Western Home Communities is a charitable Christian service organization that assertively creates fulfilling lifestyles for those we serve, their families and our employees.

Villa resident discovers Legos aren’t just for kids

It doesn’t take long to see why assembling Legos is fun at any age. They’re detailed, colorful and challenging.

Bev Fish found this out when the pandemic began and, suddenly, she couldn’t volunteer, travel or attend sporting events. She needed a way to keep busy. By chance, she discovered Lego.com and their large and complex sets specifically designed for adults.

The first set she completed was a gingerbread house. “I was going to do one and be done. I could put the gingerbread house away after the holidays,” she said. But the process appealed to her detail-oriented nature and the hobby grew. So far, she has completed 25 to 30 sets.

Continued on page two

Mickey and Minnie Mouse was one of the first Lego sets Bev completed, and one of her favorites!

A bird of paradise is a surprising Lego set and it doesn’t need watering!
“I didn’t want my home to look like a Lego store, so a couple of my nephews who live out of state receive many of the sets and they rebuild them during their school breaks,” she says.

She is currently working on another challenging build of a pickup truck. Like most of the sets she completes, it has more than 1,600 pieces. A few other completed sets include Minions, Harry Potter buildings, a motorcycle, a houseboat and a pirate ship that measures 18” long and 14” high.

Bev, a villa resident since 2015, said Legos are easy to pick up and put down as time allows so she’s not sure how long it takes to complete a set. She admits that it takes patience and focus. She receives the Lego newsletter, shops at the online store and takes advantage of VIP customer rewards.

Bev prefers interacting with people but does plan to keep up with her new hobby even as she pursues other opportunities again. “There’s satisfaction in seeing them built.”

Volunteers invited to recognition event

Anyone who has donated their time to serve Western Home Communities in some way is invited to a celebration of volunteers this month.

You are appreciated and we want to recognize you. Have you created greeting cards, written notes, pulled weeds, collected recycling? There are many ways to volunteer and we honor them all!

Consider this your personal invitation. Come celebrate and reconnect with others over a light breakfast at Diamond Event Center.

**Thursday, April 28  9 – 11 a.m.**
Saying goodbye to winter...

Great timing: Snow and cold started to fade just as COVID-19 levels dropped and many restrictions were eased, which brought smiles all around!

Bonnie Bickett and grandson Dane enjoying some pickleball!

Bonnie Bickett with grandson Dane.

Who’s behind that mask? Phyllis Koob attends the Windhaven Mardi Gras party.

Marlys Cook and Janet Williamson made everyone smile at Mardi Gras!

Ron & Mary Bro enjoyed Mardi Gras refreshments.

Employees Beth Hines and Meghan Joens at Nation Cottage dressed up for Twin Day on 2.22.22.

Phi Mu Alpha, a men’s music fraternity from the University of Northern Iowa, entertained Windhaven residents.

Little Blue Man says “Cheers!” in Irish.
Western Home Foundation and Western Home Communities appreciate being honored through estate gifts, memorials and other donations. We list donor names each month as one way of thanking donors for their generosity. This list reflects gifts received through March 10, 2022. For information on supporting Western Home Foundation, contact Director of Administrative Services Susan Steffy at susan.steffy@westernhome.org or 319-222-2022.

In memory of:
Diana Brandt
Eric & Anita Dowell

Peg Coleman
Louise Frevert
Lois Klatt

Lloyd Hager
Joan Baumgartner
Lorna Ericson
Louise Frevert
Randy Frank
Rich Hager
Louise Odle
Robert Robinson
Pat Schultz

Gary Hanks
Eric & Anita Dowell

Martha McCutcheon
Marcia Colwell
Eric & Anita Dowell
Nineteenth Century Club

Judy Mohlis
Louise Frevert

Vera Sullivan
Marcia Colwell
Louise Frevert
Robert Robinson

Len Tompkins
Willard & Kay Jenkins

Mary Taylor Scholarship
Roger & Vicki Neessen
Phyllis Steele

Annual Appeal
Esther Lageschulte
Judy Pfalzgraf

Other gifts
Rachel Edgington
Amber Elsberry
Karla Foust
Dr. Richard & Connie Frankhauser
Marlys Karkosh
Bill & Kathleen Niedert
Chad & Cindy Wiles

Online giving option proves to be popular

Western Home Foundation has collected nearly $5,000 in gifts through its new online giving option that launched Dec. 17, 2021.

“We’re glad that donor software combined with a new website has made this available,” explains Chief Operating Officer Jerry Harris. “It’s still new so we want to remind everyone that this is available. It’s already proven to be convenient and safe.”

Donors may use online giving to designate gifts to specific funds, provide a monthly recurring gift, and/or direct their gifts in honor or memory of someone. It also lets donors choose whether to cover the small cost of processing a debit or credit card payment.

Find the online giving form by clicking a “donate now” button at WesternHomeCommunities.org/foundation.
On the bus again!

In March, after two long years, Windhaven assisted living residents could once again head out together to shop. The weather was perfect for excursions to Fareway and Walmart on a Western Home Communities bus.

WHC buses will be a familiar sight out in the community once again.

Residents wait to board for a recent trip to Fareway.

Ready to ride! Clockwise from left: Jean Bilyeu, Margaret Wiebke, employee Vicky Bunger, volunteer Peggy Makinster, Flo Slawson, employee Haley Bell, LaRetta Husome, Mary Bauer, Maureen Oates and Emogene Marty.

Save the date for 25th Annual Golf Outing

Plan now to sponsor and/or attend Western Home Foundation’s 25th Annual Golf Outing, scheduled for a noon shotgun start on Monday, August 29 at Beaver Hills Country Club in Cedar Falls. For information on sponsorships, contact Susan Steffy at 319-222-2022.
Chaplain’s Corner:
Living Like It’s True

by Director of Spiritual Care Tim Boettger

Do I really believe what I say is true? If so, does my life reflect it? I’ve asked myself those questions many times.

During this month of Easter, Christians worldwide celebrate the death and resurrection of Christ. The core claim of Christianity is that, in love, God sent his son into the world to pay our penalty for sinfulness before a holy God. No human being could possibly pay this penalty and live.

Scripture also reveals to us that the once-dead, now-living Christ appeared to more than 500 people after his resurrection, before ascending back to heaven to live and reign forever with God (1 Corinthians 15:6, Luke 1:33). He told his followers it was better for him to leave so he could send the Holy Spirit as a helper (John 16:7). The New Testament reveals that, even in this day, “all those who are led by this (spirit of Christ) are the sons and daughters of God.” Romans 8:14.

I say I believe all this and more that is found in the Bible, yet the real test is how I live my life. Many times over the years I’ve felt God’s spirit leading me from one work in his kingdom on earth to another, and I’ve always tried by faith to follow where I sense he is leading.

Over the past two years, my wife, Kris, and I have felt that disrupting and guiding work of God’s spirit yet again. At first there were hints from him that we didn’t totally understand in 2019 that we kept to ourselves. More God hints came near the end of 2021.

Then, in the first three months of this year, a much clearer picture has come into focus, revealing some of what God might have for us in the next chapter of our lives.

Through a number of surprising and God-ordained circumstances, a ministry called Inspired Life has come into existence. It focuses on the core of our hearts' passions as a couple and as a family. God has uniquely opened the door for me to direct this work that will be centered on marriage, parenting and Christian education.

This transition has brought about many emotions. It’s not without some real sadness that I have announced my resignation as the director of spiritual care at Western Home Communities.

We are hopeful and anticipatory of what God has in store for the days ahead, but also deeply thankful for the last seven-plus years of joy and service that we’ve shared with so many of you. It is with a true and lasting gratitude that I share my appreciation for the teamwork, partnership, encouragement, support, prayers, tears and joys we have shared.

We now ask again for your continued prayers and encouragement as we work to live out what we say we believe. In that same vein, we want to encourage you to keep discerning how the great shepherd is leading you by his spirit as you also follow unashamedly his good and gracious guiding hand.

Celebrate Easter with us

We sure hope you can join us for a grand Easter celebration of the living Christ on April 17 at 10:30 am in Diamond Event Center.

Until that in-person gathering, continue to watch our services on YouTube (new message uploaded each Sunday morning at 10:30 a.m.) or on CFU cable channel 18 or 95.5: Sunday at 11 a.m. • Wednesday at 3 p.m. • Saturday at 4 p.m.
Exhilaration of championship remains, 51 years later

Rock star status. That may be the only way to describe roaring crowds, fan mail and media attention. We’re talking about girls’ high school basketball and the state championship game of 1971 when the underdogs of Farragut, Iowa, brought down the giants of Mediapolis.

Villa resident Bonnie Bickett, a starting forward in her senior year, remembers the moment she knew they would win. “At Vets Auditorium, there was a map with a light for every team in attendance. Lights would go out for teams that didn’t move on. Only Mediapolis and Farragut lights were blinking. I knew, in the final seconds of the game, that our light would not go out.”

Their light was shining again when the team was honored at this year’s championship game. “We were treated like queens, like the clock was turned back. We had our picture taken in the winner’s circle, we were interviewed and treated to brunch,” Bonnie said. “Almost all of my family was able to attend. It was delightful.”

In 1937, Bonnie’s mother was a part of the Farragut team and went to state where they got third. Her sister also went to state. But it was Bonnie’s team that won a championship, beating Mediapolis 67 to 60.

The excitement of their championship kept them in the spotlight over the years. “It changed our lives,” Bonnie reflected. “Our coach, Leon Plummer, was amazing. He taught us more than just sports. It was fabulous.”

After high school, Bonnie attended college in Cedar Falls. “Farragut is in the southwest corner of the state, and I came up here to UNI and people knew me. It was a big deal,” Bonnie said.

She still maintains an active lifestyle. “I moved here just a year ago and I love it. A group of us played Crossnet® [four-square volleyball] in the pool over the winter and I’m anxiously awaiting pickleball season!”
Sons of the American Revolution teaches history, honors veterans

In February, Western Home Communities was recognized by the Sons of the American Revolution with a certificate of “Exemplary Patriotism in the display of The Flag of the United States of America.” The certificate was presented to COO Jerry Harris by Dave Nation, a resident of Prairie Wind and a member of the organization’s Iowa chapter.

“I have enjoyed the view of the flag at Windridge from the fitness center whenever I work out,” Dave said, “and I understand many of the other Western Home buildings display the flag as well.” So Dave requested the certification and made the presentation in his authentic Revolutionary War uniform.

After researching and proving that his fourth great-grandfather was a patriot of the American Revolution, Dave joined the Sons of the American Revolution in June 2020, just before moving back to Iowa from Maryland.

Since then, Dave has participated in several events. His first was in May 2021 for the dedication of a restored monument to Nathan Brown in Springfield, Iowa; Brown is one of 43 recognized Revolutionary War veterans buried in Iowa. Dave owns a Betsy Ross flag and was invited to join the color guard.

The Sons of the American Revolution encouraged Dave to continue participating in the color guard so he needed his own uniform. The shirt, pants and vest are made of cotton so they can be laundered easily, but the knapsack is linen and the coat is wool. All that’s left to complete his uniform are shoes, which need special attention from a saddle shop.

Part of the organization’s goal of preserving American history includes marking graves of all veterans. In March, Dave confirmed that the gravesite of Nancy Harris, who was a nurse and uniform maker for the Mexican War, is located in Fairview Cemetery. She died in a poorhouse in 1909 at the age of 102 and has no gravestone. The Iowa chapter will request one from the Veterans Administration, as it has done for about 100 veterans throughout Iowa.

If others would like to research their family history, Dave suggests visiting the Sons of the American Revolution database online at sar.org.
St. Patrick's Day celebrations

On St. Patrick's Day, residents celebrated with mint-flavored milkshakes, lots of Irish trivia, green cookies, music, festive punch, homemade whoopie pies and the company of good friends!

“Wishing you a pot o’ gold and all the joy your heart can hold.” – Irish blessing

Resident coordinator Cassie Storlie shared her homemade whoopie pies with Willowwood residents.

Barb Jacobson, Pat Schultz, Marcia Colwell and Lorna Ericson donned their green at Windridge.

Left to right, Willowwood residents Garnet Mehlert, Jane Jackson, and Mary Van Hauen enjoying homemade treats and holiday trivia.

Left to right, Patti Sulentic, Doris and Bob Hewlitt and David Joens enjoying good company and refreshments at Windridge.

Morgan Arjes and Sara Rynearson, resident coordinators at Prairie Wind and Windridge, serve up fun and refreshments at Windridge.

Windridge residents Liane Nichols, Dione Young, Jeanne Thuesen and Connie Herbon lift a glass and say, "Cheers!!"
April Wellness Happenings

by Director of Wellness

Morgan Lehmann

Wellness Chat

Thursday, April 7 at 1:30 p.m.
in Grosse Wellness Center
Join Morgan and Jenna to hear about and share ideas for programming and events, plus discuss the upcoming pickleball season. (Lessons coming soon – watch for details to come!)

Walk & Talk

Fridays at 11 a.m. in Grosse Wellness Center
Walk and socialize with fellow residents for 30 minutes and experience the benefits! We'll walk outside as weather permits.

Healthy & Homemade from Iowa State Extension

Tuesdays, April 5-12-19 from 1:30 – 3 p.m.
at Windridge West Lounge
This three-part series focuses on using your time, money and skills wisely to prepare nutritious foods. Topics include Veg Out, Cooking for One or Two, and Cook Now, Enjoy Later. Cost for the series is $30. Register online at go.iastate.edu/I65LGZ or call Morgan at 319-859-9362 for more information.

WELLNESS RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Easter Peeps Fruit Kabobs

Ingredients:
• Pink Easter Bunny Peeps
• Strawberries CUT IN HALF
• Cantaloupe CUT IN 1” CHUNKS
• Pineapple CUT IN 1” CHUNKS
• Green and Red grapes
• Blueberries
• Wooden Skewers

Instructions:
1. Wash and dry all of the fruit thoroughly.
2. Skewer a red grape, two blueberries, a green grape, a chunk of pineapple, a chunk of cantaloupe, and a strawberry piece onto the skewer, leaving about 2.5” of space on the end of the skewer.
3. Dip the tip of the skewer into a glass of water, and then gently add the Easter Bunny Peep to the end of the skewer. As long as the skewer is wet, it should go through the Peep easily.
4. Arrange the skewers on a plate in a slight arch to get the full rainbow effect!
UNI student helps Thalman Square residents build strength

A cold January day found Thalman Square residents dreaming of outdoor time in the spring. As they talked about calendar programming, some preferred sipping lemonade on the patio; others wanted to take walks.

Several mentioned they would need to “get stronger” before walking very far. Enter Kelbie See, an intern from the UNI Gerontology program.

Kelbie directed her efforts to working with anyone who wanted to use the NuStep, a recumbent cross trainer. “Residents have been setting personal goals and working toward them,” she says. “It’s rewarding to see them having fun, increasing their time on the NuStep and also becoming playfully competitive with each other.”

Kelbie appreciates the time it allows her to get to know residents, too. “We end up having some of the best conversations when the residents are on the NuStep,” she enthuses. “I get to know about their history and their families.”

With all their enhanced stamina, watch for Thalman Square residents coming to a sidewalk near you soon!

It’s time to ride!

Residents of all skill levels are welcome to ride with the Big Kids Bike Klub this season when it kicks off in April.

Whether you’ve ridden with the group in the past or want to join the fun this year, be sure to contact Roy or Rita Justis for more information at 319-321-2048 or by emailing rjustis59@gmail.com.
Happy April birthday!

Russell Schultz WHAL April 1
Barbara McGovern WHAL April 1
Cliff Hansen WM April 2
John Rice PW April 4
Barbara Spates WG April 4
Milly Anderson WHAL April 5
Richard Swanson VTH April 5
Bonnie Humble VTH April 6
Jay Agness VTH April 6
Barb A Jacobson WR April 7
Russ Price VTH April 7
Dean Hutchison VTH April 7
David Lemons PW April 8
Bob Fread TS April 8
Janet Sandell VTH April 9
Phyllis Steele PW April 10
Jeff Bernard VTH April 10
Melvin Reimer CTG April 11
Margery Andrew WW April 11
Barb Pershing VTH April 11
Del Carpenter VTH April 11
Marjorie Kohl DS April 12
Marlys Badger WR April 14
Ethel Ann Koch WM April 15
Anita Kabele VTH April 15
Evelyn Wohlwend PW April 16
Rob Hogan WR April 16
Kathleen Aranza PW April 17
John Kragt PW April 17
Paul Foote WG April 17
Maggie Hemmer WG April 17
Patrick Brickley VTH April 17
Christine Carpenter VTH April 18
Donna Hansen WM April 19

Mary Cooley WHAL April 19
Mick Reifsteck VTH April 19
Maurice Casey DS April 20
Jon Hansen WHAL April 20
Joyce Willy VTH April 20
Patricia Cayton MS April 21
Jim Duwelius WR April 21
Peggy Lanigan VTH April 21
Karen Zwanziger VTH April 22
Greta Magee VTH April 22
Mary Fischbach DS April 23
Sheila Baker WHAL April 23
Jerry Mohling VTH April 23
Dick Johnson VTH April 23
Roger Kussatz VTH April 23
Patricia Taylor TS April 24
Dolores Steege WM April 24
Jean Brummel WR April 24
LaVerne Middleswart VTH April 24
Howard Uehle VTH April 24
Georgia Smithling MS April 25
Jacquelyn Eastman MS April 25
June Green VTH April 25
Reggie Schmitt VTH April 26
Kathleen Washington WR April 27
Kathy Thompson VTH April 27
Hans Isakson VTH April 27
Greg Hankins VTH April 28
Nancie Handorf WC April 29
Gordy Koch PW April 30
Jeanne Rogers TS April 30
Don Walton WW April 30
Vern Hansen VTH April 30

“I wandered lonely as a cloud that floats on high o'er vales and hills,
when all at once I saw a crowd, a host, of golden daffodils; beside
the lake, beneath the trees, fluttering and dancing in the breeze.”

– William Wordsworth
Raceway curiosity led to authoring a book

It seems anyone who lived in the Cedar Valley in the 1950s, 60s and 70s has a story to tell about Sunday evening races at Tunis Speedway. The privately owned dirt track hosted midget cars and then full-sized cars from 1948 until 1983, attracting 3,000 to 5,000 fans every week.

Villa resident Jim Volgarino was among them. “I was into car stuff as a kid,” he says. “I remember riding my bike to the track and sitting on the hill near the grandstand to watch the races and thinking, ‘Wow. This is so cool.’”

Little did Jim know he would later write a book about the speedway, located between University and Greenhill in Waterloo, just east of Progress Avenue; you can still make out the track outline on a Google Map aerial view.

Several years ago, as Jim had conversations with friends, he found people had memories of Tunis Speedway, but museums and libraries didn’t have any information. Jim jumped in with both feet and began looking for drivers, families of drivers and fans to learn more.

Soon Jim went from having nothing to a cascade of stories, photos and scrapbooks. In 2011, Judd Tunis’ family shared enough totes of memorabilia to fill Jim’s spare bedroom.

“I picked out and scanned 1,200 photos. These were snapshots, not professional photos, from this community of fans and drivers,” Jim says. That’s when he began a three-year journey of writing “Dirt Track Dreams: The Tunis Speedway Chronicles,” published in 2015.

In 2013, there was a reunion of 700 drivers and families; in 2018, Tunis Speedway was one of the venues featured in a Grout Museum exhibit. A Facebook group allows more than 2,600 members to share photos and memories.

Recently, Jim worked with The Market on a display window at Jorgensen Plaza and The Market is carrying the book. Jim encourages everyone to visit the display and scan the display’s QR codes for more information on this piece of Cedar Valley history.
Congratulations!
In April, these employees celebrate milestone anniversaries for their service to Western Home Communities. We appreciate their loyalty, dedication and service!

Meet the Employee of the Month, Shelly Deeringer

Shelly joined the Western Home Communities family in October 2020 and works as a hospitality coordinator at The Cottages at Creekside in Grundy Center. Here are a few things that were said about Shelly:

• Shelly is genuinely one of the nicest people I have ever met and we are lucky to have her.
• She devotes extra time outside of her work hours to assist with activities.
• Shelly will bring in treats for the residents.
• She has a great rapport with her residents and coworkers.
• Shelly is truly the face of our core value, servant spirit.

Your Western Home Communities family congratulates you, Shelly, on being named our employee of the month for March 2022.

We’re on Instagram
@westernhomecommunities is where you’ll find content on our newest social media page. Check it out! Facebook users, we’re still busy on that page – just adding Instagram to reach another audience. Engage with us on your favorite platform!
Time to take a mental break

During Brain Health Week in March, a question on Workplace (employee intranet) asked: **What's your favorite way to take a mental break?** Brain health is important all year, so try one of these suggestions today!

- Spending time with my dogs or chickens
- A walk next to water
- Riding my bicycle and letting the breeze hit my face
- Golf
- Walking or working in my little garden
- Window shopping and doing crafts
- Cranking some tunes and dancing in the kitchen
- Fresh air!

Fortified Life helps preserve assets by controlling future costs of long-term care and providing support and services to keep you independent in your current home for as long as possible.

**To learn more, attend an information session:**

- **April 14 at 2 p.m.** Diamond Event Center
- **April 28 at 2 p.m.** via Zoom

**RSVP to Jacob Bates at 319-260-4267 or jacob.bates@westernhome.org.**

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**In sympathy**

- Dolores Trimble, MS - Mar. 18
- Ila Doeden, DS - Mar. 14
- Janet Corbin, TS - Mar. 11
- Nola Kelly, CTG - Mar. 3
- Lloyd Hager, DS - Mar. 2
- Terry Hummel, MS - Feb. 26
- Bonnie Neese, CTG - Feb. 24

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**Protect Your Best Years.**

Fortified Life helps preserve assets by controlling future costs of long-term care and providing support and services to keep you independent in your current home for as long as possible.

**The Journal** is a monthly publication of the WHC office of communications and public relations. To subscribe, ask questions, offer content suggestions or unsubscribe, please contact Linda Hudwalker Bowman, editor, at (319) 859-9337 or linda.bowman@westernhome.org.
Wine
OF THE WEEK

One glass of wine won’t do it. But the right glass of wine will!

April 3-9
Dr. Konstantin Riesling 2016 - Finger Lakes, New York
$8/glass

April 10-16
Underwood Pinot Noir 2018 - Oregon
$8/glass

April 17-23
Campanile Pinot Grigio 2016 - Italy
$7/glass

April 24-30
Robert Mondavi Chardonnay 2015 - Napa Valley, California
$8/glass

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