

LINCOLN'S MAGAZINE OF CHOICE
FOR THE SEASONED READER

Fall 2023

55+

Taking Flight

*Women find a safe place to make positive changes,
gain new skills, and discover strengths at St. Monica's.*

PAGE 2

The Benefits of
Pilates as You Age

PAGE 12

Meet Celebrated
Chef Rachel McGill

PAGE 14

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Nominate Your Hero.

Roper & Sons wants to recognize those everyday heroes who have shown a commitment to helping others with our 2nd Annual Here's to the Heroes award.

From teachers and caregivers, to friends and neighbors – someone who has helped you get through difficult times and made your life a little better. Our 2022 Here's to the Heroes Award recipient was Rose Hood Buss, Executive Director of The HUB.

Nominations will be accepted through September 22, 2023. Nominees will be guests of Roper & Sons at Hub & Soul on Friday, September 29, 2023.

The winner of Here's to the Heroes Award will be announced that evening and be presented with a monetary prize.

Nominate your hero at RoperandSons.com/Heroes.

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FALL 2023

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Lincoln is a community filled with wonderful nonprofit organizations doing extraordinary things for so many. St. Monica's is one of them. They are dedicated to empowering women to believe in themselves, providing support through their recovery and beyond, and helping them find purpose in their lives again. St. Monica's is embarking on a new expansion that will allow them to help even more women. You can read about the great work being done and how you can get involved on page 2.

Ever thought about becoming a host family for an exchange student? FLAG International is busy in Lincoln developing a network of individuals and families who want to open their homes and hearts and make a difference in the lives of these students. Learn more about becoming a host family on page 6.

It's not every day you can say you know a James Beard Nominee. If you've dined at DISH in downtown Lincoln and have had the privilege of eating the amazing creations of owner and head chef Rachel McGill, then you understand why she was one of 250 chefs across the globe who were recognized as being among the best. Rachel shares her journey to receiving this top recognition on page 14.

Our Fall magazine is filled with other incredible stories, from playing a musical instrument, to using mindfulness while on vacation, to activities to do when families come to visit. It's all in this edition, and so much more.

Enjoy the beautiful season of colors, sounds, and wonderment!

With gratitude,

Jacque Genovese
Executive Editor

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Taking Flight



"The services at St. Monica's enriched my life, retrained my focus, and restored my self-esteem. I received the help and support I needed. I learned that I am important and I don't need drugs to define me. Now that I'm in recovery, I am living in my very own apartment, working, repairing family relationships, and growing new healthy friendships. St. Monica's is awesome!"

– Renatta

For women experiencing trauma and/or substance use disorders, St. Monica's in Lincoln offers a safe place for them to make positive changes, gain new skills, and discover strengths to recover – and take flight.

Since 1964, women have been able to recover in a home-like environment because of St. Monica's. Over 275 women come here each year. It's about empowering women to feel they are worthy of their recovery, and that they deserve a better life. Because they do – for themselves, and for their families.

Growing to Meet the Needs of Clients

What makes St. Monica's so unique is that they have a high recovery rate. This is due to

"Today I am the best I have ever been."

– MARTA

their understanding that a large part of recovery is keeping families connected throughout the process, including moms with kids, when appropriate. Creating programming and spaces that support the families' needs during and after recovery improves the chances for them to live healthy and happy lives.

"St. Monica's is beginning a new chapter," said Natalya Young, Executive Director of St. Monica's. "Thanks to funds available, and still to-be raised, we are working toward the completion of our Take Flight Capital Campaign which includes renovating current spaces and relocating some programs to newly acquired buildings at the Veteran

Affairs campus in Lincoln. This will allow us to provide better quality services to even more women in need of care."

Women can be at St. Monica's for up to a year between residential and outpatient services. That's why it's necessary to enhance



New Location

the spaces that are currently available. Sometimes women come with children and infants, so we have an opportunity to maintain the bond between them when possible.

Upgrades to the existing facilities and adding remodeled buildings at another location includes renovating sleeping rooms, common spaces, kitchens, restrooms, patios, fencing and play areas, and security. The following require upgrades or major renovations:

- **Short-term Residential, Facility Upgrade**
(20 women served every 6-8 weeks)
- **Therapeutic Community, New Location**
(16 women served every 4-6 months)
- **Project Mother Child, New Location**
(9 families served every 4-6 months)
- **Women Are Sacred, New Location**
(12-16 Native American families served each year; 20-25 infants and children in licensed child care)
- **Step-Down Housing, Facility Upgrade**
(12-16 women served every 4-6 months at Wedgewood, and 14 women/families served each year at Skyway)
- **Affirming Women's Empowerment-Halfway House, Facility Upgrade**
(12 women served every 4-6 months)

"We're excited about adding the Veterans Affairs campus to our residences as it is a beautiful location and the buildings feel very welcoming. This will help women feel like they are part of a home and a community while they heal," Natalya added.

**Client names have been changed to protect their confidentiality.*

Be a Part of Helping Women Recover

You may know someone who is in need of services that St. Monica's provides. She's your mother, your daughter, your sister, your friend, your neighbor – and she needs your support to Take Flight.

"A woman who crosses our path has strength to deal with the past and face what is ahead in her life," Natalya said emphatically.

If you're inspired to help, there are many ways you can get involved.

- **Join our volunteer list**
- **Purchase a donor or memorial brick with your name or the name of a loved one**
- **Sponsor a room on our new campus**
- **Make a one-time or monthly general donation**

\$1,000 provides 3½ days of residential treatment

\$500 ensures weekly meals for 14 women

\$100 provides transportation to appointments and childcare

\$50 buys hygiene items for 2 new clients

\$10 buys a monthly bus pass

Scan to
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Donation



It takes a village to Take Flight. Join St. Monica's village. Your contribution is a part of the support system that makes stories like these possible. Thank you again for your commitment to St. Monica's mission.

LEARN MORE

stmonicas.com



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THE JOY OF PLAYING A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

BY MIKE MURPHY AND LANCE NIELSEN

Mike and Lance are co-directors of the Lincoln Community Concert Band and are both 55+. Not only does the band experience provide them with joy and positive well-being as conductors, they see the impacts of music on many of their band members of ALL ages.

Music can have a profound impact on our lives. It can evoke strong emotions, provide comfort and support, and even improve our health and well-being. For older adults, playing a musical instrument can offer a number of benefits, both physical and mental.

Improved cognitive function: Studies have shown that learning to play an instrument after the age of 55 can lead to increased brain plasticity, which is the brain's ability to change and adapt. This can help to protect against age-related cognitive decline, such as Alzheimer's disease and dementia.

Increased social interaction: Playing in a community band is a great way to meet new people and make friends, share your love of music, and have the opportunity to socialize both during rehearsals and at concerts.

Improved mental and physical health: Studies have shown that music can reduce stress and boost mood. Learning to play an instrument requires a number of cognitive skills, including attention, memory, problem-solving, hand-eye coordination, and spatial reasoning.

A sense of purpose and belonging: Playing in a community band can give you a sense of purpose. Working toward a common goal can give you a sense of satisfaction and fulfillment.

Tips on learning and playing an instrument for 55+ students:

- Pick an instrument that is easy to learn and that you are interested in.
- Find a qualified teacher who can help you learn the basics.
- Set realistic goals; don't get discouraged if you don't see results immediately.
- Make time to practice regularly.
- Find bands in your community that you can join.
- Have fun!

Playing an instrument in a community band or with a smaller group can be a rewarding and enjoyable experience. If you are 55+ and are looking for a way to stay active, make friends, and improve your health, consider joining a band!





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UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCES FOR EXCHANGE STUDENTS AND HOST FAMILIES

A CONVERSATION BETWEEN MOLLY WIEBER AND JACQUE GENOVESE

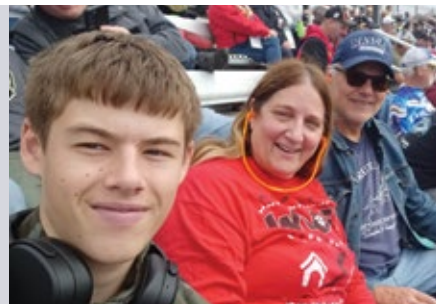
Foreign Links Around the Globe (FLAG) International is a program that was started in 1989 by an exchange student and his host mom. It is dedicated to providing high-quality international exchange experiences that transform the lives of high school students, host families, and communities around the world. I asked Molly Wieber, the FLAGship Managing Director, to talk about the great work FLAG is doing and her efforts to find host families in the Lincoln area.

Where do students come from?

This year, we have over 400 students from 35 countries coming to the U.S. Most students come for a full academic year, while others for a semester (August – December or January – June). The Lincoln school district and surrounding towns are very welcoming and appreciate the cultural diversity exchange students bring to their schools.

How many host families are needed?

We hope for about 10 host families for the Lincoln area. They can have kids or no kids, be retired, or single. We have a huge demographic of empty nesters who tend to host year after year. They enjoy it because it keeps them active and feeling younger.



"Our original reservation was that we don't have kids of our own. We thought a student may find us boring. But then we realized that we have a lot to offer an exchange student! We were able to identify shared interests and we learned a lot about new sports and activities that we previously had no experience with. We truly enjoyed our experience and we're so glad we stepped out of our comfort zone a little bit and gave it try."

– SANDEE S.

How do you find host families?

Local coordinators look for people who love kids that age and have an interest in cultures. They find host families from their social circle or people they know in the community.

What are the benefits of being a host family?

When you host, you get to select your student. You open yourself and your loved ones to a new world of culture and unforgettable experiences that become life-long relationships between students and families.

What is the application process?

After a host family submits an application, a background check is done, reference checks are made, and a home visit is scheduled. We are governed by the Department of State. The application process is simple and can be done rather quickly.

FLAG is still seeking host families for this school year. If you're considering hosting, now is the time to reach out. Learn more at flag-intl.org, or contact Molly Wieber, (269) 365-3488 or mwieber@flag-intl.org.

DIXIE DELIVERS MEALS WITH JOY



Open-minded, enthusiastic, respectful and observant, long-time Tabitha Meals on Wheels volunteer, Dixie Johnson is the epitome of kindness. “God made me with a loving, helping heart,” shares Johnson.

Johnson is a doer and in 2014, after ending a 30-year career, she got busy doing what she loves most — giving back by volunteering for Tabitha Meals on Wheels, Lied Center, Matt Talbot Kitchen, and as a mentor.

Fast forward nine years later and every Monday you’ll still find Johnson delivering warmth by way of her caring spirit and a hot noon Tabitha meal to fortunate recipients on her route.

At one stop, 90-year-old Pat Harre greets Johnson with a hug. Harre is used to being independent. After all, she raised six kids on her own after her husband passed away at the age of 40.

“Dixie is family,” bursts Harre, “we just hit it off. I look forward to seeing her. While I still have my car, I know I should not be driving. Having a prepared meal, delivered, keeps me safe and independent at home. Dixie goes above and

beyond, she even helps water my flowers, grabs my mail — she really looks out for me.”

At another delivery George Deemer, age 95, swings open the door with a big smile and embraces Johnson. The former Korean War Air Force veteran and retired Offutt mechanic listens as Johnson reminds him to drink more water and then the focus shifts to his lifelong hobbies of collecting clocks (he has 70) and his love of music, he can play 14 instruments by ear.

“I really look forward to Dixie bringing me my meal, love her like family. I don’t like to cook and after losing my wife Jerine of 60 years, in 2013, I did not have anyone available to cook for me. Tabitha Meals on Wheels deliveries make all the difference.”

Nonprofit Tabitha needs more Dixies. Make an instant impact and volunteer to deliver today. Visit Tabitha.org/Volunteer or donate money for meals at Tabitha.org/Give.

As the state’s quality award-winning expert for older adults, nonprofit Tabitha empowers people to live joyfully, age gratefully. Supporting families since 1886 across Nebraska, Tabitha offers a range of services, from results-driven rehabilitation, accessible at-home home health care, innovative living communities, resourceful serious illness support and compassionate hospice services. Tabitha is Your Answer; learn more at Tabitha.org.



LINCOLN COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

YOUR PARTNER FOR YEAR-END GIVING

The end of the year always seems to sneak up on us, doesn't it? One minute, we're watching fireworks on the fourth of July and then next – the season of giving thanks and gathering with friends and family is upon us. Many folks use the end of the year as a special time to give back to their community through charitable gifts and acts. Since 1955, the Lincoln Community Foundation has been privileged to serve as a steward for this year-end generosity, connecting donor passions to local needs.

Of course, there are many ways to make a meaningful year-end charitable gift. A gift of appreciated stock or mutual fund shares provides an enhanced tax benefit when compared to a gift of cash. The donor receives an income tax charitable deduction for the full value of the donated shares and pays no long-term capital gains tax on the appreciation.

For example, Elena purchased stock for \$3,000 ten years ago that is now valued at \$10,000. If she sells the stock, she will incur a capital gains tax of \$1,050 ($\$7,000$ appreciation \times 15% capital gains tax rate). Instead, Elena chooses to use the stock to make a charitable gift. In her 28% tax bracket, she enjoys a deduction of \$2,800 for the full fair market value of the stock (\$10,000). She also avoids the \$1,050 capital gains tax liability she would have paid if she sold the stock. Therefore, the net cost of her gift is only \$6,150 ($\$10,000 - \$2,800 - \$1,050$) compared to \$7,200 for a cash gift of \$10,000.

There's another giving technique that's gaining traction lately for folks of a certain vintage. An IRA charitable rollover allows donors of a certain age to make a tax-free transfer from an IRA directly to a qualified charity. The amount transferred is not eligible for a charitable income tax deduction, but it counts toward the donor's annual required minimum distribution. This is an especially attractive option for donors that must take IRA withdrawals they do not need.



Our professional staff is here to help create your personalized plan for current or future gifts to support your favorite organizations, causes or the community of Lincoln and Lancaster County. Take advantage of expertise to help achieve your philanthropic giving and charitable goals.

"We can be a resource for donors and their advisors about potential income and tax benefits of various gift types.

– CHIP DEBUSE



*Chip DeBuse, Vice President,
Development – Legacy Planning*

Donors can use these taxwise giving methods to benefit the charitable organizations that reflect their interests and passions. Your financial advisor or the Lincoln Community Foundation can help you make these creative

gifts. Please let us know if we can be a resource as you reflect on how best to make an end-of-year gift that is meaningful to you and your family. I can be reached at (402) 474-2345, or chipd@lcf.org.

"FALL"OW THE CLUES



CROSSWORD PUZZLE BY FRED OHLES

Theme clues are starred. When the puzzle is finished, every letter from A to Z will appear in one of the 26 circles. **For answer key, please visit 55LNK.com.**

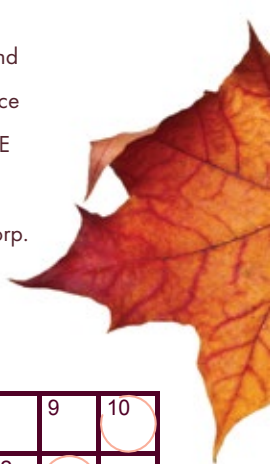
ACROSS

- 1 Small docks
- 8 "For what reason?"
- 11 Ways to get there
- 12 "__ the land of the free..."
- 13 *Largely occupied bobsled, say?
- 14 Four Monopoly props
- 15 Reasons for some dog collars
- 16 __-Fit, Nike trademark
- 17 *Parallelograms with sides that are not equal and angles that are not right
- 21 One piece of candy
- 22 *Shaped like a triangular pyramid, on a count of the number of sides (hint: the answer is an anagram of "trade lather")
- 27 Beethoven's Third
- 28 *Bottom of a shoebox, say
- 32 __ in cackle
- 33 Does the lion thing
- 36 Regular: Abbr.
- 37 *Two violins, viola and cello
- 39 __N, "Drive Time Lincoln" station
- 40 COVID defense
- 41 Bookend to ABC
- 42 Tidying action



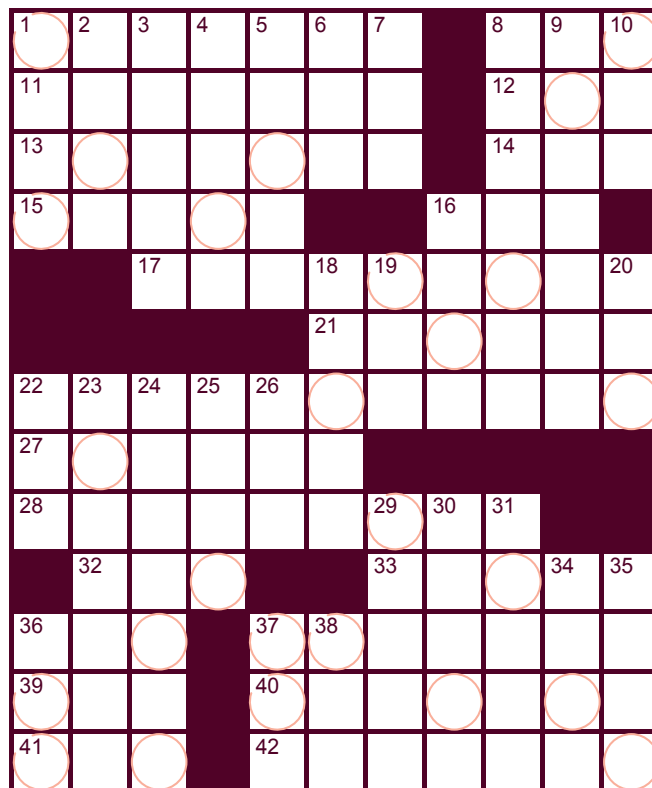
- 5 "__ very glad to meet you!"
- 6 Lemon or lime beverage when turned upside down
- 7 Tax return ID
- 8 Person always fretting
- 9 He did not come up with it
- 10 Pts. of a decade
- 16 Mamie Eisenhower's née
- 18 Famous naval strategist - and but for a missing O on the front, a resident of Nebraska's largest city
- 19 Degree for mech. or elec. studies
- 20 Baseball Cards on crawl line
- 22 Lobs and mobs finish
- 23 Standing straight up
- 24 Sailing instruction for American ships bound for Spain in the 1700s

- 25 Upstate New York institution for engineers and dye brand
- 26 "Obamacare" by the letters
- 29 Prayer before eating
- 30 Federico Garcia __, poet, playwright
- 31 Take a table and dine
- 34 Contact lens solution brand
- 35 Word with ladder or dance
- 36 Skechers symbol on NYSE
- 37 HSN competitor
- 38 "Fly the Friendly Skies" corp.



DOWN

- 1 In a __ (speedily)
- 2 A famous ranger riding his horse uphill?
- 3 More voracious
- 4 Five Hebrew holy texts





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THE BENEFITS OF PILATES AS YOU AGE

AN INTERVIEW WITH CHRIS KRUEGER,
OWNER OF CLUB PILATES LINCOLN



Chris Krueger will tell you that Pilates offers many benefits. She personally saw how Pilates changed her body and improved her health, and that inspired her to share that with others. After 36 years in banking and wanting to do something different when she moved back to Nebraska, Chris felt

opening Club Pilates in Lincoln was the perfect business opportunity.

What is Pilates?

Pilates is a core and overall body workout. Strengthening your core muscles impacts many parts of your body including flexibility and balance which can be two common health concerns as people age. Pilates has been shown to:

- Improve bone density
- Improve posture, balance, and gait
- Improve mobility
- Reduce stress
- Elevate mood and overall well-being
- Improve memory and mind/body connection
- Reduce back pain
- Help to prevent injuries from falling

Do pilates. Do life.

What can people expect to find at your studio?

Club Pilates is for every type of body. We offer a state-of-the-art studio with many levels of classes. Our instructors are nationally certified with 500 hours of training. They work closely with our clients to ensure they are getting the most from their workout, safely.

Clients use the reformer for about 60% of workouts. The resistance provided by the reformer elevates your workout so that you see results more rapidly. We offer:

- 12 Reformers
- 9 different types of classes
- Multiple modalities
- Training tailored to your needs
- Private instruction

What about people who haven't been exercising?

We've talked to a lot of people and they are just hard on themselves. Pilates is for everyone - men and women. Give yourself grace if you haven't done any activity for a while. Come in anyway. We have many people who are first-timers and they love Pilates!

Complimentary Session!

We invite you to come in to discuss your goals and how we can help you achieve them. We offer a free 30-minute, full-body session as an intro to our studio, workout, and experienced team. Call (531) 500-1456 or visit clubpilates.com/lincoln to learn more.



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DISH to Designated James Beard Nominee

A CONVERSATION WITH RACHEL MCGILL AND JACQUE GENOVESE

Rachel McGill is a Lincolnite, born and raised. In 2022, she was honored as a Nominee by the James Beard Foundation which recognizes the “best of the best” in the culinary world. I sat down with Rachel to learn more about her love for food and community, and what being a Nominee means to her.

When did you first discover your passion for cooking?

I was 21 working at Jack’s Bar & Grill in the Haymarket. I had no cooking experience but I loved it, and they let me run the show. I taught myself to cook by reading cook books and watching videos.

How did you come to own the DISH Restaurant?

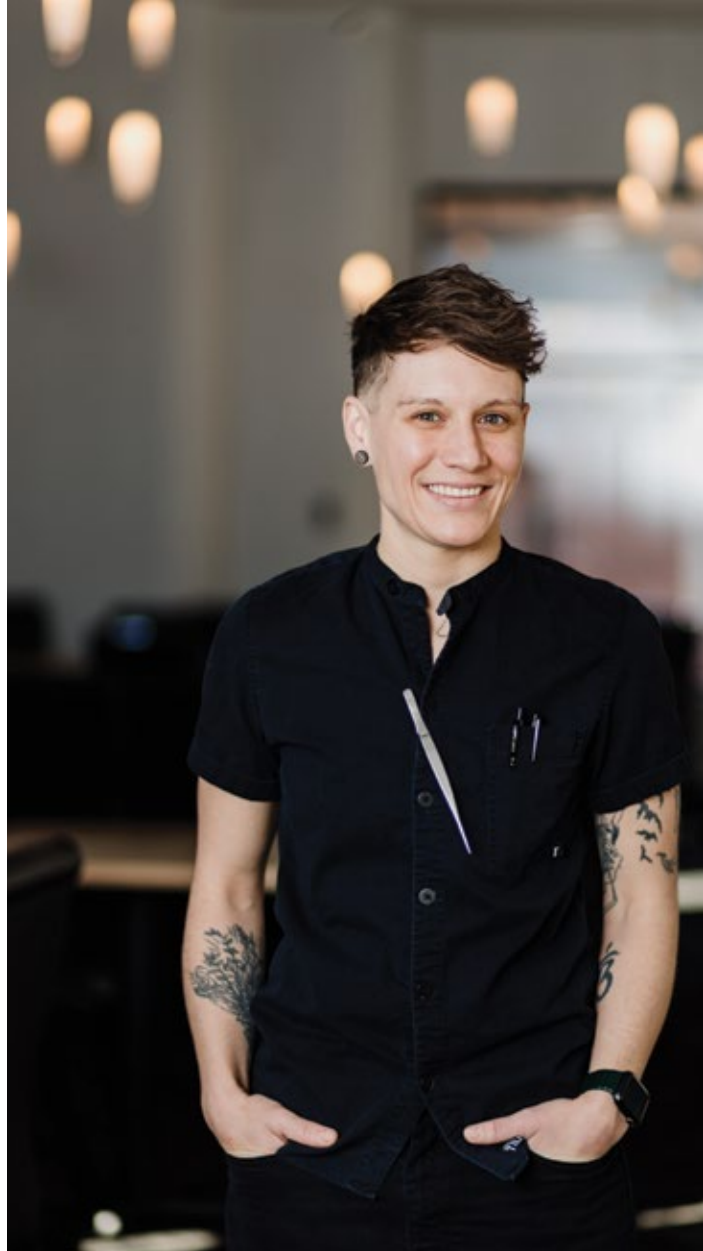
I worked at DISH for a couple of years as a sous chef. When the owner decided to sell, my then partner and I bought the restaurant in 2016, and it’s been a whirlwind ever since.

What do you enjoy about being head chef?

I love the freedom of creating whatever I want. It took me a little while before I spread my wings with my style of cooking. I started by slowly changing the menu, moving toward more seasonal items. Today, our menu is entirely what we’re able to source locally each day. Designing unique dishes is really fun for me.

Where does your creative inspiration come from?

In high school I went to an arts and humanities focused-program and really loved art, but I could never find my medium. With food, I don’t do the same thing every day – and I love that. It scratches that creative itch for me.



How does your creativity impact patrons and staff?

Our patrons love that the menu changes regularly and will ask what new dishes we've added. It also keeps my team engaged and excited about what they are cooking and serving. Some of my sous chefs have been with me since their culinary program at Southeast Community College and it's fun to watch their evolution. The bar staff are equally inspired to develop unique specialty drinks.

How did receiving the James Beard Nomination affect your business?

The James Beard Foundation is about uplifting people in the culinary industry as a whole. Applicants must describe how they and their restaurant align with the Foundation's core values: equity, transparency, respect, and integrity, what your goals are, and how you do food well. The Foundation sends someone unannounced to experience your cooking. I had no idea when someone came to DISH or that I was even in the running until I received the nomination.

Since being named a Nominee, our business has increased by 25% month-after-month. It was an insane time because it was all post-Covid and we had just fully opened back up. The Lincoln community really supports DISH. The relationship we have with The Lied Center, UNL, and the downtown as a whole is amazing. We have a queer and inclusive staff and it's been fun to be a part of that community, as well as to offer a unique and welcoming experience. People appreciate us.



What does being a James Beard Nominee mean to you?

It means so much. It validates all the work I've put in over the years. To be one of 250 chefs recognized on this national stage is so amazing. Thousands of people submitted applications and to be one of the chefs selected was a huge honor. Chefs that I admire and aspire to be like are in this group, so to be seen on their level is pretty amazing considering that I am a small-business owner going up against chefs who work for major corporations.

How has being a Nominee elevated you in the culinary world?

I filmed a Chopped episode last fall (it aired in August 2023). The show producers reached out to me so I'm sure that had something to do with my nomination. I've also gotten some national/international recognition. We have had guests come to the restaurant to dine. It's great to hear how their dining experience at DISH is being compared to restaurants in larger cities around the country and world.

What does the future hold for you?

I don't know what the future looks like but I know I will be ambitious and continue to drive forward. DISH is what I'm doing now, but it won't be the only thing that I do.



TALL IN THE FALL— WHEN THE PRAIRIE STATE AMAZES

BY JULIE THOMAS, PhD



My early fantasies about life on the prairie were undoubtedly influenced by “Little House on the Prairie” (and other Laura Ingalls Wilder’s books). As a child, I sought out tall grass (or weeds in my backyard) to flatten a bed and lay on my back to watch the clouds (just as Laura did).



Today, I am a grown-up prairie girl who knows Nebraska, the Prairie State, includes four different prairie ecoregions stretching border-to-border. Our home, Lincoln, is in the Tallgrass Prairie Region. Though Lincoln is no longer a sea of grass and open horizons, we continue to appreciate this region’s abundant rainfall and fertile soil (formed in glacial times).

Fall may be the most beautiful prairie season — when green grasses reach maximum height (some 6-8’) and turn warm shades of brown and red as plants send nutrients into their deep roots for winter. I encourage you to check out this tall in the fall occurrence by visiting one of the prairie destinations below. Managed, remnant prairies such as these preserve some of the most valued ecosystems on earth and remind us, there is no place like Nebraska!

Spring Creek Prairie, located 20 miles southwest of Lincoln (near Denton), features four miles of mowed, walking trails across 600+ acres

of native prairie. Here, you can choose your own adventure — follow an accessible path around the spring-fed pond or locate interesting features (such as wagon ruts left by pioneers following the Oregon Trail).

Ample parking, prairie trails, and grounds are open daily (from sunrise to sunset).

Dieken Prairie, located 21 miles southeast of Lincoln (near Unadilla), features 15 acres of upland prairie wildflowers and native grasses nestled-in among cropland, a windbreak, and the Little Nemaha River. Parking is available along the road and there are no trails — so you can hike wherever your senses lead you! You might listen for birds in the trees or discover an area where a prairie mammal bedded down in the grass.

Check these websites for maps, driving directions, Spring Creek’s visitor center hours, and upcoming fall events:

Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center
springcreek.audubon.org

Wachiska Audubon
wachiskaaudubon.org



Julie Thomas, PhD, is a retired Science Educator and a Research Professor Emerita from the University of Nebraska and a contributing writer for 55+.

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3rd Thursday of Each Month

CountryHouse at 84th & Pine Lake
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RSVP Optional

Scan the QR code to learn more or go to CountryHouse.net/LincolnSupportGroup



Day and Respite Stays

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Day and Respite Stays are based on space and availability. Please call your preferred community for more information.



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CountryHouse.net

SAY HELLO TO FALL

Don't miss out on these local events this fall! Find more upcoming events at 55lnk.com or facebook.com/55pluslnk.

→ **SEPTEMBER 8**

Movie in the Park, 9 p.m.
Air Park Community Center

→ **SEPTEMBER 29**

Hub & Soul Music Series, 6 p.m.
Union Plaza

→ **OCTOBER 4**

Fall Sip Nebraska · Wine, Craft Beer & Spirits Tasting Festival, 11 a.m. - 9 p.m.
Haymarket Park

→ **OCTOBER 6**

The Hope Venture Presents A Night for Hope, 7 p.m., Rocco Theatre

→ **OCTOBER 8**

Walk to End Alzheimer's, 10 a.m.
Haymarket Park

→ **OCTOBER 20**

Putt Putt Fore Puppies, 4 - 6 p.m.
Adventure Golf Center

→ **NOVEMBER 2**

Nebraska Storytelling Festival, 7 p.m.
The Grand Manse

→ **NOVEMBER 18**

Dancing Within the Star City Benefit
5:30 p.m., Centennial Mall South

Scan For Event Details



Fall Bucket List

Here's our handy checklist of simple, fun, and free (or almost free) things you can do in the Lincoln-area this season!

- Take a hike in Wilderness Park.
- Make s'mores.
- Get fall goodies at a Farmers Market.
- Participate in a program at Lincoln City Libraries.
- Find a place to volunteer your time (shelters, picking up litter, care facilities, etc.).
- Visit the State Capitol.
- View art at Sheldon Museum of Art.
- Play a musical instrument.
- See a movie in the theater.
- Star-gaze at Hyde Memorial Observatory or Branched Oak Observatory.
- Visit a Pumpkin Patch.
- Visit the International Quilt Museum.
- Visit Pioneers Park Nature Center.
- Collect fall leaves.
- Enjoy a picnic at Holmes Lake.
- Make a bird-feeder.
- Roast pumpkin seeds.
- Go mini-golfing.
- See fossils at Morrill Hall.
- Bake a pie.
- Visit a corn maze.
- Go tail-gating.
- Create a grateful list.
- Make caramel apples.
- Get spooked at a haunted house.
- Carve a pumpkin.
- Hike on Saturdays at Prairie Pines.
- Attend Hub and Soul on Sept. 29 or Oct. 13.

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Contact us for more details, or stop by so we can say thank you.

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MINDFULNESS + TRAVELING

BY KARLA JENSEN, PhD

Travel is a precious gift, providing a respite from daily responsibilities as we explore new landscapes. Although travel can be exhilarating, it may also be overwhelming and exhausting. During our time away, we can sometimes fall into the trap of overplanning, rushing from one landmark to the next. Or maybe we find ourselves tethered to a phone, unable to appreciate what is in front of us. And no matter where we travel or how we get there, things will not always go as planned.

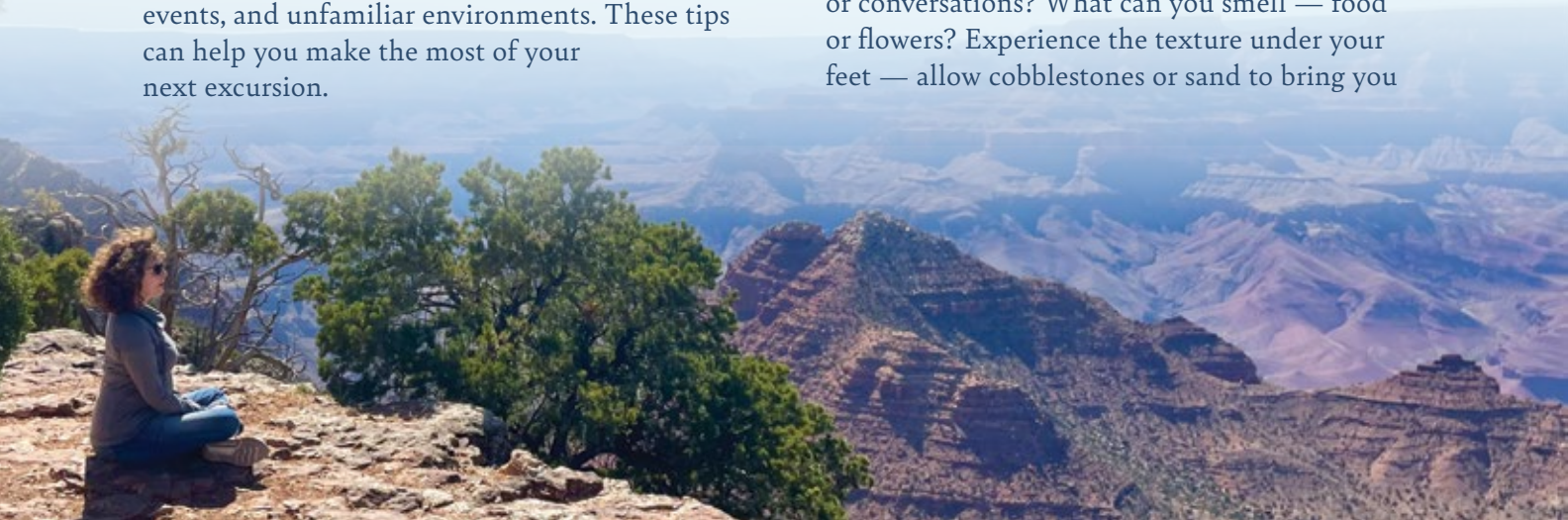
The essence of mindfulness is to be completely aware of the present moment. While it is easy for our minds to creep into the past or peek into the future, mindfulness enables us to firmly anchor in the present, encouraging full immersion in the richness of each experience. For travelers, mindfulness can be a game-changer as it allows us to meaningfully engage with our surroundings, absorb the true essence of a place, and create authentic connections with those we encounter – including our travel partners and even ourselves. Since recent studies demonstrate that those who practice mindfulness experience a variety of benefits including lower anxiety, increased empathy, and a greater overall sense of well-being, it makes sense that mindfulness is a useful travel companion. Mindfulness is a skill we all possess, we simply need to remember to access it in order to stay grounded, particularly when managing tight schedules, unpredictable events, and unfamiliar environments. These tips can help you make the most of your next excursion.

Prioritize Presence

The first step in cultivating mindfulness wherever you are is to simply notice the present. Whether it's strolling in a picturesque town, lounging on a pristine beach, or indulging in local cuisine, allow yourself to take in the beauty and charm of your surroundings. But the present moment isn't always pleasant — it can sometimes be frustrating or uncomfortable. Because mindfulness equips us to accept present moment experiences as they arise, we can more gracefully manage a delay, a language barrier, a heat wave, or any other unexpected challenge. By acknowledging difficulties without judgment and embracing the present moment for all it holds — the pleasant, the unpleasant, and the neutral — we open ourselves up to learning valuable lessons, fostering resilience, and finding creative solutions to navigate hurdles. The bittersweet truth of the present moment is that it is ephemeral. So, find comfort in the fact that the negative or unpleasant won't last forever but also be aware that the positive and pleasant moments may also be fleeting — that's why we need to pay attention to them.

Engage Your Senses

One of the best ways to prioritize presence is by engaging all the senses. In addition to “seeing the sights,” carefully listen to your environment. Do you hear bells or birds? Cars or conversations? What can you smell — food or flowers? Experience the texture under your feet — allow cobblestones or sand to bring you



to the present moment. And of course, relish the unique flavors of regional delicacies. Don't just take photos while you travel — create multi-sensory memories to last a lifetime.

Put the Phone Down

Being truly present will be challenging if your phone is distracting you. Do you really want to spend your vacation emailing or scrolling through social media? Be mindful about when and how you use technology. Instead of using your phone for directions or a restaurant recommendation, look around, use a map, or talk to a local instead. If you are taking photos with your phone (and most of us are), consider turning off all other functions so you aren't pulled out of the moment with a notification. Intentionally set a short amount of time to correspond with family and friends. A little digital detox will enhance your awareness of each moment as well as give your mind a much-needed rest.

Practice Gratitude

Because you are more deeply noticing with all your senses, it follows that gratitude will increase. Whether it's appreciating the natural beauty of a landscape, the kindness of locals, or simply the opportunity to explore a new place, expressing gratitude fosters a positive mindset and can even improve your sleep and increase your immunity. Make a point to acknowledge



the joys of your journey – both large and small – as often as possible.

Use the Buddy System

Present moment awareness isn't always easy. Having a mindfulness-buddy can help. Planning is important, but if your brain is already on the next morning's flight home, you could be missing a spectacular sunset. Similarly, if you are always reflecting on previous events, your delicious dinner goes unnoticed. When travel partners agree to offer gentle nudges to "be here now," they help each other appreciate everything they experience, including their relationships.

Your toothbrush and walking shoes are packed. Don't forget to also take the transformative power of mindfulness on your next adventure.



Karla Jensen, PhD, is a professor of Communication Studies and Contemplative Practices and a certified meditation and yoga teacher. She invites readers to investigate mindfulness by checking out reputable organizations and authors who support this practice.

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AN UNEXPECTED CHARIVARI

BY JO ANN WAGNER

My fiancé and I arrived at my parents' home on a Friday evening in April. We had come for our wedding on Sunday. We were greeted with the news that there was a charivari (shivaree) being held for us at the fire hall.

We were tired from the trip. I'd been planning what needed to be done the next day. Even though it was to be a small ceremony with only close family members, I still had to get some flowers for my bouquet, the bridesmaid, the groom, best man, parents. What else did I have to do?

The last thing I wanted to hear that there was a charivari being held. I had no intention of going. "I didn't know anything about a charivari tonight," I said. "I'm tired and I'm not going."

My soft-spoken, easy-going father pulled me aside. "You know if you don't go there, they'll come here. They have been known to steal brides. If you go for just a little while, they'll be satisfied."

I trusted my father. He may have felt some peer pressure to see that there was a celebration of some sort since we would be leaving after the wedding and we hadn't planned a reception or dance or anything.

I took a few deep breaths and decided it was probably better to go than to have a bunch of drunken people come to my parents' home to steal me away. Who knew how that might end?

We walked the two blocks to the fire hall breathing in the cool evening air. The hall was filled with people – friends and neighbors of my parents. They were a little loud, but not too rowdy yet. I talked with them for a while, glad to see some of them. Then we ate a little, and slipped out the door to let the partying continue.

I felt fortunate that my charivari experience had been peaceful, although it seemed to me to be mainly an excuse to party.





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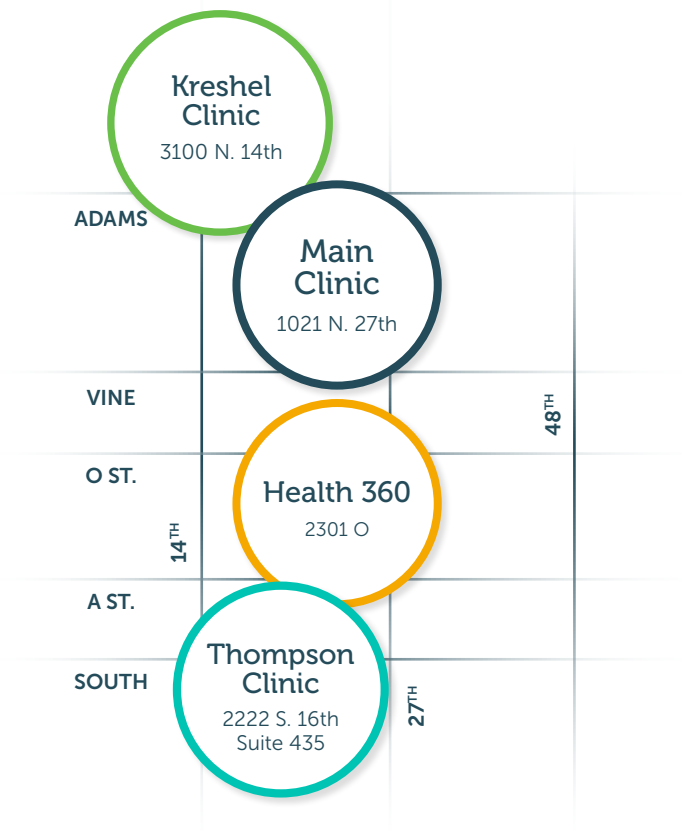
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A “Grand” Guide to Family Visits

The holidays are a time when families come together to share memories and create new ones. Many kids (and grandparents) may feel out of place when not at their own homes so with a little thoughtful planning and fun activities, everyone can enjoy what makes getting together so special! The key to these activities is to do them together to create moments that can be remembered long after.



Shop for Gifts

What kid doesn't want to go look at gifts around the holidays? While the idea is to go shopping for others, letting them pick out a small gift for themselves can boost excitement. It is also an opportunity to teach kids about the value in giving rather than receiving.

Read a Book

Turn visits into a book club by reading an exciting book aloud so everyone has something to look forward to! Read something new or a favorite book you had while growing up. This can even continue after visits through phone calls or video chats online.

Have a Pajama Movie Party

Getting the whole family dressed in their favorite pj's is a great way to get everyone comfortable and for the adults to feel like kids again! After everyone gets cozy, pop some popcorn and put in a new or favorite feature flick.

Go On a Scavenger Hunt

There are lots of ways you can do this, and all of them are fun! Leave clues around your house in the form of riddles that lead to a small prize or make a list of holiday items to find. Just create a list, set the boundaries of where to look, and let them loose indoors or outside!

Look at Photo Albums

A good way to keep the kids entertained while also teaching them some family history is to look through old photo albums. Kids, as well as adults, love to see old pictures of themselves, and you can show them what Mom, Dad, Grandma, and Grandpa looked like when they were their age.

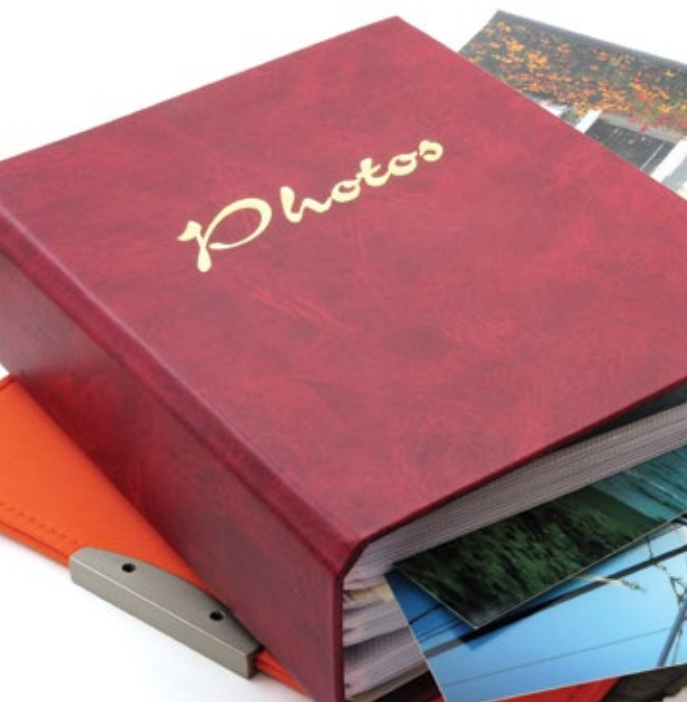
Create a Family Cookbook

Get the recipes for everyone's favorite meals together and put them into one book. The book can later be a resource for what to make during family gatherings, and it can always be updated. You can also teach your grandkids how to make some of the recipes.



Play Board Games

This may seem obvious, but you shouldn't underestimate how much fun a good board or card game can be. Even if your grandkids are used to playing games on digital devices, those can't quite capture the feeling that comes with playing a traditional board game.



Be a "Grand" with a Plan

We're not kid-ding! Being prepared helps create a smoother experience for everyone. Check out these tips to get prepped for when young visitors come to stay at your home.

Safety

- Close off, remove, or supervise home hazards (gym equipment, cords, plugs and outlets, breakables, wobbly furniture)
- Childproof cabinets or drawers containing toxic chemicals and medicine
- Remove easy access to choking hazards like decorative items, hard candies, coins, and buttons
- Have the right car seat or booster seat if young children will be riding in your vehicle
- Store numbers for the pediatrician, poison control, and neighbors who could help if you needed something quickly

Supplies

- Backpacks or bags for carrying extra items on outings
- First-aid: bandages, antiseptic spray, burn salve, ice packs, bug spray, calamine lotion
- Medicines: children's acetaminophen, ibuprofen, and cough and allergy medicines
- Nightlights
- Table or free-standing fans
- Favorite snacks and drinks
- Blankets and pillows
- Paper supplies: plates, bowls, plasticware, towels, toilet and facial tissue
- Toothbrushes and toothpaste

ILLUMINATING THE PATH FORWARD FOR SENIORS

BY ALICIA CHRASTIL



We live in an era where information is abundant but often muddled by misinformation and half-truths. Seniors who have witnessed the evolution of communication from a simpler time find themselves facing a challenging dilemma. Every decision, from healthcare choices to financial planning and lifestyle adjustments, requires sifting through a barrage of conflicting data.

Nebraska Savvy Seniors Empowerment Seminars have emerged as a guiding light. They provide invaluable, unbiased insights and empower seniors to cut through the chatter, discern the truth, gather knowledge, and make informed decisions.

Picture seniors gathering in a comfortable space, engaging in meaningful discussions, and gaining insights from expert speakers who bring decades of experience to the table. In a world where constant information bombardment can lead to confusion and anxiety, these seminars stand as a beacon of clarity and empowerment. They provide free access to vital information, foster connections among seniors, and address their unique needs and concerns, changing the lives of seniors in Nebraska and beyond. From healthcare options to financial planning, from social engagement to lifestyle transitions, the seminars delve into the core matters that concern seniors in today's world.

Nebraska Savvy Seniors Empowerment Seminars help you confidently make decisions that lead to an exciting, fulfilled, and enriched chapter of life. These free seminars are sponsored by local professionals and are held the first Wednesday of each month.

Contact Alicia Chrastil at 402-499-8147 for more information.

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