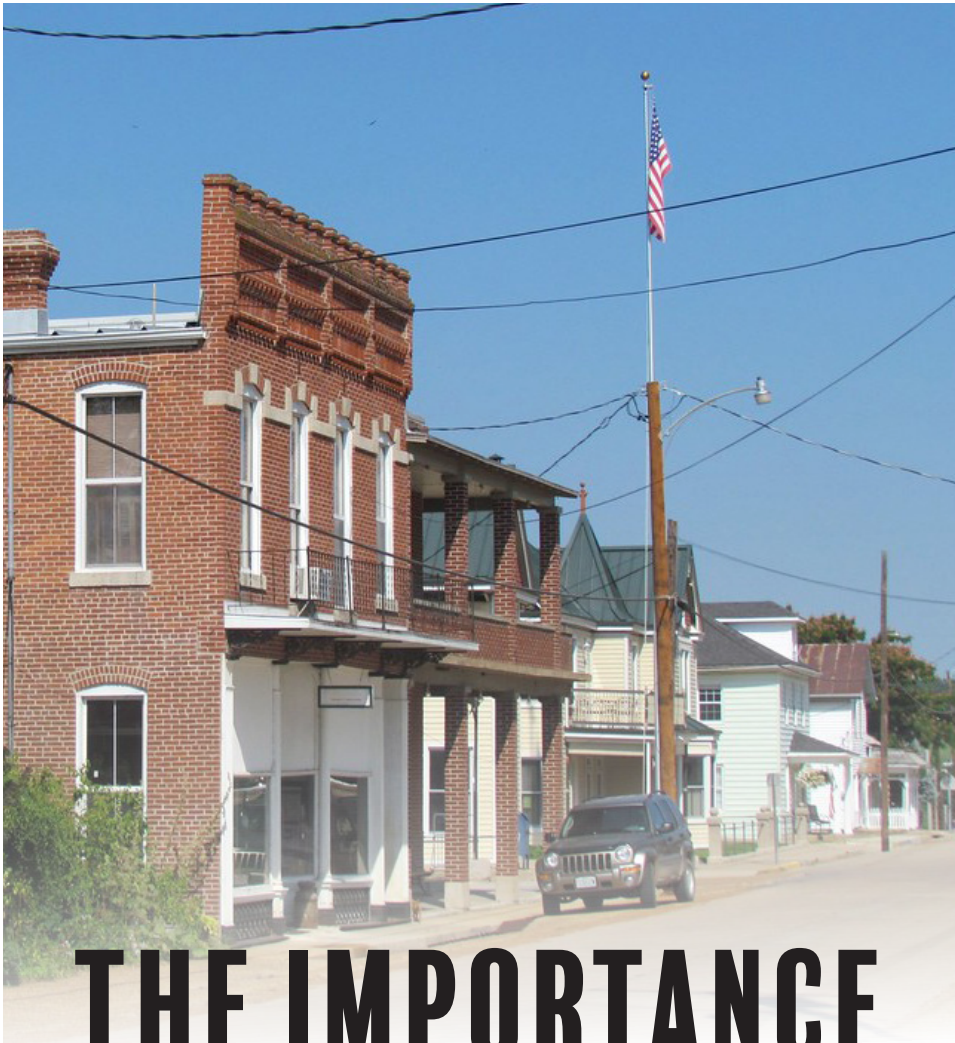
March 2022  
A Special Supplement to  
**Unterrified Democrat**

# *Local* **Livelihoods**

Small Businesses & Their History

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# THE IMPORTANCE OF SHOPPING LOCAL

By Connie Warden

There are a variety of reasons to shop locally.

Aside from the obvious — your money stays in our community, you don't have to spend time traveling, and you purchase locally grown and/or handmade products — there are also some maybe not so obvious reasons.

You may discover interesting things about the people in our community. While doing business with our local shops or restaurants, you will probably start some conversations with the folks working there or other shoppers. With the pandemic, many of us were careful about how close we were to other people and in so doing, became isolated. Now is the time — still being careful about our health — to begin to rebuild those relationships with others in our communities.

When you take the time to participate in gatherings such as Taste of Osage County, Christmas on Main Street, and craft shows — any event that has local crafters and vendors — you may find some folks with talents and products that you may not have realized existed in this area.

If you are looking for an unusual gift idea — and don't want to shop on Amazon — you need only look around. You may be surprised at the variety of items available.

Local businesses know that their customers are looking for high-quality items. They also realize that in small communities, quality is going to become a topic of conversation among their customers.

Osage County business owners care about the products and/or services they are providing because they care about you — their customer and neighbor.

When you shop locally, you show pride in your community. You help businesses and the community grow economically and you help make this unique place attractive to visitors.

As you shop locally, especially those of us with children in our care, you can become an example for future generations. Many of us are overwhelmed with the advances in technology and how people communicate nowadays. Using a phone to make a purchase with a few clicks is convenient but my challenge to everyone is to spend time shopping in the community, doing business, whatever you need to do — just good old-fashioned talking with the business owners you may be asking in the future to support your youngster's fundraising efforts.

Save yourself some time and money. When purchasing locally, most of the time, your items are immediately available, and you will invest in the progress of your community to help someone else succeed.

And let's face it — that is one of the things we are supposed to do — help other people.

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# Linn Thriftway points to loyalty as reason for success

By Neal A. Johnson

Linn Thriftway under the direction of owners Bruce Bax, Kevin Ousley, and Mike Rackers since May 2016 has continued the long-time approach to customer service followed by former owners Bob and Norma Lee Campbell, and say that loyalty plays a huge role in the success of the local grocer.

“Loyal, hardworking employees, loyal customers, and good working relationships continue to be important,” said Rackers, who serves as the beer and liquor manager.

There have been some challenges during the pandemic, including employee staffing and product shortages, but overall, Linn Thriftway has enjoyed tremendous support from the community.

“Our customers have been there for us throughout the pandemic,” said Rackers.

Last summer, the store found itself limited to 600 cases by distributor Associated Wholesale Grocers (AWG).

However, as of now, the store does not have a case count. “We get what we

get, around 50-55 percent of what we order in dry groceries,” Rackers said.

With 17 full-time and 50 part-time employees, Linn Thriftway maintains a solid foundation with which to continue operations in a friendly way.

“We offer small-town, personal attention,” said Rackers.

A clean store is also vital. “We clean regularly and have other options for people who don’t want to come to the store in person,” said Ousley.

For those who wish to avoid in-person contact due to COVID, Linn Thriftway began and continues to offer a phone application for curbside pickup of groceries to ease congestion at the store, which at one time was restricted to limited in-person capacity.

Linn Thriftway’s app is available on Apple and Android, and the grocery store is also on Facebook.

Moving forward, Linn Thriftway is tentatively planning a grocery reset this summer to add items and freshen the look of the store, Rackers added.



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# BESCHEINEN INVESTS IN MAJOR REMODELING

By HB Dodds

Bescheinen's Family Furniture, one of Osage County's longest-tenured family-owned businesses, is getting a makeover. The multi-phased project began in 2012 with repaving the parking area and other exterior improvements.

"We poured 298 yards of concrete," said second-generation owner Steve Bescheinen.

The storefront exterior followed in 2014. The general contractor was Doug Bax Construction.

The landmark store in Loose Creek was founded in 1946. Like so many other enterprises, it is now enduring a supply chain slowdown. Bescheinen believes COVID-19 policies are to blame. The trucks keep coming on schedule but they aren't delivering the goods like they used to.

"Before, we'd get 50-80 pieces on a truck," he explained. "Now we're lucky to get 20-35."

An event like this, heading into its third year, translates into a lot of vacant space. The traditionally

showroom floor is half empty. What's a resourceful store owner to do?

The Bescheinens saw this as an opportunity to remodel indoors, half the store at a time, beginning last year. "That's why we decided to start this project now, instead of in three or four years," said Steve Bescheinen.

The inventory they have fits into half the store. The other half can hide behind sheets of plastic. Carpenters and other craftsmen can have at it. Right now, the upstairs portion and the western ground floor are completely gutted. They're getting new ceilings, walls, and flooring. The prominent central staircase is included.

Other invisible systems: insulation, electrical wiring, lighting, sound system, heating, and air conditioning are being improved as well. Shaun Haslag is the general contractor.

Founders Hubert and Pauline Bescheinen are retired, or at least semi-retired centenarians. Hubert still shows up to work often enough, though, so this all has to meet his approval.

"He'll be here on Wednesday morning," said Steve Bescheinen. That way



he can go to Loose Creek Oil and obtain the new edition of the *Unterrified Democrat*. "He just can't wait to get it."

The current building was erected in 1959. Major additions and remodeling in 1961, 1978, and 1990 followed. The business is now well into its third generation of keeping Bescheinen family members in Osage County, making their livelihoods local.



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# Becker Millwork & Hardware carrying on family legacy

By Theresa Brandt

Joe and Edna Becker decided to open a lumberyard and hardware store in Freeburg in 1948. They had hoped they would be a service to the community and build a legacy to hand down to future generations. Seventy years later, Becker Millwork & Hardware is a growing, successful business that is still family-owned and operated.

Originally, Joe and Edna's children took over the business. Richard Becker and his sister, Kristie Miller, ran the business successfully for years with their brothers, Delbert and David Becker. Richard passed away in 2019, and Kristie and Delbert retired, leaving the day-to-day operations to Richard's wife, Brenda Becker, Richard's nephew, Todd Becker, and Richard and Brenda's daughter, Paige Becker Lafferty.

Kristie's daughter, Amy Miller, has recently started working in the office, and Todd's Brother, Rockie Becker, has been working in the lumberyard for many years.

"We take a lot of pride in being family-owned and operated," Paige Becker Lafferty said.

They are proud to be certified as a Women Business Enterprise.

Becker's Millwork and Hardware carries a wide variety of building materials. "From lumber to paint, we carry everything you would need for your project," Paige explained.

The store handles insulation, siding, drywall, closet shelving, locks, soffits, decking and railing, metal roofing and siding, doors, windows, paint and stain, hardware, tubs, showers, toilets, roofing, trusses, millwork, cabinets, countertops, ceiling tile, tools, and caulk.

They work with an assortment of brand names, selling Quaker windows, Valspar paints, LP Smartsiding, and Owens Corning insulation, just to name a few.

COVID-19 has been difficult, with Becker Millwork having the same problems that most businesses are facing.

"The supply chain is the biggest issue we have right now," Paige said. "Pricing, extended lead times, and trucking are a problem with almost all of our product lines."

Becker Millwork has been trying to counteract the problems with the supply chain by ordering things ahead and trying to keep the right number of items in stock at the right price.

"There are parts of the equations that we don't have any control over," Paige explained. "All we can do is hope that the supply chain issues get better soon."

The owners of Becker Millwork feel like they have more to offer than the big

box stores.

"We promote products that we personally use," Paige said. "We pride ourselves on customer service and our knowledgeable staff is here to help you with any questions you might have. Our goal is to help our customers to get the home of their dreams, whether it is a remodel project or a new house. We strive to make our customers happy and try to make building a house less stressful."

The crew at Becker Mill Work offers personal service that's not common among their competitors. They strive to offer reliable service from the beginning to the end of a project regardless of the size of the project. The salesmen visit job sites to aid in estimating quantities of products to order, like windows, doors, siding, and cabinets. They sit down and review the products with the homeowner to provide an accurate material and quantity estimate based on the plans customers provide. Experienced delivery drivers take materials to job sites daily and work through all the seasons of the year.

"We have a great crew that knows what needs to be done and how to do it," Paige said. "It takes all of us to keep the business running."

Becker Millwork provides a variety of product training throughout the year for local contractors. The company appreciates all of the contractors, businesses, and customers with whom they work.

The company works with other local businesses and organizations in Osage County and surrounding communities. They believe it is important to work within the community to support one another. Just a few weeks ago, they held a coloring contest for their young customers and students at Holy Family School. The winner received their very own kid-sized wheelbarrow.

Becker Millwork has a website and frequently posts specials on Facebook, along with pictures of remodeling projects and new construction, and shout-outs to their employees. During March, they will be running a special for 5% off Quaker windows. You can check out their Facebook page or go to their website and join the mailing list to get notifications of specials and events.

Despite the ups and downs, Paige, her family, and employees are committed to having a strong presence in the community.

When Joe and Edna Becker opened the business, they had hoped that the family would carry on the legacy. It looks like their dream is safe with this new generation and that Becker Millwork will continue to be of service to the community.

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# OSAGE COUNTY CONCRETE CONTINUES FOUNDING PRINCIPLES

By Theresa Brandt

Osage County Concrete has been a fixture in the area since it was established over 45 years ago. The concrete plant sits between the creek and bluff alongside Hwy. 50 in Linn. Mike Rackers has been the manager there for the past three years. He took over as manager after the unexpected death of long-time manager Dwight Sieg. Mike worked for the company for eight years before he took over as manager and brought tons of experience to the job.

The company offers ready-mix concrete and dump-truck services locally and extends service throughout Osage, Miller, Gasconade, and Cole counties.

Mike and his employees believe in delivering a quality product to the job site and pride themselves on customer service. Whether it is new construction or a remodel, residential, commercial, or an agriculture building, Osage Concrete is ready to be of service. Mike and his employees are conscious of the fact that they are providing materials for projects that may last generations.

Mike's staff starts a project making sure customers get all the information

necessary to make a good decision. A call to the office can get an estimate started, yield information about what type and amount of concrete might be best for the project, or schedule a delivery. Osage County Concrete does its best to work within a timely manner knowing that time is money on a job site. All the drivers are helpful and do their best to work with contractors and property owners.

Mike hires all local drivers and knows that they are important to the success of the business. Osage County Concrete has 10 employees ranging in experience from five to 40 years. "I think it is important to keep local employees," he added.

Mike has several employees who are getting close to retirement age, and he knows that in the current climate, they will be hard positions to fill.

He also believes that it is not only successful businesses that help build the county but providing good jobs to the area is important as well. Osage County Concrete strives to find drivers that stick with the company for

the long haul. They are invested in their employees and their families, building strong foundations on job sites, and within the community.

Osage County Concrete supports the local community by purchasing premiums at the fair for 4-H and FFA projects. The company also donates to organizations and causes when they are asked for loads of rock for area benefits.

Throughout the past year with COVID-19, the company has been as busy as ever. The new year started slow but Mike attributes that mostly to the weather.

"Moving  
f o r -

ward we have a lot of projects coming up," Mike explained.

Like most companies, Osage County Concrete is navigating rising prices, supply chain issues, and high fuel costs.

Mike's philosophy is simply to do the best job they can.

"We really appreciate all of our customers and strive to do the best we can," Mike said. "Sometimes we may have problems, but we do our best to address them. We are not perfect, but we try to be as close as we can."



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# Family-owned Joe's Market is a big part of Westphalia

By Theresa Brandt

Joe's Market is truly a family-owned and operated business. Duane and Darlene Fennewald of Westphalia bought the business 19 years ago and all four of their children play an active role in keeping the business operating smoothly.

Chris and his wife Amber have three children, Audra, Carter, and Allie. Chris helps Duane on the family farm full-time but also finds time to run errands and deliver groceries. Aaron and his wife Laura have two children, Emerald, and Georgia. Aaron is a full-time electrician and helps with any electrical needs for the store. Duane and Darlene's daughter, Jennifer, married Andy Brendel, and they have two children, Addilynn and MacKenzie, with two more on the way. Jennifer works full-time at the store and helps manage the business. The Fennewalds' youngest daughter, Nicole, is married to Jacob Linhardt, and works full-time at a financial institution and part-time at the grocery store, often working evenings and weekends. Darlene's sister, Shirley Morfeld, also works at the store.

Joe's Market loves to offer locally grown products in the store. The pork that Joe's Market sells is raised on the Fennewald family farm and processed and inspected at a local processing plant, The Butcher Shop. They also sell wine from Westphalia Vineyards. Joe's Market offers bedding plants and flowers grown by Countryside Gardens.

Joe's Market is known for its deli, offering fresh sandwiches and slice-to-order meats and cheeses at a customer's request. The store offers meat and cheese trays as well as fruit and vegetable trays made to order. The store offers Hunt's Brother's Pizzas throughout the week and twice a week they serve a hot lunch special. They offer biscuit and gravy and breakfast sandwiches on the weekends.

The Fennewalds also have gift bas-

kets for sale throughout the year.

Since Duane and Darlene bought the business in April 2003, they have continued to expand and make improvements. The first addition was in 2009 when they added a 30-foot storage area, a larger loading dock, and a larger walk-in freezer. In 2015, they added a 30-foot x 100-foot area that included a kitchen, beer cave, additional produce cooler, and an additional freezer. The added freezer and beer cave allowed the store to offer a wider variety of products. In 2020, the Fennewald family improved the entrance into the parking lot by widening it and replacing the graveled driveway with concrete.

Joe's Market employs between 20 to 25 people who mostly work part-time. Some are retired, some work full-time jobs elsewhere and some are college and high school students who work around their class schedules and school breaks. Duane and Darlene are proud to work with other local businesses and supply groceries to convenience stores, grocery stores, and other local organizations. The Fennewalds rely on Remote Computer Services in Westphalia to assist them with their computer and printer needs.

Joe's Market is proud to serve the community by providing groceries locally. They are thankful for the support they receive from the community. They emphasize that shopping local helps support the schools, churches, and community organizations. A few of the ways that Joe's Market supports these organizations are through SCRIP, Receipts for Education, and donating to various fundraisers.

Two years of dealing with COVID-19 has brought on its own special set of challenges, which continue as Joe's Market works with distributors and warehouses to get products into their store.

Through it all, the Fennewalds keep working together as a family and serving the local community.



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# Diamond R Equipment building on 20 years of service

By Theresa Brandt

Diamond R Equipment has been serving the community for over 20 years. Established in 2001, Diamond R Equipment has grown to include two full-service locations, one in Freeburg and the other in Higginsville.

Owners Jim and Trisha Rehagen are two of the hardest-working people around. They take great pride in their business. Diamond R Equipment started out selling industrial equipment, but quickly grew and began offering farm and lawn care equipment.

Today, the business sells and services a variety of brands, including LS Tractors, Mahindra, Scag, Krone, Woods, Mustang, STIHL, Husqvarna, Gravelly, Rhino, and Tonutti.

Diamond R Equipment offers a variety of new and used equipment and likes to feature customers with their new equipment on their Facebook page. Their site is full of pictures of smiling customers and shiny new (or new to them) tractors and equipment. It is hard not to smile at the pictures of customers, kids, and pets, all grinning from ear to ear.

The Rehagens are proud to offer a variety of services. They can do anything from sharpening a chainsaw to rebuilding a motor. They give the same attention to detail and customer service to customers, whether they need routine maintenance or a major overhaul. They strive to get things done in a timely manner knowing that every day equipment is in their shop it is a hardship to their customers.

Jim and Trisha have seen their share of hardships. In 2019, Trisha was diagnosed with breast cancer. The news was devastating for the whole family. But the Rehagens decided early on that they would not let a cancer diagnosis change their priorities or dominate their life.

“Jim and I decided at the beginning of this that we would deal with this one day at a time,” Trisha Rehagen remembers.

And that’s what they did, somehow, pulling together as a family and continuing to keep the business running and their family strong. Though the Rehagens hope that their cancer days are now behind them, they are adamant about supporting breast cancer research and talking about their experience in a way that helps other people. The black sign with bright pink lettering that reads “Diamond R Equipment Fighting for a Cure” that is on their website and frequently in front of their shop is a clear sign of where their hearts are.

Jim and Trisha are up-front about the trials and tribulations of running a business. It is a lot of hard work. Jim said that he and Trisha had to learn to not take things too personally and don’t let things get under their skin. No matter how hard they work, the Rehagens realize that they can’t do everything. They depend on their employees to be just as dedicated as they are to helping customers. Running a business is a team effort and Diamond R Equipment has one of the best teams around between their drivers, technicians, sales, office, and service employees. They are a team dedicated to their jobs. The other part of any business is customers and Diamond R Equipment is thankful for all the sup-



port they have received over the years.

Diamond R Equipment is proud to have its roots in Osage County and to have found a way to serve the community. The Rehagens believe that the key to handling the good times and the hard times is all about having a good attitude. No matter what life throws at them, they keep moving forward, growing a business, raising a family, and building strong relationships with everyone that walks into their shop.



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# WIEBERG RED-E-MIX CONTINUES TO THRIVE

By Neal A. Johnson

Despite the COVID pandemic, Wieberg Red-E-Mix, with locations at Meta and Vichy, has continued to thrive.

"We were lucky and were not affected too badly," said Jodie Phillips, who along with her brothers, Mark Wieberg and Mike Wieberg, have helped their father, Charlie, run the business since 2021. "The construction industry seemed to continue and thrive during the pandemic."

Bill and Hilda Wieberg began operations in 1963 with the first plant and two trucks. Before building the first plant, Bill had two portable mixers that would be taken to the job site with material hauled in on dump trucks for mixing and poured into wheel barrels.

Bill and Hilda Wieberg's son, Charlie, who became the sole owner last year, noted that one of the last projects using this method was the school in Meta. Cement was hauled in on the Rock Island Railroad, and Charlie remembers as a kid having to load the bags, each weighing 94 pounds, onto pallets to bring to the plant. Bill passed away in 1969. In 1972, Hilda had a new concrete plant installed to help carry on Bill's vision and continued to run the company until her passing in 1983.

At that time, the company was run

by Charlie and his sister until her retirement in 2021. In 2000, the current plant in Meta was installed, and in 2016, a computerized batch system was added. In 2014, Wieberg Red-E-Mix added the plant in Vichy which allows them to serve the Rolla area and surrounding communities.

A tracking system installed on all the concrete trucks allows management to see in real-time where drivers are at any time.

"The family is proud to have been in service for the last 59 years and hopes to continue to be in service for a long time, with the third generation ready to carry on the family business," Charlie said.

Wieberg Red-E-Mix provides concrete services to the Jefferson City and Rolla areas, and surrounding communities.

"We have two plants to best serve you, and we offer ready-mix concrete as well as dump truck services for all your needs," Phillips noted. "Whatever project you may have, we're here to help."

Services are available for both commercial and residential properties, and trucks are dispatched by radio to provide on-site help with any project.

Wieberg Red-E-Mix offers free estimates for all services and is insured for



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customers' protection.

"We are dedicated to providing our customers only the finest concrete blends and we specialize in decorative concrete," said Phillips. "Wieberg Red-E-Mix has a team of experts for all of your concrete needs. Passion for a job well done is our driving force."

Phillips added the company is acquiring new batch control panels at both plants. This is a computerized system that loads the trucks and prints out delivery tickets, and installation is expected this spring, along with two additional concrete trucks. The company is currently looking to add two more drivers at the Meta plant.

Employees at Meta are Charlie Wieberg, Mike Wieberg, Jodie Phillips, Adam Kliethermes, Pat Wulff, Phillip

Sestak, Pat Lackman, Ron Rothove, and Leonard Schulte.

At the Vichy location, employees are Mark Wieberg, Adam Hays, Mike Able, Robert Kever, Mark Bland, Zeb Kramer, Danny Roam, Larry Weidinger, and William Henson.

Find Wieberg Red-E-Mix on Facebook for more information.

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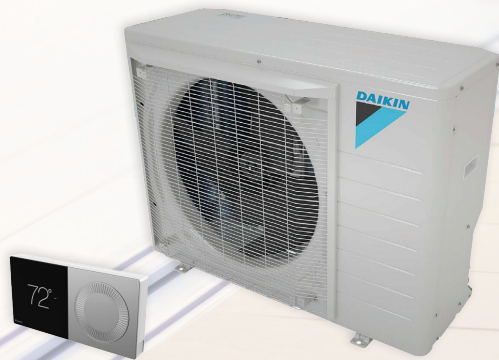
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# Rehagen Heating & Cooling celebrates its 41st anniversary of service to local communities

Written By Edward Gehlert

A staple of business longevity in Westphalia since 1981, locally-owned and operated Rehagen Heating & Cooling has been proudly serving the area for 41 years and is looking forward to continued operations.

Travis Rehagen purchased the company from his uncle, Melvin Rehagen, in 2006, and was joined in 2009 by Jacob Dorge, who partnered with Travis to help grow the company into the successful business it is today.

Currently boasting a workforce of 30 employees, the company specializes in installation and service work for residential and commercial structures.

“Servicing heating and cooling equipment is extremely important to our company,” said Rehagen. “We have five full-time technicians that specifically work on providing routine maintenance or repairing units on any type or brand of equipment with 24 hours

emergency service. Some other HVAC companies do not offer service work on HVAC equipment. Our service department has grown within the



last 10 years to provide the professional assistance every homeowner desires.”

Rehagen Heating & Cooling provides the full circle of HVAC practice from design, to installation, to service. Their professional workers want customers to be comfortable with the choice they make from proposed options.

“Our estimators help find the right fit for your home or business by listening to what your needs are,” Rehagen said. “We offer equipment with elevated warranties, financing options, and up-to-date rebate offers.”

“The installation technicians are educated on getting your system up and running while respecting you and your home,” Rehagen continued. “We also register your equipment for warranties and submit rebate forms for any possible rebates when installing a new system. Performance inspection plans are also available to help keep your equipment operating effectively and efficiently.”

The company offers name-brand equipment on traditional systems and geothermal options that are the greenest, most efficient, and most cost-effective heating and cooling systems

available.

Rehagen Heating & Cooling recommends and installs WaterFurnace Geothermal — the number-one brand in geothermal equipment — along with the warranty that accompanies it. This ground-source heat pump will heat and cool a home efficiently and economically with little maintenance. Rehagen installation and service technicians are highly trained on the operation of these systems to get customers up and running smoothly or to repair any issues that may arise.

Daikin Brand is also recommended. This company offers a wide range of heating and cooling equipment that is cost-effective and manufactured in America and has better warranties and higher efficiency ratings.

Rehagen Heating & Cooling attributes its

choice of high-quality equipment as one of the reasons the company has maintained a cutting edge over the competition.

“We credit our success by offering and installing equipment that we stand by and are leaders in their industry,” said Rehagen. “We take pride in the wide range of knowledge to design and install the right system to fit your needs for your home or business. Our office staff is there to help assist you with all your questions or requests. We work with your schedule to get a service technician or estimator to you as soon as possible.”

Visit Rehagen Heating & Cooling on their website at [www.rehagen-hvac.com](http://www.rehagen-hvac.com) for more information.





# SOW KINDNESS, REAP JOY, GALATIANS 5:22, WORDS THAT DEFINE NATURE'S KEEPER FLOWERS AND GARDEN NURSERY



Currently, she is a grower.

Katlyn Borgmeyer owns her own nursery business that she literally built from the ground up and it brings her joy to provide this service to her customers. Nature's Keeper Flowers and Garden Nursery LLC's mission is to make the world a more beautiful place.

Years ago, Katlyn Borgmeyer was taught by her parents that anything in this life comes from hard work and that there is great dignity in knowing that you were able to achieve it on your own. She watched her paternal grandparents run a successful business from sun up until sundown in Loose Creek and her maternal grandmother put everything she had into her farm in Rich Fountain. It was only a matter of time before she combined the mix and carried out what was already running through her veins.

Therefore, her ambitions became the accumulation of business, agriculture, education, and conservation. These areas are all a part of why she came to be who she is today. Katlyn has taken many courses in these areas and as a young adult, graduated salutatorian, and became a teacher. She earned her master's degree. Now, conservation came into the mix because she was always outside, running the hollers of Osage County, hunting, exploring, or fishing as a child. When it was time to settle down for the evening, she would continue her quest and could be found curled up in a hammock reading and discovering more about nature. Her parents passed on to her a real love of nature, and it was remarkable to be out in it. Nature had a majestic way and there was so much to learn from it and about it.

In the not too distant past, Nature's

Keeper Flowers and Garden Nursery was a far-off dream of hers — a dream that would come to be much, much later in life, or so Katlyn thought. However, life is in a constant state of change; doors opened and opportunities presented themselves.

Several years ago, Katlyn had a wonderful, kind-hearted, and sweet friend, and when asked, she would assist him at his nursery that had been a family-owned nursery for well over 50 years. Sadly, her friend passed away. He was loved by many and everyone enjoyed his company.

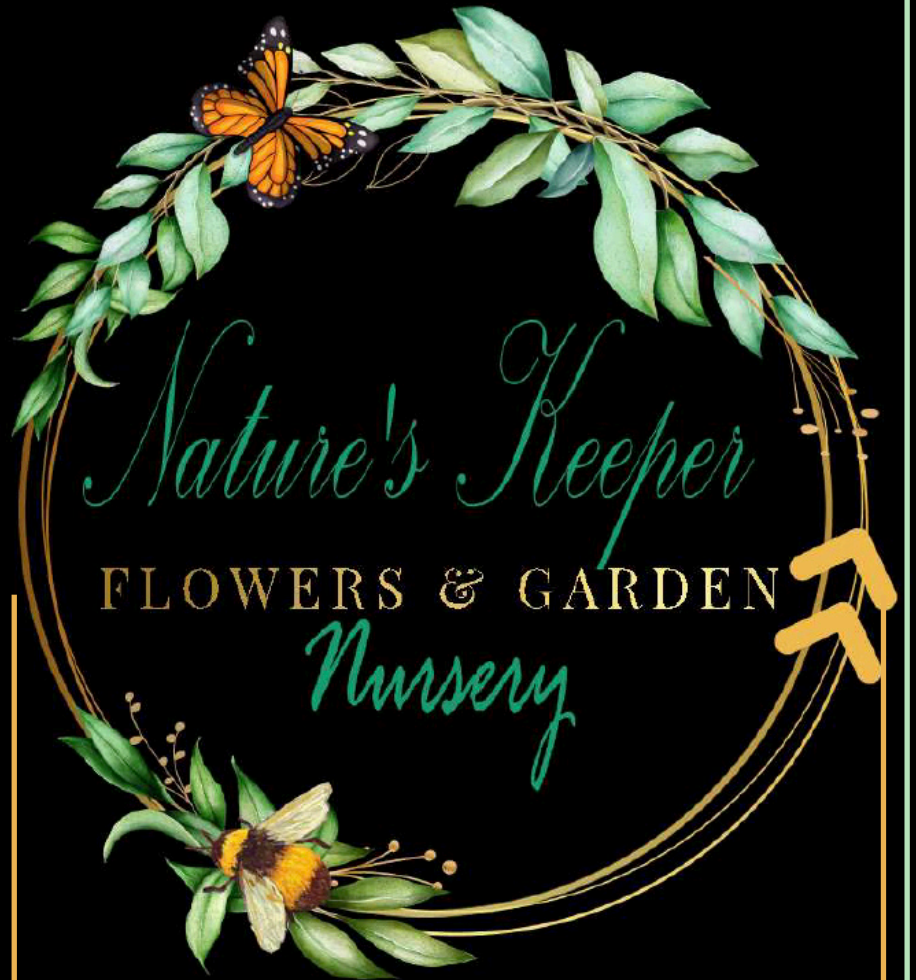
A little over a year later, his brother offered her the opportunity to buy the greenhouses and she accepted the opportunity. Katlyn knew that her friend could in some way live on through her and that her far-off, someday, dream wasn't actually so far away after all.

In 2020, Katlyn, or "Sunshine," as others call her, began building her business. Beginning a business is always risky and challenging, and even more so at the beginning of the pandemic, but the challenge was accepted and she pushed forward.

Katlyn has been prepping for the spring of 2022 since the day she closed up for the fall. Preparing everything for each season is a monumental task and it takes an entire season to get ready for the next. The nursery business happens in all seasons, whether it is -5 or 105 degrees outside. This will be her second spring season and for Katlyn, it is her favorite time of the year for the nursery because "Everything in nature comes out of the frosty winter and is ready for new growth. The birds are chirping, the sun brings everyone joy, and what you can plant is limitless," she said.

Katlyn personally grows nearly everything you will find at Nature's Keeper. Each season, she hopes that all of her customers will enjoy what the nursery has to offer.

Currently, at Nature's Keeper Flowers and Garden Nursery, a customer will find excellent customer service, knowledgeable assistance, guidance in helping you plan your flowerbeds or vegetable garden, informational garden hacks, educational conservation to benefit you and your family in your own backyard oasis, custom container plantings in a drop-off and pick-up method, annuals, perennials, hanging baskets, and high-quality vegetable plugs. Please stop in this spring and see all that Nature's Keeper has to offer. You'll be glad you did!



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# Baker pleased to guide investors at Edward Jones

By Neal A. Johnson

Kurt Baker has been a part of the investment community since hanging out his shingle on Dec. 3, 2001, and believes today as he did back then that his role as an investment advisor with Edward Jones is to bring the investment world to rural Missouri.

“People have the same access to investing as someone living in Boston or San Francisco,” he said. “The difference is, they will always talk to me, not whoever answers the phone of a 1-800 number. I will help them realize their goals and dreams through investing.”

What people need to realize is that Baker’s job is to help build wealth over the long haul. “It’s been my pleasure to help people save for their future,” he said. “I focus on achieving this with an educator’s mind with the heart of a friend. Investing isn’t easy, it’s sort of like planting a garden. You don’t harvest the bounty of a garden shortly after planting it. Rather, it takes time, focus, and work to realize the fruits of your labor. Investing is the same. Using short-term measures for a long-term investment never works. It takes dedication, focus, and the ability to stick to

a plan. The harvest of a good investment has produced great results time and time again throughout the years.”

Markets can be volatile, with ups and downs to be expected, and Baker believes it takes determination to succeed.

“In the good times, investing is easy,” he said. “It’s not so easy to make the decision to invest in the downturns; however, that is usually the best time to do it. Communicating this to people makes it a continued challenge. Being determined with my message is a must.”

The investments and life insur-

ance he markets keep more at home than just his family. Folks now living and working in the county have a better chance of staying here when they retire. Often, it’s because of Baker’s guidance. Without solid counsel, many may scrape by for a few decades. Then, though, they’re forced to move when disability or old age lean on them. The products Baker offers keep options

open. Retirement accounts allow folks to live on their own terms, even if they live longer than they expect. Life insurance helps dependents be flexible in case a bread winner dies too soon. Plus, premium and investment dollars are



**Edward Jones**  
Continued on page 15B



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# Classic Buildings provides much more than structures to the community

By Edward Gehlert

From humble beginnings in 2003 to a company that now manufactures more than 10 buildings a week at its headquarters in Linn, Classic Buildings has proven that with hard work, dedication, and most importantly faith, positive changes can be made for the business and community.

Kenneth Miller moved his custom buildings business from Salem to Linn in 2008. What began with only a handful of

workers has now grown into a company that employs 50 people and

is a business that puts those people first. In fact, Miller said that his goal is to have Classic Buildings ranked as the best place to work in Missouri by the year 2032.

“What God called me to do is build a workplace environment that builds people’s lives and that’s what we do,” said Miller. “That is the number one thing we do. We create an environment where people can come to the workplace and thrive, grow as individuals, and grow with their families. That means so much, physically, spiritually, and emotionally.”

Miller’s business plan has its foundation on faith-based Christian values and guiding principles. As one of their core values, he says they are a Kingdom business operating in faith.

“We follow God’s leading, understanding everything happens for a reason, and are sensitive to what God puts in our path,” he explained. “We make plans but the Lord determines our steps. Proverbs 16:9.”

Miller appreciates the time it takes for a home or business owner to research his business’ type of buildings, products, and services. He assures cli-

ents that they will be invested from their first point of contact with the company.

“A smart buyer does his or her own due diligence,” said Miller. “Because we appreciate the time it takes to pick and purchase the best product, we hope that what we say makes great sense and that in your own defining moment, you choose Classic Buildings to provide an exceptional product, one that you can be truly proud of for years to come.”

Miller credits the quality of his employees and God with the success of his business. With forgiveness and second chances holding deep, personal meaning to him, he offers those things to prospective employees.

“One of the biggest callings that we have is helping people coming out of addictions,” Miller said. “That is the number one calling that God put on my life. There are people who are tremendous individuals that have been caught up in addictions. What does the world do? They write them off. They actually



**Classic Buildings**  
Continued on page 38B

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# EDWARD JONES

continued from page 13B

under the stewardship of a local professional. "Having an investment business has been very beneficial not just to me but to my clients here in Central Missouri," Baker asserted.

Many of Baker's clients own Individual Retirement Accounts (IRA), which can be two distinct tax qualified commodities. The standard IRA shields investment dollars from taxes going in. It also defers taxation as the principal grows. For those who feel they need the tax shelter now, it's ideal. The Roth IRA, though, keeps those dollars tax-free when the retiree draws them out. It also shelters their growth, taxing them only as they're invested. Many may feel it's easier to handle taxation now than then. It's a powerful tool for clients who start soon, and invest wisely enough, so they actually retire to a raise. When much more comes out than goes in, it's better to pay the taxes going in. "Having these investments allows for people to stay local in retirement or can also provide for other goals, such as travel," said Baker. "Of course, a lot of people want to assist the next generation, so these investment accounts also provide for wealth transfer."

Baker was hired by Edward D. Jones & Co., L.P., on July 23, 2001, and the company trained him to sell securities and insurance. He is licensed in 16

states, including Missouri, to market those products. He earned his current professional certification as an Accredited Asset Management Specialist (AAMS) in 2006. Baker also holds a degree in Agricultural Mechanization from the University of Missouri.

Baker credits Sarah Strobe, his branch office assistant, for the day-to-day smoothness of the operation. She does everything in the office that doesn't require licensing.

"I talk with individuals about their investment needs," Baker explained. "She handles the day-to-day needs, as in gathering necessary signatures, setting appointments, and manning the phone. She also is the first person people see when they walk in the door so she is the one person welcoming committee for the office. I wouldn't have survived 20 years without her."

Recently, Baker has moved from satellite communications to fiber-optic for more reliable transmission of information.

While COVID has played a role in how business is done, Baker said he and Strobe have conducted more phone and Zoom appointments than ever before, and it has accelerated their ability to e-sign documents.

For more information on investment opportunities, visit Baker on Facebook and LinkedIn.



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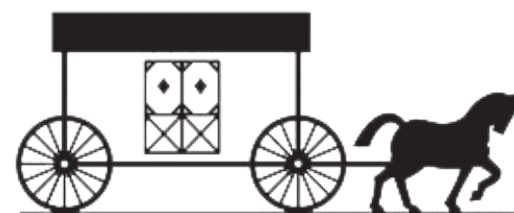
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# Osage Ambulances, a local livelihood that saves lives

By HB Dodds

A major Osage County employer, Osage Ambulances, commands the skill and experience of many local workers. It's one of the largest local payrolls and more than one in three who toil there have been reporting for duty for more than 15 years. Such a loyal, dependable, and experienced work force is hard to find anywhere.

Company President Kyle Shimmens insists this is no accident. According to Shimmens, Osage Ambulances has made this a goal throughout its history. Management has always held this ethic and held it successfully. "We put significant focus on providing solid benefits for our employees and their families," said Shimmens. "Seeing our team provide for their families and watching their kids grow is one of the greatest joys we experience."

Shimmens feels the secret to this is never taking the good worker for granted. "We certainly are aware that competition for the best employees is high," he said. "There are many other strong central Missouri employers, so working to stay competitive is always in focus. We want to be the place in Osage County people want to work."

Building ambulances requires attention to detail. There must be a desire to produce a machine that can be counted on to help sick and injured people. The dedication and precision required of Osage's team must be of the highest quality. The plant continues to attract and satisfy customers across America. It's a testimony, says Shimmens, of "the quality of people right here in central Missouri. We consider ourselves lucky to call Linn and Osage County home."

Because they're here, many skillful neighbors are also able to call Linn and Osage County home. Because of them, folks elsewhere are often able to go back home after an accident or illness.



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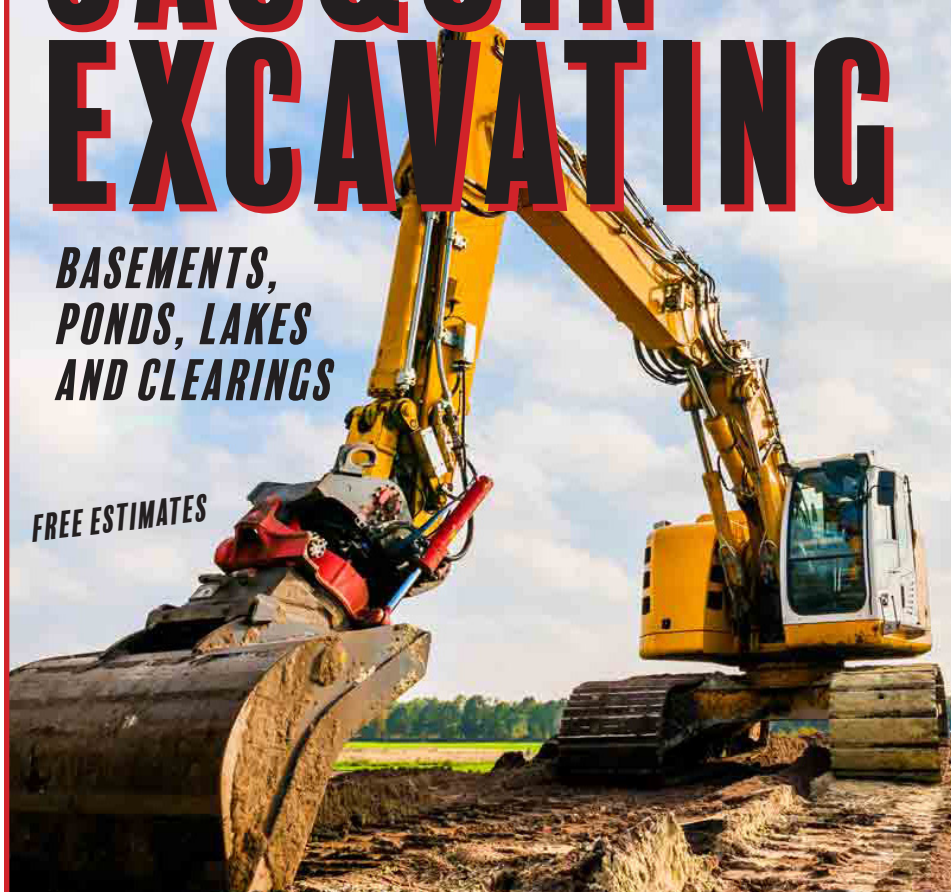
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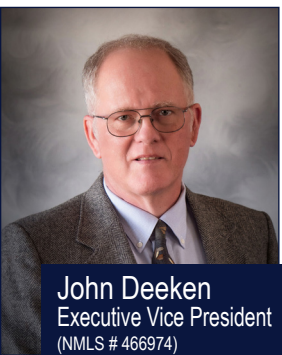


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# Legends Bank continues to grow but will always call Linn home

By Theresa Brandt

Legends Bank has been occupying the same space on Main Street in Linn since 1934. The building has been expanded and remodeled but the bank and the Klebba family remain dedicated to Linn and Osage County.

"We like being here," said Legends Bank Chairman and Chief Executive Officer John Klebba. "We have a commitment to Osage County, and we have every intention of continuing that into the foreseeable future."

Over the years, Legends Bank has continued to grow and has expanded branches into six different counties. As the bank grew, the Klebbas knew they needed to expand the headquarters building but didn't know exactly how to do that.

"We never considered leaving Linn," Klebba was quick to point out. "We've always been based here because we've always lived here. Ownership and management have always lived in Linn. From my grandfather to my dad to me and my brother Tom,

who is now the bank president, we've always lived here in Osage County in the Linn area."

When the owners of the building next door, Linn Printing, offered their building for sale, everything just seemed to fall into place.

"Sometimes it's really great when a plan comes together and sometimes it's a wish that comes together," Klebba said. "I think ours was kinda both."

But the expansion and renovations did not go exactly as planned. There are always complications that are involved when dealing with buildings, walls, and foundations that are over 100 years old. None of the local companies wanted to take on these issues so Legends Bank hired companies from St. Louis to deal with the demolition and foundation issues.

"We started this thing at the exact wrong time, right before COVID hit," Klebba explained. "We had labor issues, especially our construction labor."

Then there were supply issues.

"Everything has taken a little longer, but we are at the end and things should be done fairly quickly," Klebba said. "We're really happy about that."

Legends Bank has recently rolled out a brand-new website believed to be easier to navigate. Klebba has seen a lot of changes in the banking industry over the years.

"I remember when I worked here in the summer during high school," Klebba said. "That was before ATMs and automatic payroll deposits. On Friday evenings, when the factories would pay, our lobbies would be full and there would be lines out the door. That doesn't happen anymore."

Klebba noted that COVID-19 has changed people's habits and increased the number of people banking online. Some people have gone back to face-to-face banking but Klebba notes that the future of banking is online.

"People appreciate the fact that if they need to talk to somebody, they can call us," Klebba said. "But you can't rely on that and think that you are going to be successful in the future based on the fact that you are still here. You must have really good software and really good internet banking programs so people can interact the way they wish to. We have to make it as easy to interact with us as if we were one of those mega banks."

Klebba believes that Legends Bank can compete with the big banks.

"More and more banks are closing branches," Klebba said. "There were over 2,000 branches or financial institutions closed last year across the country."

Klebba believes that as less foot traffic comes into the lobbies of

banks, there will be more branches closing and the largest percentage of those closures are being seen in the bigger banks.

"They are not focused on personal interaction," Klebba said. "They are focused on volume, and we don't feel like that is the way to go, at least not in our markets."

Legends Bank is planning to break ground on a new branch in Rolla soon and is constantly looking for other areas to expand.

"The big banks are getting out of some of these markets, like Rolla and Owensville," Klebba noted. "That's fine with us because those are markets where we work well and we're happy to be able to serve those people."

Klebba is excited and optimistic about the future of Linn and Osage County.

"The whole Linn community has a really bright future," Klebba said.

He believes that the community is fortunate that at a time when many rural counties in Missouri are seeing declining populations, the Linn area is seeing growth. From the growing college to the new high school football program to the new Stonegate Subdivision and the renovations at the Osage Country Club, Klebba sees nothing but potential for the community and is excited about the future.

"The great thing is we have another generation coming into the bank," Klebba says with a smile and a lot of pride. "My oldest has been working here for five years and my second oldest son has joined us at the Jefferson City branch. That's the fourth generation."

Visit [www.legendsbk.com](http://www.legendsbk.com) or find the bank on Facebook for more information.







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# McDaniel says strong customer service is key to American Family Insurance's success

By Neal A. Johnson

The McDaniel name has been associated with American Family Insurance and central Missouri for the last 57 years, and Mike McDaniel, Agent of the Linn office, said connection with the community, both personally and professionally, is the primary key to success.

"While the majority of the conversations we have with customers on a daily basis are about insuring property (home and auto), it gives me great pause to think about the other policy conversations I've had over the years," said McDaniel. "For example, I'm now writing life insurance plans for young people who are the children and grandchildren of the people I wrote life insurance plans for when I began my career. It makes me proud to know that people trust me and my staff enough to have those serious discussions, and to purchase insurance plans that could impact future generations."

Mike took over operations in 1998 from his father, Merv, and has one employee, Sales Specialist Stephanie Lewis. "Mike and I work hard to be more than just our customers' 'insurance person,'" she said. "We are both very proud to represent a company like American Family Insurance. They provide us with a wide range of insurance products to fit the majority of our customers' needs and a dedicated claim staff to help them when tragedy strikes. American Family is one of the most financially stable and

prudent insurance companies out there today and that gives us peace of mind knowing our customers' dreams are secure."

McDaniel added that the time they dedicate to being available to customers, where and when they need help, has made a difference. "Whether face-to-face in the office, working remotely, or responding to calls and texts in the evenings and on weekends, American Family provides us with the tools we need to fit the ever-changing challenges of the world we live in," he noted. "Those tools are combined with the belief that every single thing we do is designed to help people understand insurance, and not to simply sell them insurance."

COVID has resulted in a decrease in the number of walk-in customers but otherwise, his office has not been impacted. "We have the ability to quote, bind, and sign documents electronically, so if the customer didn't want to meet with us face-to-face, we can help them from the comfort of their home," said McDaniel.

Phone and computer upgrades have made it easier for McDaniel and Lewis to work remotely, and customers can send text messages to the primary office number. "For many people, especially our younger clients, text messaging is their preferred method of communication so the ability to send and receive messages on that platform has been a huge benefit," he said.

American Family Insurance can be found on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn or by visiting [www.McDanielAgency.com](http://www.McDanielAgency.com)





# OSAGE CHIC BOUTIQUE PROVIDES UNIQUE OPTIONS

By Neal A. Johnson

Osage Chic Boutique offers a variety of women's clothing, shoes, and accessories after beginning in 2018 as an online venture and owner Alex Trower-Holtschneider of Loose Creek is happy with the progress.

"I started the business making jewelry and selling it on Etsy and Facebook as a side business," said Trower-Holtschneider. "I was still working full-time, I ended up being too busy to make my own jewelry anymore."

With growth came additional items and in September 2020, she purchased an enclosed trailer and converted it into a mobile boutique. Alex and her husband, Jamey, drive to local craft shows and customers can shop the trailer.

In June of 2021, Alex quit her full-time job to focus solely on the boutique, and despite the pandemic, Osage Chic Boutique is ready to open its first storefront location next month in Linn.

That's not to say the growth was easy through the battle with COVID. "It definitely impacted our business in spring 2020," Alex said. "I think every show we had booked ended up being canceled. By fall 2020, we were able to do a few shows but it was still hard to find any. We amped up our online

presence because it seemed like more people were either working from home or quarantined at home and wanted to shop online."

She credits her success to a strong work ethic. "My husband would say I'm a bit of a workaholic," Alex said. "I am so passionate about this business and it fuels my hustle. I love diving into what the latest trends are, new ways to market my business and any other knowledge I can soak up."

While she doesn't have employees, per se, Alex said she gets help from her husband, along with her sister, Samantha Davis, and her brother's girlfriend, Stephanie Fisher, the latter two helping with modeling outfits and live sales.

Alex added that boutiques are unique. "It's like you're shopping that owner's personality or their personal closet," she said. "One thing that is super important to me is size inclusivity. I order everything in small-3XL. Now since COVID, not everything that I order comes in, but our goal is to have everything in those sizes."

Osage Chic Boutique carries popular brands like Gypsy Jazz, Kan Can, Judy Blue, and more, and can be purchased at [Facebook.com/osagechic](https://www.facebook.com/osagechic) (VIP group), [www.osagechic.com](http://www.osagechic.com), or with a mobile app, and the business is also at [Instagram.com/osagechic](https://www.instagram.com/osagechic).



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# COOTS EXCITED ABOUT GROWTH OF FREESTYLE FITNESS AND NUTRITION

By Neal A. Johnson

Freestyle Fitness and Nutrition (FF&N) owner Denise Coats, who opened her business in early 2020, said she's excited about continued growth in Loose Creek, and will keep tweaking the small group class schedule monthly to allow members to get the most out of their memberships.

In December, members filled out a year-end survey in which they were asked what could be done to make FF&N even better next year.

"I have taken as many of the suggestions I could and implemented them, for which they have expressed great satisfaction," she said, noting for example, that she added a Keurig coffee-maker so members can enjoy a cup after a morning workout.

FF&N launched its first official workout class on May 4, 2020, and grew at such a rapid rate that Denise and her husband, Nathan, were able to convert an older building on their property to the new gym, into which the business officially moved in May of last year.

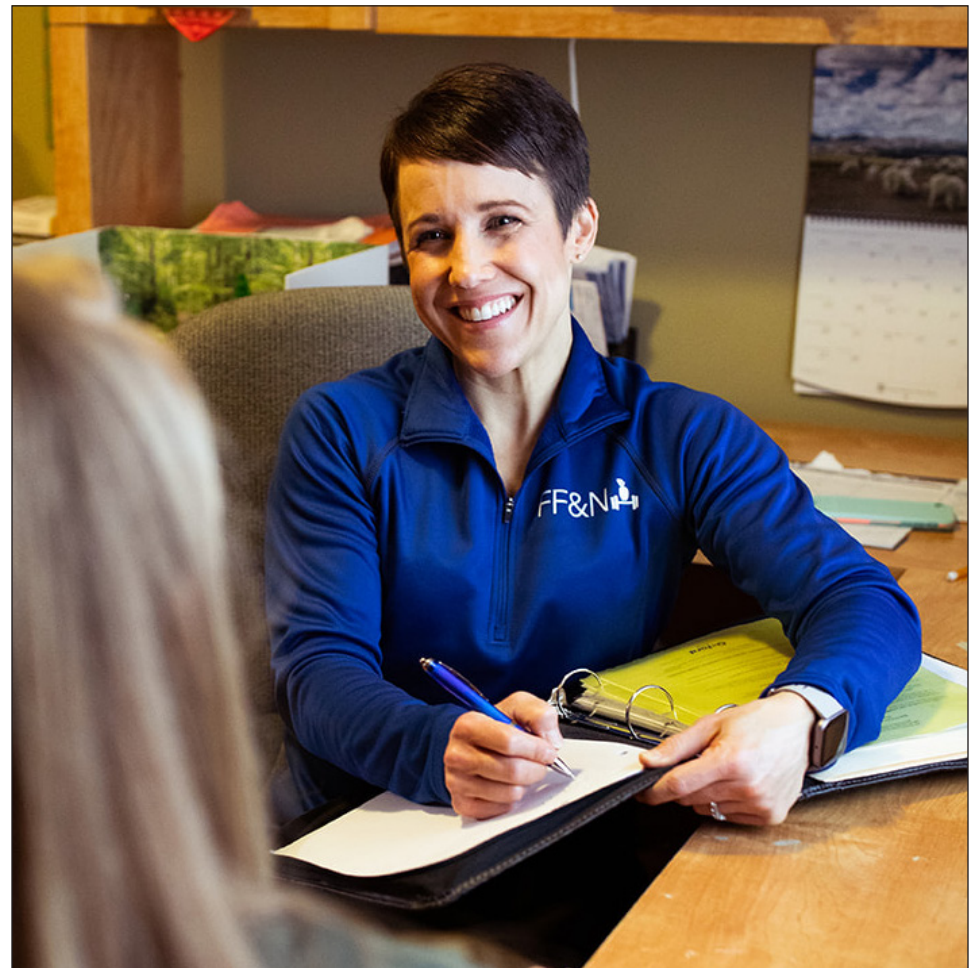
Since then, Denise and her sister, Stephanie Helmig even more classes.

In a Transform class, participants bend, circle, rotate, fold, lift, recover, pulse, balance, jump, squat, plank, push up, twist, burpee, and lunge. "It is the perfect blend of sport, yoga, tai-chi, and pilates, perfectly choreographed to motivating music, leaving you transformed," Helmig said.

While Helmig has been busy teaching additional classes, Denise has spent more time on her signature 12-week Reigniting Your Flame Program for women who are struggling with nutrition and fitness.

"This comprehensive nutrition and fitness program is where I love to spend the majority of my time," Denise said. "I designed the program to help women develop sustainable habits that will allow them to take back control of their lives. It helps set them up with the knowledge and experience to maximize their overall nutrition and fitness."

This program starts with a discovery call during which Denise can get an idea of where a prospective client is at and where they are looking to get to from a nutrition and fitness standpoint. "If I think I can help them, I will explain the program," she explained. "Despite the fact that I love helping individuals crush their goals, I realize that I cannot help everyone. If I do not think we would be a



good fit for one another, or if I get the sense that they may not succeed, I will be honest and upfront."

That may seem counterproductive but Denise said she wants what's best for each client, and those who commit to the program soon find the fun in being fit.

"We start with a detailed nutrition and fitness assessment as well as an 'In-Body' body composition scan," Denise said. "From there, they will complete a five to seven-day guided whole foods cleanse. After the cleanse, they begin week one of their custom meal plan. I take the time to make sure each client receives a meal plan that suits their needs, one they will enjoy, and that will help them meet their goals."

Each client is also enrolled in a virtual FF&N At Home workout program. "They are encouraged to participate in workouts again that will suit their needs and help them meet their goals," Denise noted, adding that weekly tailored nutrition and fitness education is sent to each client on Fridays to help solidify habit-forming behavior.

Lastly, Denise checks in every two weeks via telephone, one-on-one to discuss progress, barriers, wins, and more. "I feel strongly that this one-on-one time has an enormous impact on clients," Denise said. "Rather than being in a group setting

where they may feel less inclined to ask questions or discuss progress when it is just the two of us on the phone, they tend to open up. Over the course of the program, we undoubtedly become very close. In essence, when members join this program, they have their own personal registered dietitian and certified personal trainer at their fingertips. Clients are getting life-changing results and those results are driving me to work harder and harder on delivering a superior experience to each and every one of them. It has become so popular that I now have a waiting list to join."

COVID did not have much of an impact on FF&N's in-house workout group. The small size of the garage required that class sizes remained very small to allow for the appropriate distance.

"Since having grown and moved into the new gym, we can spread apart more which in turn has led to the ability to increase capacity," Denise said. "With that, there were members out here and there who either had COVID or they had been exposed. And of course, when they were out, they would be out of classes for 10-14 days at a time. So we would miss those individuals for sure."

COVID also presented an opportunity to provide alternative methods for achieving the goals determined by Denise and her clients. From that grew the FF&N At Home Program, which allows clients to work out virtually with Denise and a variety of guests from anywhere, and all they need is internet access and a few sets of dumbbells. "I will admit, it has been a learning curve figuring out technology



**Freestyle Fitness**  
Continued on page 35B





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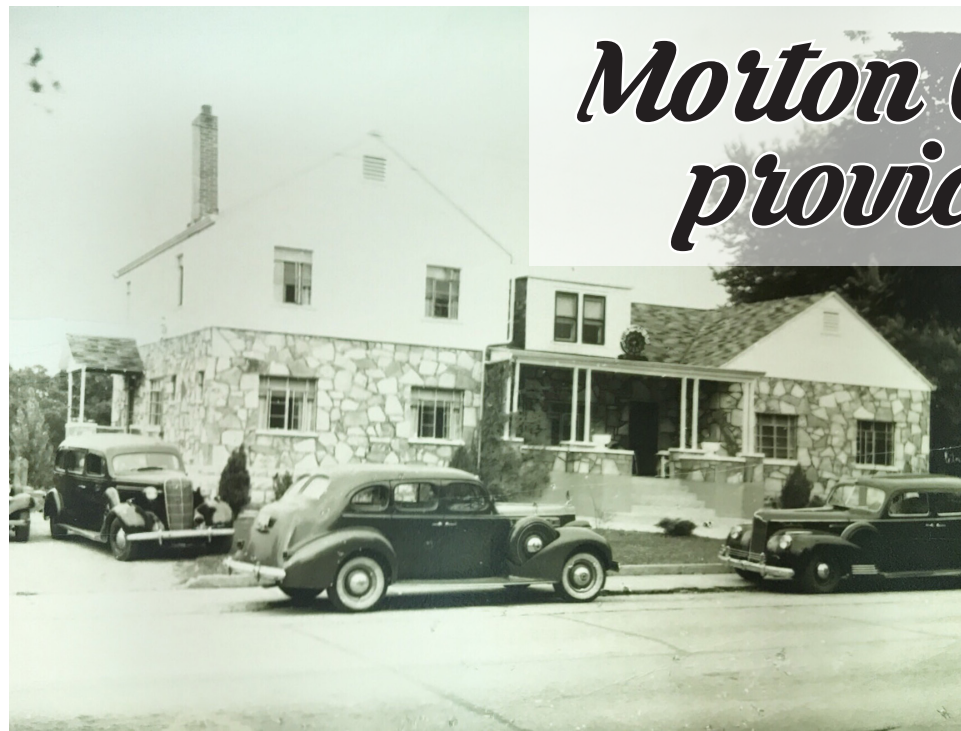
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# Morton Chapel continues to provide peace of mind

By Neal A. Johnson

Morton Chapel under the direction of owners Mike and Pam Thomas continues to provide peace of mind to families during the most difficult time of their lives.

"We strive to carry on the tradition that the Morton Family established almost 90 years ago," Pam said.

The Linn business was started in 1933 by original owners Clyde and Beulah Morton, Vernon and Mary Ruth Morton, and Mike and Betty (Herndon) Morton. Mike, the last of the original owners, recently passed away.

Joe Caldwell and his family were next to own the business until 2008, when it was purchased by Mike and Pam Thomas.

Originally, the funeral home opened in its present location in the early 1940s on the site where the old Linn school was located. The Mortons added on periodically over the years and it served as a home to several members of the Morton family.

Since Mike and Pam purchased the building in 2008, they have continued to make upgrades to the building, adding new windows and carpeting, while

updating landscaping and adding awnings.

In 2013, Mike and Pam purchased Sassmann's Chapel in Belle and Bland, and in 2018, added a crematory.

Due to the pandemic, the funeral home has been impacted. "Because of the type of business that we are in, we were directly affected by COVID and so were the families that we served," Pam said. "The mandates limiting the number of people allowed to attend services directly affected the families and their loved ones."

Additionally, a tradition began shortly after the purchase that has become an annual event designed to offer a sense of comfort each December called the "Tree of Remembrance."

The process is simple in that all one has to do is contact the funeral home and request that a loved one's name, year of birth, and year of death be placed on an ornament.

There is no charge for the service.

"We provide solid-colored ornaments and we take care of writing the information on them," said Mike, noting that a few people have chosen to bring in their own ornament. "Our goal is to remember those who have passed

away, and offer that to families, especially this time of year."

Of the nearly 850 ornaments that have been placed on what is now six trees since 2008, only a handful have elected to provide their own ornaments, but the practice is welcome.

In 2020, because of the pandemic, instead of an evening of remembrance, the funeral home was open to families during office hours. Pam said she and Mike hope to have the evening of remembrance again in the near future.

Full-time employees are Licensed Funeral Director and Embalmer Mike Thomas, Funeral Director/Accountant Pam Thomas, and Funeral Director Nathan Veltrop. Part-time support staff includes Funeral Director Stanley Strobe, Pre-need Agent Michelle Kliethermes, and Funeral Assistants Paula Gabelsberger, Paulette Peters, Mark Meyer, and Doris Voss.

Visit [www.mortonchapel.com](http://www.mortonchapel.com) where you can find obituaries, funeral resources, and pre-planning information. Morton Chapel is also on Facebook. The website has been updated and Morton Chapel has adapted its services to help families honor their loved one on a more personal level.

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# Thoenen credits pride in service for the success of Casper's 66

By Neal A. Johnson

Casper's 66 in Linn any given day is hopping with customers who enjoy a hot meal or snack or stop in for gas, and owner Tim Thoenen said the reason the business is so successful is that he and his employees take pride in the services they offer.

"I have great employees who understand what we're doing here and what our customers expect," said Thoenen, who has a total of 35 employees. "The community has shown great support and we have a lot of repeat customers. Without them, and my dedicated staff, we wouldn't be successful."

There is also a sense of pride whenever Thoenen thinks about the name of the business. Before purchasing the store 32 years ago, when it was known as Wolfe's Conoco, Thoenen and his wife, Connie, who sadly passed away in September 2020, talked about what to call the new venture.

"Connie came up with Casper's," Tim said. "It was all her idea and not everyone knows what it means."

Casper's is actually an acronym for "Christy, Amy, Sam Place Enjoyable Refueling Services" and is an homage to the Thoenen's children.

Now Casper's 66, the store recently underwent a major remodel for the first time since 1991, with the new decor and increased space allowing for more trade.

Casper's can accommodate 52 diners, almost double the number of customers (30) before the remodel. A few new items have been added to the menu as well.

"The floor plan gives a chance to spread everything out so that customers can get through more easily," Thoenen noted.

Casper's continues to see an impact due to COVID but Thoenen said

it's not as bad here as it is for some in bigger cities. "We have not been able to completely fill and face our beer cooler since the remodel because of supply chain issues, but we do our best with what we get," he said. "Everyone has adjusted a bit to the shortages because they know it's affecting everyone. We're not alone in that."

Expansion of the building to the east and north created the extra space to accommodate Thoenen's goals.

"This was really about making it easier for our employees to do their jobs, and making the experience even better for our customers," said Thoenen.

One big change was the closure of the auto repair shop, a familiar part of the business since 1973. Thoenen said the reality is that there is more demand for food and other items than auto repair.

Casper's participates in the "Kick-back" program to offer rebates to reward loyalty, and a gasoline app called Get Upside that gives Phillips 66 customers 15 cents off each gallon purchased using the program.

"This app is great," said Thoenen. "It will show you the nearest station on a map so you can get gas no matter where you are, and with the discount, it's a great tool."

Thoenen added that Chase will be partnering with Get Upside soon to offer savings using a credit card through that financial institution.

"Technology continues to advance all the time and you have to keep up," Thoenen said.

All in all, Casper's 66 is home to local employees and Thoenen has a vested interest in making sure everyone leaves his store happy.

"Giving people good service and a great experience is very pleasing to me, and we will continue to do that," he said.

Follow Casper's 66 on Facebook to see weekly meal specials.



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# SPECIALTY

# COFFEE

From hot lattes to pour overs, Serendipity Coffee and Tea has been serving Linn since opening in 2018. In their new location, they plan to add further food options, such as a few gourmet savory snacks to accompany their muffins, scones, and biscotti.

Try mobile ordering on their website to have your drink ready for you when you pull up!

## COFFEE



Serendipity creates all of their specialty coffee drinks using beans roasted by Vintage Paris in Hollister, MO. Vintage Paris is a fair-trade, small batch roaster. This ensures that every single person who had a hand in getting the coffee from the farms to your Serendipity cup has been treated fairly and professionally.

For those days when you don't need any more caffeine but would love an espresso drink, ask for your favorite drink made with decaf espresso beans to satisfy those cravings!

## TEA

Did you know that Serendipity also specializes in tea? We carry a delicious selection of teas from The London Tea Merchant in St. Louis. Black, Green, Herbal, Oolong; there's a tea for everyone! Buy it by the cup or take some home to brew whenever you want it.

Some of our newest additions are:

**Serenity**: with flavor notes of chamomile, honey, floral, mint, lavender, lilacs and lemon.

**Peach Oolong**: with flavor notes of peach, apricot, pink lemonade and hibiscus.



PEACH OOLONG



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## NEW LOCATION

Serendipity will be moving their shop just around the corner soon. It will be conveniently located across from the City Park at 1210 E Lee Steet. Their new location will be drive-thru only, ensuring that you get your morning drink even faster. They will also have an outdoor seating area for their customers to enjoy when the weather is nice, along with a private parking area.

Follow Serendipity on social media and watch for updates @SerendipityCoffeeAndTea





# SERENDIPITY COFFEE & TEA MOVING TO NEW LOCATION THIS MONTH

By Gemma Asel



In 2018, the Asel family opened Serendipity Coffee & Tea inside the Old School Antique Mall, a beginning that has allowed them to grow and expand over the last few years. Before the antique mall, the Asel family started renovations on the original drug store in Linn before deciding that it wasn't the right fit for their business plans. When they opened at the mall, they started in a small space near the main entrance with tables lining the hallways beside their single-counter cafe. From there, it was evident that more space — as well as a drive-thru — would be needed

for their quickly growing business. A classroom at the front of the building became their new home. Now, after three years, Serendipity Coffee & Tea is building a new location into which they'll move their business.

In March, they will be moving to a new stand-alone building around the corner, a drive-thru-only shop that will allow for the continued growth of the business. The new space will be located on Lee Street, past Sweet Bee's Shaved Ice, and across from City Park, on property owned by Ron Helmig.

According to owner Lori Asel, the new building will offer additional independence

and improved efficiency, such as an updated and designated drive-thru lane, a pick-up space for larger orders, a walk-up window with parking for guests, and the ability to upgrade equipment for faster service.

Though they're discontinuing their indoor seating area, Serendipity Coffee & Tea will offer a beautiful outdoor area for customers to enjoy. You can still order your favorite drink and sit and relax on nice days or take the kids to play in the park. This open space will enable the business to continue to host live music, bring back the farmer's markets that so many enjoyed, and offer other

community-oriented events.

After celebrating the "Last Day in the Cafe" with live music and giveaways on Feb. 5, Serendipity Coffee & Tea has closed the inside seating area to prepare for the move. They will continue to serve customers in their current drive-thru at 1204 E. Main St. until they move to their new building in March.

Follow along with their journey by liking their Facebook or Instagram page, subscribing to their email list, or by watching their website for updates

Current hours are from 6:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday and Tuesday, 6:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Wednesday through Friday, and 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Saturday.

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# Wibberg surprised but pleased with the success of Linn Shoe Store

By Theresa Brandt

Harriet Wibberg seems a little surprised that she is a successful, small business owner. She and her husband, Tom, own the Linn Shoe Store and have navigated through six years that have included the COVID-19 pandemic, a cancer diagnosis for Tom, major supply chain disruptions, and cost increases. Through it all, Harriet, better known as the “shoe fairy,” has carried on as best she could.

Although Harriet runs the store, it was Tom’s idea to buy it. Harriet had been working at the Missouri Valley Mercantile for 10 years. She liked her job but was starting to get burnt out. Harriet had just undergone an operation and Tom had gone back into Linn to pick up her prescriptions.

“He came back and said, ‘Do you feel like riding into town?’” Harriet recalls. “I said sure, and he goes, ‘Well, I bought you a present.’ I told him if he bought me a milk cow, I wasn’t milking it cause he always said that’s what he was going to do.”

Harriet grew up on a dairy farm and it was a running joke between the two of them that he was going to buy her a milk cow since she didn’t have very fond memories of milking the poor creatures.

“He told me he bought the shoe store in Linn, and I was really surprised and asked him why?” Harriet said. “He said that I ran the place up there (Missouri Valley Mercantile) and surely I could do it for myself and it would be mine. So, I said okay.”

While some wives might not

be excited about the prospect of owning a business and going into debt. Harriet was thrilled.

“It was a total surprise to me, but I was okay with it,” Harriet said. “Actually, it made me feel good that he had that kind of faith in me and that he knew I could do it.”

Harriet had never been a boss before and didn’t see herself as a leader.

“Normally, I’m a follower but this gave me that boost so I knew I could do it and I was going to prove that I could do it,” Harriet said.

Although the two bought the store in February 2016, they didn’t take over running the store until April. About three weeks before she was scheduled to take over the store, Harriet worked at the store with the

former owner, Diana Radmacher, who had owned and operated the store for 30 years, and her parents for decades before that.

“For a while, I just continued doing things the way Diana had,” Harriet explained. “I tried to keep it just like she did because I knew it was a well-run business and she did a very good job, and I wanted to keep up that reputation.”

Eventually, Harriet started to make the store her own. One of the very first things that she did was buy a computer, printer and Post-it notes.

“She (Diana) didn’t have a computer,” Harriet explained. “She didn’t have Post-it notes.”

**Shoe Store  
Continued on page 29B**



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**SHOE STORE**  
continued from page 28B

She was very frugal, and she did everything by hand with notebook paper. That's the way she did it and it worked. But I knew that I wanted to catch up with the times."

Harriet also rearranged the store a little, moving the counter around so that she could greet people, and people could see her as soon as they walked in the door. She moved the shelves so the customers could walk around more.

"I had to get my own style in here," Harriet said. "I knew it was going to take a couple of years to finally make it my own. But eventually, I made it my store, so when I walk in it, is mine and I love it."

COVID-19 has been hard on Harriet's little store. In December, she and one of her employees came down with COVID-19 and they had to shut the store

down for several weeks.

"It hurt a little bit," Harriet admits. "Things are starting to come in and I think we'll be fine, but it's been tough."

Harriet attributes the store's continued success to local customers that keep coming back to support the business. She also gets customers from far away, people who hear about her store and love the small-town feel and customer service.

Harriet said she gets tired of people complaining that their shoes aren't coming in because of COVID-19 and she has had trouble getting and keeping stock in the store to sell. Boots that would typically ship within five days before the pandemic are now taking five to eight months to arrive.

Harriet is all about keeping things local and helping each other out.

"I love people and I love talking and I love working with Kelly (at Main Street Pizza) and Christina (at the Unterrified Democrat),"



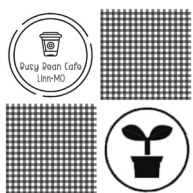
Harriet said. "I think supporting local business is so important because it helps our town grow."

Harriet is proud of the changes that have come about in the last couple of years in Linn. From the

Christmas on Main Street Program to the remodel at BJ's, and improvements at State Technical College, she believes change and growth go hand in hand, and she is proud to be a part of it.



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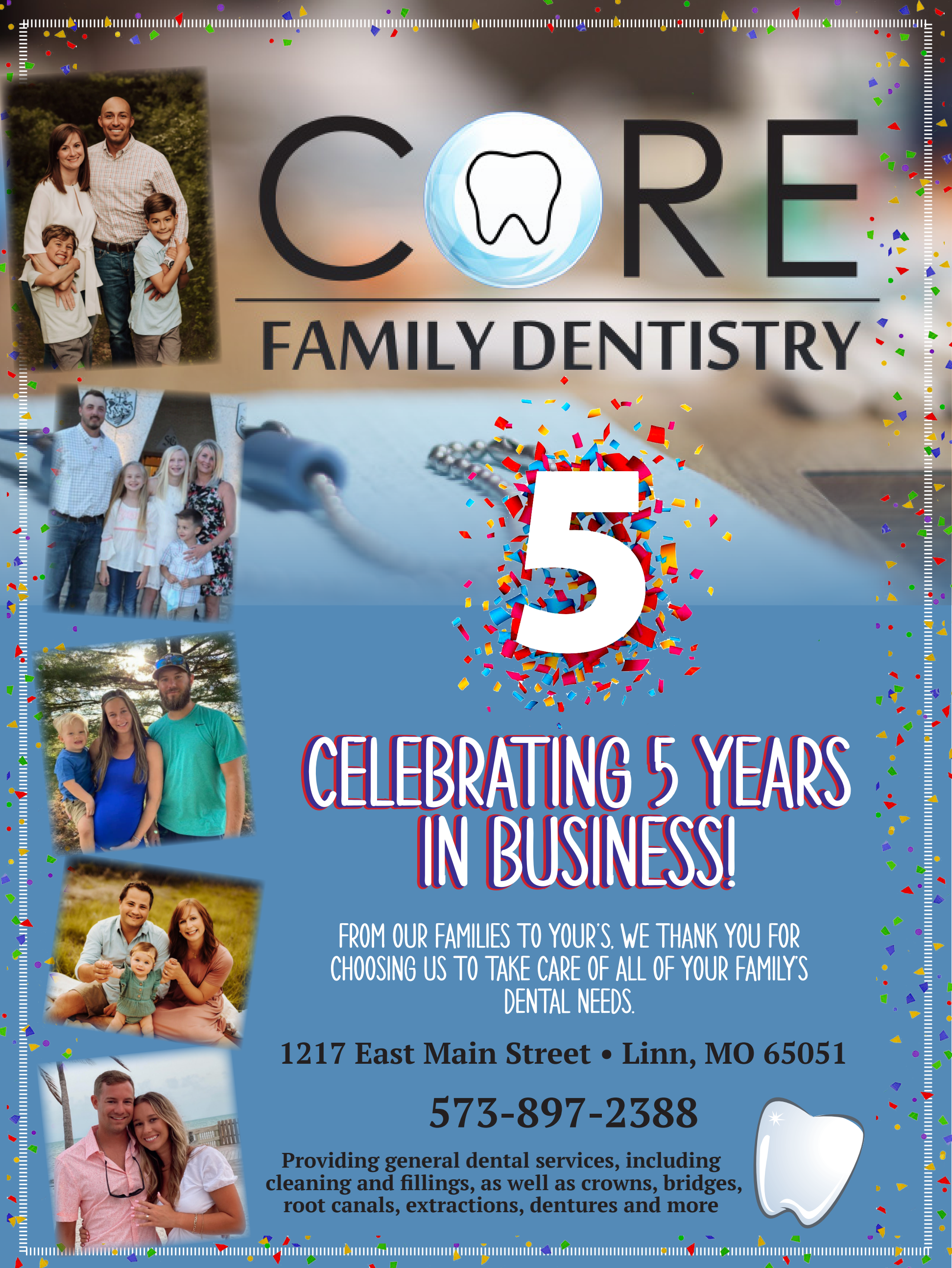
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# Core Family Dentistry continues to create smiles in the community



By Edward Gehlert

Dr. Corey Mack of Core Family Dentistry has been treating patients since 2017 and is proud to serve and be a part of the community, without having to answer to any big corporate stockholders.

“We often get questions about being part of a corporation. We are 100 percent a local, small business,” said Dr. Mack. “I feel our continued success is thanks to our kind, compassionate, and hardworking staff. When you work in a team of four to five people, someone is always having to step up and step in to help out. Everyone on this team does that with a great attitude.”

Alongside Dr. Mack, service at Core

Family Dentistry is provided by a team of four full-time and two part-time employees. Full-time registered dental hygienists Brooke Wolfe and Hannah Plassmeyer are joined by full-time dental assistant Meghan Ortvals, and Kayla Dudenhoefter rounds out the full-time employees as the office administrator.

“We’re also fortunate enough to have a part-time employee, Megan Thoenen, and a dental assistant who joins us on an as-needed basis, Brenda Voss,” Dr. Mack said.

Core Family Dentistry takes every step to stay on top of changing technology and community needs, implementing what Dr. Mack feels offers patients the best care.

“We are continually updating and

improving our office and our systems but have made no major changes in the recent year,” said Dr. Mack. “Our biggest changes have been operational. We brought on a second dental hygienist, Hannah Plassmeyer, to better accommodate our patients’ busy schedules.”

While COVID-19 has had a negative impact on many businesses across the country, at Core Family Dentistry, the effect was different than in other industries.

“COVID has been an inconvenience for our office but fortunately, dental offices have always operated in a manner that helps to prevent the spread of diseases,” said Dr. Mack. “We have always sterilized and disinfected before and after each patient. Medical-grade

masks and gloves have been a part of the routine as long as I have practiced dentistry. Managing schedule changes due to quarantines has been stressful, as well as keeping stock of affordable gloves, masks, and other dental supplies over the past couple of years. We’re thankful to be working and we’re thankful our patients have trusted us to provide them a safe and healthy environment.”

Core Family Dentistry provides a full range of dental services to all age groups and embodies the motto, “The dentistry you need, delivered with the care you deserve.”

Find them on social media at [www.facebook.com/LinnDentist](http://www.facebook.com/LinnDentist).



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# Real Deal Rustics has antiques for any taste

Written By Theresa Brandt

Real Deal Rustics is the neatest antique shop off Hwy. 63 outside of Freeburg. Brenda Becker opened the shop in 2016 in an old storage shed. It took the efforts of the whole family to clean out the shed and remodel the interior, which itself is interesting as the roof is supported with old telephone poles. The interior walls are lined with rustic, mismatched boards and all sorts of mismatched shelves and furniture have been repurposed to hold items. The front porch and red siding on the outside give the shop a welcoming look.

Brenda tasked her sister-in-law, Denise Gradel, with running the day-to-day operations of the shop. On Wednesday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., you can find Denise behind the counter or puttering around the antique shop. When Brenda asked her to run the store, she knew that Denise shared her love of antiques and had retired from her state job and was looking for something to do.

Denise keeps a guest book at the

front counter of the shop, and asks everyone to sign in after they walk through the door. Real Deal Rustics has regular local customers that come and browse through the shop looking for new items, but Denise also gets a lot of out-of-town visitors and people who might just be traveling through the area.

One of her favorite stories is about a customer that stopped by with a big RV. Denise noticed right away that they had a strong German accent. When she started asking them questions, they informed her that they were from South America and had gone there from Germany. The community took great pride in their German heritage and still spoke German and had Germanic customs. The customers had driven from their home country in South America to Alaska, back through Canada and were on their way home. She has had customers from Ireland, California, and most neighboring states.

Real Deal Rustics has a wide variety of items. There is Depression-era glassware, vintage signs, old toys, tools, ar-



chitectural pieces, furniture, china pieces, farm items, and animal skulls. Denise attributes the wide range of items to the different tastes and interests of herself and the Becker family.

“Since Brenda and I are so different, we pick up different things,” Gradel explained. “Brenda and her daughters, Paige and Chelsea, are outdoorsy. So, they bring in animal skulls that they find around their farm and hunting and fishing stuff. I’m more of a girlie girl so I love the glassware.”

Gradel said there is no rhyme or reason to why things sell and what might

be the next hot item. She noted that when Martha Stewart was popular, Depression-era glassware would just fly off the shelves and now pieces sit there forever.

“China pieces are definitely not something people are looking for right now,” Gradel explains. “I am always surprised by what sells and what doesn’t.”

**Real Deal Rustics  
Continued on page 33B**

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# REAL DEAL RUSTICS

continued from page 32B

Most of the pieces come from auctions, which Gradel and Becker love attending to purchase different items for the store. There are always new pieces to set out and the inventory is constantly changing.

"You never know what you'll find when you come in," Gradel explained. "That's part of the fun of little antique stores like ours."

She credits running the store with helping her to be more outgoing. "I tend to be a little shy," Gradel explains. "I really like running the store because it pushes me to be more social."

Gradel likes to research things when they come in, not only to price things accurately but to be knowledgeable about what things are and how the item was used.

"It is interesting to find out what something is and be able to have a good, interesting conversation about it," Gradel said.

She explained that recently they came across an item that was a little odd and after some research, discovered it was an antique breast pump.

Gradel also likes to find out what people are doing with different pieces. While some people may be buying things to display or fit into a collection, other people are purchasing things to make into projects. She's had a customer who was collecting old license plates to make a large framed collage, and recently a customer was purchasing old tools that they used to spell out words once attached to old barn wood.

"I have the most interesting conversations with people," Gradel said with a smile.

She is full of information once you get her talking and she loves talking about antiques and old things.

Gradel is a joy to talk to and Real Deal Rustics is full of treasures waiting to be discovered.



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# SHOW-ME AXE HOUSE CONTINUES TO OFFER UNIQUE EXPERIENCE

By Neal A. Johnson

Show-Me Axe House has something no other business offers in Linn or the surrounding areas, and new owners Chris and Tammy Reichart, who purchased the venue in November, are pleased to continue what Gene Grellner began in 2019.

“Gene did a great job with the building and getting this up and going,” Tammy said. “We’re filling a need in the community and this is unique.”

Chris and Tammy recently celebrated their 11th wedding anniversary and said they were prepared to open a business after retirement. Chris retired last October from the U.S. Army after more than 30 years and the timing was perfect.

At first, the idea was to open a laundromat. “We knew the kids at State Tech would need that service,” Tammy explained.

As such, the couple visited Northern Lights to check out a property for lease in the plaza. They strolled past Show-Me Axe House, which at the time had a “For Sale” sign in the window.

“Gene is a long-time family friend so I called him and told him we wanted to talk about it,” Tammy said.

During their visit, Tammy picked up and threw an axe. “I had never thrown an axe before then but it hit the bulls-eye,” she recalls. “I took that as a sign to

buy the business.”

Instead of rushing into it, however, though Tammy knew she wanted to own the axe-throwing enterprise, she and Chris went to eat.

After dinner, they called Gene and told him they would pull the trigger, so to speak.

“I’m so glad we made that decision,” Tammy said. “It’s a lot more fun than laundry, I’ll tell you that!”

Chris and Tammy painted the walls with an American, “Red, White & Blue” theme, accented with several professional team themes, including the St. Louis Cardinals, Kansas City Chiefs, and St. Louis Blues.

In addition to new carpeting, Show-Me Axe House also has new decorative paneling on the outside of the lanes.

Lindsay Grellner designed the interior space for maximum usage, which means there are four lanes, with two party lanes that can accommodate larger parties and two solo lanes that can handle from one to six throwers each.

Each lane meets international standards, meaning it’s a regulation 12 feet from the foul line to the target. An additional three feet or so is provided for throwers in which to stand.

Each target has rings valued from 1 to 6 (bullseye), and there are two “kill shot” dots that can be utilized.

Foam targets and axes can be placed in a lane or even in different spaces as needed since there is no harm in throw-

ing them.

Chris, who is certified through the World Axe Throwing League (WATL) to teach proper techniques, earned several training certificates while serving in the military so this was an easy move for the retired veteran.

“We want to teach people how to safely throw axes while helping them to build their confidence and above all, have a good time,” Chris said.

Before every session begins, Chris goes through safety measures, and everyone signs a waiver, acknowledging they take responsibility for their actions, holding Show-Me Axe House harmless in the event of an accident, but Chris said there is a low probability of that happening.

“We do everything in a controlled setting, and everyone has to hit the board before they’re allowed to throw on their own,” Chris noted, adding that



closed-toe shoes are required. Once that is done, customers go on

**Show Me Axe House**  
Continued on page 35B

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## FREESTYLE FITNESS

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and beyond,” said Denise, who recently finished recording workout number 454.

Improving one’s nutrition and fitness is always a worthy investment, Denise noted. “While I’m not going to go into all the benefits of exercise and eating healthy here, I do partially attribute these factors to my continued success,” she added. “Investing time and or money to become healthier will only improve your life. Additionally, offering a variety of services including small group fitness class memberships, 24/7 gym memberships, personal and small group training, the FF&N At Home Program, seasonal nutrition challenges, and the Reigniting Your Flame Program have also undoubtedly led to my continued success despite the economic challenges.”

Denise is uniquely qualified for this business as a registered and licensed dietitian and a certified personal trainer. “I can provide medical nutrition therapy to individuals with food allergies and or disease states such as diabetes, heart disease, and kidney disease,” she said. “Most facilities specialize in offering either nutrition or fitness. It is rare to come across the registered dietitian/certified personal trainer combination. When you come to Freestyle Fitness and Nutrition, you can be sure that you are in expert hands who will stop at nothing to help you crush your goals.”

She also enjoys helping the community. Last Thanksgiving, she joined Linn Thriftway and Salon Dash for the first annual Pack the Pantry event, during which individuals who registered for this free event met at Maguire Park, filled their backpacks with non-perishable items, and then walked up to the Good Shepherd Food Pantry, where the donations were graciously accepted. “It was a very heart-warming event in which over 40 people donated hundreds of pounds of food to support our local community,” Denise said. “For those who participated in the event, it was a win-win, with the opportunity to get in some awesome physical activity and to give back. I hope to continue this tradition from year to year and watch it grow even larger.”

FF&N also hosted an event called “Booties, Bubbles, and Brunch” that showcased local vendors. Participants were able to get in a solid booty workout, shop, mingle, eat brunch, and sip on mimosas or juice.

Denise said the mission of Freestyle Fitness and Nutrition is to help individuals maximize their nutrition and fitness in a welcoming and non-judgmental environment. “When you become a member, you become part of a tightly-knit community that supports one another wholeheartedly,” she added. “Over time, the client-trainer relationship blossoms into an amazing friendship that will last a lifetime.”

For more information visit <https://www.facebook.com/freestylefitnessandnutrition>, <https://www.freestylefitnessandnutrition.com>, or email [denise@freestylefitnessandnutrition.com](mailto:denise@freestylefitnessandnutrition.com).



## SHOW ME AXE HOUSE

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the clock for the desired length of time, from a half-hour to 90 minutes. A group rate is available for parties of 10-18 people.

Chris said this is an experience for the entire family.

“Anyone can learn to throw an axe and have it hit the board,” he said. “This fits our life very well. I have a lot of experience with training people so it’s perfect.”

Each axe has a different throwing technique, and Chris is happy to see even small children get involved.

“We offer foam axes for the little ones, and often, we’ll have parties with big families spread all over the place,” he said. “It’s really a neat thing to see.”

“This is family-oriented and it’s a great way to relieve stress,” Tammy added.

In addition to axes, Chris teaches people how to throw other instruments, and visitors are allowed to bring their own axes as long as they meet WATL requirements.

Show-Me Axe House has a party theme for all occasions, including birthdays, office and Christmas parties, bachelor/bachelorette parties, gender reveals, retirement, and an “Axe the Ex” experience.

“People really enjoy Axe the Ex,” Tammy said.

While she is not responsible for teaching, Tammy said she enjoys watching people learn. “We love see-

ing their excitement when the axe sticks in the board,” she said.

More than that, however, is the connection she and Chris make with customers.

“We wanted a homey and comfortable atmosphere and we want to make sure they have the most enjoyable axe-throwing experience possible,” Tammy said. “Getting to know people is a huge part of what we offer.”

Show-Me Axe House recently began offering a weekly tournament for up to 16 throwers each Thursday. Chris explained that the double-elimination tourney takes place on one night.

“That way, people can come in when they want to and compete for just that night and not be obligated to an ongoing commitment,” he said. “We’ll see what kind of interest there is and go from there.”

Moving forward, Chris and Tammy are considering offering a monthly membership, and even a mobile axe-throwing experience in which a trailer is taken to parties.

Show Me Axe House is open from 2-11 p.m. Thursday through Saturday, and by appointment the rest of the week. The business offers a 10% discount for military and students.

For more information, or to schedule a party, visit Show Me Axe House on Facebook, at [showmeaxe-house.com](http://showmeaxe-house.com), or call 573-536-9988.



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# Business with Osage County roots comes home

By Edward Gehlert

There is always cause for celebration when someone returns home, even more so in these uncertain economic times when that individual brings their financial management business back with them to offer their services to the area.

President and founder Dennis Markway started Iron Horse Wealth Management, LLC in 2012, in Johnston, Iowa. This business is a fee-only financial planning firm engaged in the process of comprehensive financial planning for clients which includes helping people identify their financial goals and objectives, analyzing their current financial status, developing recommendations and alternatives, as well as implementing and monitoring recommendations.

Iron Horse Wealth Management has seven employees: Dennis Markway, Ron Markway, Greg Hayes, Danny Beyer, Mark Broderick and Penny Schmidt. The addition of Katie Neuner as Lead Advisor has helped the company expand to the Osage County area.

Markway said Neuner has a passion for educating and helping others make informed financial decisions at all stages of their lives. With over 10 years in the

financial industry, she has experience in financial planning, tax preparation, commercial lending, pension systems, private equity, and private credit investing.

Neuner enjoys meeting with clients, focusing on their entire financial picture and how each individual piece fits together.

“Katie is your trusted partner and resource for all things and situations that affect your financial well-being,” said Markway. “She believes there is no such thing as a stupid question and truly aspires to help clients understand their entire financial picture.”

Neuner graduated from the University of Missouri with a BS in Business Administration and a minor in Personal Financial Planning and completed her MBA from William Woods University in 2015. She lives in Central Missouri with her husband, Alex, and their two children, Oz and Vivian. Visit her professional profile on LinkedIn at [www.linkedin.com/katie-neuner](http://www.linkedin.com/katie-neuner).

Although the company may be new to

**Iron Horse**  
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# CLASSIC BUILDINGS

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are some of the best workers and now managers ... that are 10 years free from addiction and now running a third of my company. Those guys know what it means to be authentic and humble. The general population doesn't understand that."

Miller added that these employees have been a key factor that has grown Classic Buildings from one locale to 10 sites that showcase their buildings, including locations in Illinois and Kansas.

"We believe that sharing the life and hope given to us so beautifully through Jesus Christ and communicated to us through the Holy Bible with those we meet will ultimately make a difference in people's lives," said Miller. "We're very thankful for the heritage we have been given, and we strive daily to serve

our Lord Jesus Christ, provide for our family, and serve our customers the same way our parents did. We aspire to run a business that glorifies God, benefits people, and produces a product that serves a viable marketplace purpose."

Miller and his company stand by their mission statement, which again puts employees first, and stresses the importance of quality.

The mission statement reads, "It is the mission of Classic Buildings LLC to provide a healthy work environment with the opportunity for each employee to grow personally and financially. We strive to be the best in quality and workmanship in the portable building, garage, and cabin industry. It is critical to our mission that we provide a high level of service to our customers by doing our job professionally, on time every time. We will continue to differentiate ourselves from the competition through innovation and continuous improvement."

Visit Classic Buildings LLC on their website at [www.classicbuildingsales.com](http://www.classicbuildingsales.com).



# IRON HORSE

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Osage County, Osage County is not new to Iron Horse. Markway has family roots in the local community.

"When I think about Iron Horse Wealth Management as a company and where it came from, I wouldn't hesitate to say that its roots are firmly embedded in Osage County," Markway said. "With deep family ties to Westphalia and Rich Fountain, the business values of hard work, community stewardship, and fair dealing come directly from having great role models who came before me. For example, my grandfather, Art Fick, bravely served his country, farmed, and worked as an insurance agent which he did with a spirit of honor, dedication, and service to his community. Grandma Louise Fick was cut of the same cloth. She was dedicated to her community, her family, and was a pillar of the Sacred Heart Church and school. I see the same attributes in my aunts, uncles, cousins, and friends throughout Osage County who do amazing things to help others.

"So, it was a natural decision to give back to the community that has been so important to my family - Osage County," Markway continued. "I couldn't imagine a better place to create jobs and opportunities centered around helping families reach their financial goals and objectives than right here. Could we have opened an office in St. Louis, Kansas City, or Columbia? Sure, But it would not have been the best thing we could do with our resources — devoting our time to help families in our community."

Markway credits the success of his business to the quality care and service they provide to their clientele.

"We strive to make every decision in the best interest of our clients," he said. "Our dedication to this philosophy, coupled with our approach to val-

ue fact when dealing with the market has built incredible trust and relationships with our clients. Proactive communication and our willingness to meet people where they are have also been game-changers over the last several years."

There are not many businesses that haven't had to make changes because of COVID-19; this includes financial services such as Iron Horse as well. The company overcame these difficulties while others in their field faltered under the hardship of the pandemic.

"We have been able to continue to serve our clients through the adoption of technology and ongoing communication through the last two years," Markway said. "Thanks to this proactive approach, we have expanded our team with the addition of Katie and a new office in Osage County. We look forward to additional future growth and making a positive impact in the Central Missouri area."

Who needs the services of a wealth management company like Iron Horse? Many people are surprised that anyone can receive the benefits of their expertise.

"We want to work with people who want and need our help," said Markway. "We do not require clients to have a specific net worth or asset requirement, and being fee-only allows us to keep our costs low and our value high. We are a fiduciary, putting our clients' interests ahead of our own, with a duty to preserve good faith and trust."

Visit Iron Horse Wealth Management, LLC on social media at [www.facebook.com/ironhorsewealth](http://www.facebook.com/ironhorsewealth). You can also check out their YouTube channel at [www.youtube.com/ironhorse](http://www.youtube.com/ironhorse) or their website at [www.ironhorsewm.com](http://www.ironhorsewm.com).





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