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## Welcome to North Iowa!



On behalf of the Jane Fischer & Associates Team, I would like to extend a warm welcome to you and your family! North Iowa is where we work, live, and play; and we truly believe it is the best place to call home.

This relocation guide provides incredibly useful information about Mason City and the surrounding communities, and we are proud to support the Chamber's Community Concierge program.

After you have looked through these pages, we hope you will turn to us to begin the search for your new home.

The Jane Fischer & Associates team offers unparalleled service to all clients in the Mason City, Clear Lake, and North Iowa area. Your complete satisfaction with our service and representation is our number one priority.



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# Welcome to North Iowa!

On behalf of the Chamber of Commerce, I'd like to welcome you to North Iowa! I may be biased, but between the recreational opportunities, internationally-renowned architecture, and cultural and musical heritage, I believe our region is an exceptional place to call home.

Mason City and Clear Lake share an impressive list of architecture, art, and events that have influenced America. Frank Lloyd Wright chose Mason City as the site of the Historic Park Inn, which is the last remaining hotel in the world designed by the great architect, and his influence is seen throughout the community. It was here that composer Meredith Willson formed his love for music, leading him to write "The Music Man" as a valentine to his hometown. Musician Don McLean penned "American Pie" as a tribute to the artists (Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens, JP "The Big Bopper" Richardson) who played their final concert at The Surf Ballroom in Clear Lake... although, despite the lyrics, the music is still very much alive at The Surf.



These are just some of the reasons you'll often find Mason City and Clear Lake winning international praise. Mason City was recognized by the American Planning Association (APA) as one of the "Great Places in America," and Conde Nast Traveler calls us one of the world's "Best Cities for Architecture." Clear Lake is proud to be one of USA Today's "Great American Beaches."

North Iowa's rich history and culture intertwines with a forward-thinking business community. Fortune 500 companies operate alongside century-old family-owned stores and restaurants. We have made major investments in our parks, bike trails, and public art. Residents enjoy family-friendly neighborhoods, recreational fun, access to top-rated healthcare facilities, and quality schools.

We look forward to having you join our progressive, thriving community. Welcome home!

Colleen Frein is the President & CEO of the Chamber of Commerce in Mason City.

## New to North Iowa Relocation Guide 2024-25

This publication was created by the Mason City Chamber of Commerce  
9 N Federal Ave | Mason City, IA 50401 | 641-423-5724 | [chamber@masoncityia.com](mailto:chamber@masoncityia.com) | [www.masoncityia.com](http://www.masoncityia.com)

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# Calling North Iowa Home

By Allyson Krull

I love to travel. If you would have told me I would get to pursue this passion living in small town Iowa, I might not have believed you, but it is exactly what I'm doing. Through my work with the Chamber, I've led groups to China, Germany, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Egypt, Croatia, and Peru. All are unique and amazing (for me, the more exotic, the better!). But, at the end of the day, there is no place I'd rather reside than North Iowa.



Here's what I love most about calling North Iowa home:

## **SMALL TOWN LIVING WITH BIG CITY AMENITIES.**

With just over 28,000 residents, most would consider Mason City a small town. Commutes are short, people are friendly, and neighborhood potlucks are plentiful. At the same time, it serves as the 12-county regional hub, making it the largest city in an 80-mile radius. We have all the essentials to living well: top-notch healthcare, big box retail, incredible dining establishments, and entertainment (did I mention traveling Broadway shows?!). You can live big here in small town Iowa.

## **YOUR BUCK GOES FURTHER HERE.**

Rural living has its perks. In North Iowa, the cost of living is low compared to the rest of the country, which means after those essential expenses such as groceries, transportation, and housing, you can afford to send the kids to piano lessons or indulge in an impromptu night out on the town. You can live a similar lifestyle to those in larger cities, but at a lower cost.

## **PASSION IN HISTORY.**

You won't get far in our town without noticing the effects of famous architect Frank Lloyd Wright and composer Meredith Willson. Mason City is home to the beautiful Historic Park Inn, the only remaining Wright-designed hotel in the world – a must-see for architecture lovers. Native son Meredith Willson also left his mark in Mason City, and a tribute to his legacy can be found at The Music Man Square, a museum and home of the first ever Grammy award. North Iowans embrace our musical and architectural roots, and you'll see reminders proudly displayed around our community.

## **BUSINESS MATTERS.**

North Iowa is home to several Fortune 500 companies including Kraft Heinz, Cargill, Smithfield, and McKesson, along with many small businesses and entrepreneurial start-ups. Business is strong both locally and on a global scale, and nothing says community like the strong support our residents have for small family businesses. North Iowa is also home of the 2022 ACCE Chamber of the Year...and we're pretty proud of that!

## **EDUCATION IS IMPORTANT.**

Excellent private and public school options are available for children in North Iowa. Test scores consistently rank high among other states and our graduation rate is high. Mason City is also home to North Iowa Area Community College, ranked in the top 10 percent of community colleges across the nation.

## **GET ANYWHERE FROM HERE.**

North Iowa is beautiful – year-round. We have lakes, hills, bike trails, prairies...and activities for every season. While we feel you'd never need to leave, if you're up for a weekend getaway, you can get there from here. I like to travel, remember? Our regional airport has daily service to Chicago, connecting you to flights worldwide. We are also located right between Des Moines, IA and Minneapolis, MN (about 2 hours in either direction) if you're looking for a quick day trip to a larger city.

## **THAT AT-HOME FEELING.**

Sometimes it just boils down to a feeling. In an effort for all newcomers to feel at home, the Chamber has launched the North Iowa Navigator program. This group of community champions are here, waiting to welcome you to our community. We love it here and want to share our passion and knowledge about North Iowa with you.

As I prep for my next big adventure to learn about new people, cultures, landscapes, and climates, I humbly remember why I love home so much. North Iowa has it all...right here in the middle of everywhere.

Allyson Krull oversees the Community Concierge program for the Chamber of Commerce.

# Welcome to North Iowa!



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*Kelly Rush*

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Kelly has lived in North Iowa all his life and has been a Home Loan Expert for over 25 years.



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*Abe Hackman*

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641-380-3347

Abe is an avid cyclist who is seen on many of the NI bike trails. He has been a Home Loan Expert for over 20 years.



SCAN ME



*Apply Online*

Whether you're looking to buy or build your home, we can help. Scan the QR code or visit myfcb.bank to get started.



SCAN ME

A woman with blonde hair and sunglasses is sitting on a lawn, smiling and talking to two young girls. One girl is wearing a pink and blue patterned shirt and denim overalls, and the other is wearing a pink and blue patterned shirt and pants. They are all sitting on a green lawn. In the background, there are other people sitting on lawn chairs, including a woman in a blue shirt and sunglasses. The scene is outdoors and appears to be a family-friendly event.

# *Living Here*

It's easy to see why so many people are choosing to call North Iowa home. With a low crime rate, excellent schools, affordable housing, access to quality healthcare, plenty of job opportunities, and unique culture, Mason City and Greater North Iowa offer a lifestyle many families are seeking.



# *Housing*

When it comes to finding the right home, new residents may consider whether they want to live “in town” (Mason City) or in one of the surrounding small communities. Whichever you choose, you’ll find people take a lot of pride in their homes and neighborhoods. Yards are well-maintained, people are welcoming, and most housing is owner-occupied.

While the area boasts several exquisite residential developments for discerning buyers, a nice variety of properties is available in all price ranges. According to the Mason City Multiple Listing Service, the average sale price for a home is \$184,204, and the average days on market (DOM) is 71 days.\*

\*Statistics provided by the Mason City Multiple Listing Service Paragon sales report generated 2/15/2024 at 4:22 PM. Data represents single family residential listings reported sold within Mason City for the term of 1/1/2023 to 12/31/2023. Information provided is deemed reliable but not guaranteed.

# *It Pays to Work With a Realtor*

By Amber Scholl, Executive Officer of the Greater Mason City Board of REALTORS & Mason City Multiple Listing Service

Housing inventory in North Iowa continues to follow national supply and demand trends. Days on market are showing steady decreases meaning homes are continuing to sell at a rapid pace. Now more than ever, buyers need to enlist the help of a qualified real estate professional to help navigate the challenges of the homebuying process.

If you're interested in relocating to Mason City or surrounding communities, we recommend doing some homework prior to starting your homebuying journey.

Know **HOW MUCH** you can spend.

- Prepare a budget. Calculate your income and expected expenses.
- Do you know much you can afford to spend on monthly mortgage payments, insurance, and property maintenance?



Visit with a mortgage lender to get pre-approved.

- A **PRE-APPROVAL LETTER** is the best way to show that you are ready, willing, and financially able to purchase a home.

Know **WHAT** you want to buy.

- Make a list of the features you want in your home, as well as the style/type of home you prefer, number of bedrooms, bathrooms, garage stalls, etc.

Know **WHERE** you want to live.

- Is it important to you to live near your workplace for easy commuting?
- Do you want to be near parks and trails, grocery stores, shopping centers, or do you prefer a peaceful country-like setting outside of town?

Enlist a **REALTOR®** to help with your home search.

- Obtain **PROFESSIONAL** representation!
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Housing affordability, lack of available inventory, and promoting and protecting the rights of property owners to buy, sell, and own real estate in Iowa continues to be at the forefront of our legislative priorities. Our advocacy efforts at local, state, and national levels ensure we will continue to provide the best possible service to our clients and customers.

When you work with a member of the Greater Mason City Board of REALTORS® you're working with a REALTOR®, a licensed real estate professional belonging to the National Association of REALTORS®, adhering to a strict Code of Ethics.

Contact a REALTOR® member of the Greater Mason City Board of REALTORS® & Mason City Multiple Listing Service today. GMCBOR offers nearly 100 licensed real estate professionals specializing in various fields of business including: residential sales, commercial, farm acreages, lots/land, vacation homes, property management and more, or choose to work with someone from our growing list of affiliated business partners who provide services and products to suit all of your real estate related needs.

\*REALTOR® is a federally registered collective membership mark which identifies a real estate professional who is member of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® and subscribes to its strict Code of Ethics.

# Neighborhoods

## MASON CITY

### Downtown

Want to live in the center of it all? From modern apartments and condos to renovated lofts, there are many choices for leasing in the heart of downtown Mason City. Just outside the downtown core, you will find beautiful, historic homes - including the famous Rock Glen neighborhood.

### Northeast

With proximity to East Park, Highland Park Golf Course, and the beautiful Winnebago River, the neighborhoods in Northeast Mason City are perfect for families. The Highland area is nestled around Harding Elementary School. Asbury Farm and Eastbrooke are residential communities with opportunities to build new or purchase an established home, and Mason City High School is just a stone's throw away!

### Northwest

Historic homes, lakeside views, and proximity to stores and restaurants are just some of the benefits of living in Northwest Mason City. Located just north of MercyOne North Iowa Medical Center, the Forest Park neighborhood features exquisitely kept turn-of-the-century homes. Move into a newly built home in the high-end Pebble Creek or Sunset Ridge developments, or enjoy your morning coffee overlooking the water in a home along Lakeview Drive. The historic North End is an established neighborhood with excellent starter homes for young families.

### Southeast

Featuring quiet family neighborhoods, many residents choose to live in Southeast Mason City. Young families will enjoy low home prices and proximity to schools. The Stone Pillar neighborhood offers the chance to purchase an updated home or build a new one that suits your needs.

### Southwest

Southwest Mason City offers a wide variety of sought-after neighborhoods. You'll find affordable family homes near the Mason City YMCA and Frederick Hanford Park. The Briarstone neighborhood offers lakeside living in the city, and new condos offer flexible lease lengths. Like to hit the links after work? The Fairways subdivision is located just east of the Legacy Golf Course and offers top-notch homes and twin homes for the discerning buyer.

## CLEAR LAKE

Ten miles west of Mason City, Clear Lake offers a mix of large family homes, lakefront properties, vacation cottages, and condos. Most houses are located within walking distance of the lake, and apartments and condos are available downtown. Since it is one of the premier tourist destinations in the Midwest, residents enjoy living like they're on vacation. Main Street is filled with boutiques, antique shops, and quaint restaurants; and Central Park is the best place to enjoy the numerous community celebrations, sailboat regattas, or a concert at the Band Shell.

## GREATER NORTH IOWA

Just outside Mason City, communities like Garner, Nora Springs, Northwood, and Sheffield give residents the perks of small-town life with a short commute to city amenities. Many of our area's largest employers are located in these communities, including Diamond Jo Casino (Northwood) and Sukup Manufacturing (Sheffield). These towns are within a 30-minute drive to Mason City, and offer a variety of housing options - from starter homes to new developments overlooking beautiful golf courses. While small towns across the nation are slowly dying, these communities are thriving! Growing Main Streets, employment opportunities, and new housing developments are just some of the reasons why many choose to make their home in greater North Iowa.



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# Small Town Charm

By Amy Berding

In a world where cities often symbolize progress, small towns, like Mason City and Plymouth, quietly hold onto something irreplaceable.... charm.

What makes these small towns in North Iowa so charming you might ask? Well, here are JUST A few of my top reasons.

**Sense of Community:** Small towns foster tight-knit communities where neighbors know each other by name. There's a sense of belonging and support that's harder to find in larger, more anonymous settings. Whether it's lending a helping hand during tough times or celebrating together during festivals, the community bond is a trait that cannot go unmentioned.

**Simplicity and Slow Pace:** Life in a small town moves at a gentler pace. There's less hustle and bustle, allowing residents to savor the simple joys of life. From leisurely strolls down main street to spending evenings on front porches, small towns encourage people to appreciate the moment and prioritize relationships over rush.

**Tight-Knit Social Networks:** In small towns, social networks extend far beyond immediate family and friends. Everyone seems to know everyone else, creating a web of connections that provides both support and a sense of security. Whether it's borrowing a cup of sugar from a neighbor or attending community events, these social ties enrich daily life.

**Opportunities for Meaningful Contribution:** In small towns, individuals have the opportunity to make a tangible impact on their community. This could mean volunteering at the local school, joining a civic organization, or participating in town hall meetings. Residents can actively contribute to shaping the future of their hometown.

**Escape from Urban Stressors:** For many, small towns offer an escape from the stress and pressures of the busy city lifestyle. With less traffic, pollution, and noise, residents can enjoy a quieter, more peaceful existence. It's a chance to step off the treadmill of city living and reconnect with what truly matters.

In essence, the appeal of small towns lies in their ability to offer a simpler, more connected way of life. While they may lack the glitz and glamour of big cities, small towns possess a timeless charm that continues to captivate hearts and inspire a sense of belonging.

Amy Berding is the mayor of Plymouth, a small North Iowa town.





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# *Health & Well-Being*

Healthy living is important to North Iowans. We have placed a special emphasis on initiatives to encourage families to live their healthiest, happiest lives. This commitment to health can be seen in the wealth of healthcare resources, access to recreational opportunities, and unique programs to teach our youth about healthy living.

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## *Health Care*

### MercyOne North Iowa Medical Center

North Iowa residents enjoy the technology, services and resources of a major modern medical center within a family atmosphere of a hometown health care center. The area's largest healthcare service, MercyOne North Iowa Medical Center, is consistently recognized on both a state and national level for excellence in care. MercyOne Family Clinics are located across North Iowa, offering convenient access to care. MercyOne North Iowa is also home to many specialty centers, including the MercyOne Cancer Center, Women's Health Center, and Dermatology Care. The area is extremely privileged to have a health care organization with this size, stature and breadth of medical specialties and capabilities.



## Mason City Clinic

Mason City Clinic is an organization of highly-trained specialists dedicated to providing the latest in medical and surgical care, while working hand-in-hand with local and regional health partners. The clinic's highly-credentialed physicians specialize in numerous surgical fields, neurology, psychiatry, and cardiology. Mason City Clinic is conveniently located on MercyOne North Iowa's East Campus, and specialists also drive across North Iowa to provide care in regional facilities.

## Additional Healthcare Services

As the business hub for the region, Mason City is home to a wide-range of health care professionals. Located on the MercyOne North Iowa East Campus, the Mason City Surgery Center offers multi-specialty surgical needs. Chiropractors, optometrists, dentists and therapists are readily available and accepting new patients. Community Health Center of Mason City offers medical, dental, and behavioral care for all, regardless of insurance or financial status.



*Welcome to North Iowa!*  
*¡Bienvenido a North Iowa!*



*Dr. Noemi Cruz-Orcutt, DDS*

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Mint Springs Dentistry provides complete dental care for the whole family; including general, cosmetic, and preventative dentistry. Their expertise ranges from porcelain veneers to dentures, dental implants, crowns and bridges. Dr. Cruz-Orcutt also has advanced training on TMJ treatment. New patients are always welcome!

La Dra. Cruz-Orcutt es una dentista que habla Español aquí en Mason City y en North Iowa. ¡Esperamos poder atenderte!

*Your best life. Our one purpose.*

By Chad Boore

At MercyOne, health care is more than just a doctor's visit or a place to go when you're in need of medical attention. Our Mission is based on improving the health of our communities – that means not only caring for you when you are sick but also partnering with you to keep you well.

MercyOne North Iowa Medical Center and MercyOne New Hampton Medical Center serve most of the North Iowa region, but we're part of a larger, integrated system of hospitals, clinics and other care facilities across the state of Iowa. Here in North Iowa, we have more than 3,000 colleagues, including a medical staff of over 400 physicians and allied health professionals, making MercyOne North Iowa Medical Center the largest employer in the region.



Additional services provided under our banner include MercyOne Radiologic Technology Program, MercyOne North Iowa Foundation, MercyOne Cardiology, Internal Medicine, Family Medicine, and Pharmacy Residency and Fellowship Programs.

Extending our reach, MercyOne also provides management and support services to six affiliate hospitals in the region. Working collaboratively to provide personalized care and lower costs, these facilities help provide options and convenience to our surrounding communities:

- Franklin General Hospital
- Hancock County Health System
- Hansen Family Hospital
- Kossuth Regional Health Center
- Mitchell County Regional Health Center
- Palo Alto County Health System

The MercyOne Medical Group leads the way to improving health care for nearly 42 million patients each year across the state of Iowa and beyond. In North Iowa, our clinics are made up of more than 25 primary care, pediatric, internal medicine and specialty clinics.

Our Mission of care in Iowa has been consistent for well over 100 years. We, MercyOne, serve together in the spirit of the Gospel as a compassionate and transforming healing presence within Mason City, North Iowa and all our communities in Iowa. It's our privilege and purpose to serve you.

Chad Boore is the Market COO, MercyOne North Iowa Medical Center



# Healthy Living

Healthy living is a priority for North Iowans. Communities and businesses have invested time and funding into programs that will make positive health and well-being changes in the lives of our residents. Mason City's efforts in this began in 2012, when it was named one of the initial Blue Zones Project demonstration communities. After successfully developing a blueprint for making permanent environmental, social, and policy changes that would help people lead longer, healthier, happier lives, the city achieved Blue Zones Community Certification.

Now, more than a decade later, the community and its employers continue to invest in health and well-being. For example, POET Biorefining-Hanlontown added a fitness facility to its plant, Sukup Manufacturing has an on-site clinic for its employees, and Metalcraft brings in a body movement specialist to lead exercises and provide massages. Not only do these efforts improve the employee's health and well-being, they often translate into improved health for the worker's family.



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# *Making Connections*

You move to a community for new opportunities. You stay because of the connections you make. North Iowans understand the importance of having a strong network of friends and colleagues. While it can be intimidating to begin the process, these clubs, organizations, and places of worship are ready to invite you in and help you get engaged.

# Service Clubs/Organizations

## *The Joy of Giving Back* By Emily Adams

Mason City's service clubs offer a welcoming environment to all who wish to join. While each club has a unique identity, participating in any of these groups is an excellent way to network, make new friends, and give back to the community. We recommend visiting two or more clubs to see which is the right fit for you!

### **EXCHANGE**

Exchange Club of Mason City  
tim@schupickcpas.com  
www.nationalexchangeclub.org

### **KIWANIS**

Mason City Noon Kiwanis  
mckiwanisnoon@gmail.com  
(641) 424-2281

River City Morning Kiwanis  
rivercitykiwanispresident@gmail.com  
(515) 996-5437  
www.rivercitykiwanisclub.com

### **LIONS**

Mason City Lions Club  
dennis.reidel@midwestroofingcompany.com  
(641) 424-4114  
www.iowalions.org/masoncitynoon

### **ROTARY**

Mason City Noon Rotary Club  
rotarytreasurer@gmail.com  
(641) 210-9876

Mason City Sunrise Rotary  
tscoffey67@gmail.com  
(641) 430-3836  
www.masoncitysunriserotary.org

Volunteering is a powerful force that transforms the lives of those who witness it while enriching the lives of the volunteers themselves. At its core, taking the step to volunteer is an act of selflessness, a commitment to making a positive investment in the community around us, fostering a sense of unity and shared responsibility.



Whether it's helping the elderly, supporting education initiatives, or participating in various projects, we often become the lifeline of North Iowa. Choosing to contribute time, skills, and passion, the dedication of our volunteers has certainly created a ripple effect, inspiring others to join the collective effort.

Consider our 2020 pandemic. In times of crisis, our volunteers played a pivotal role in providing relief and rebuilding our community in both small and significant ways. Our volunteering never wavered; in fact, it highlighted the resilience of our citizens to not only rebuild...but to do so together. In such a time of uncertainty, it was inspiring to see the strength that emerges when we all unite for the greater good. I'd venture to say that volunteerism became a beacon of hope, supporting our community during the pandemic and continuing for many years to follow.

For me, the benefits of volunteering have extended far beyond the immediate impact on North Iowa. I find a sense of purpose and fulfillment, while gaining valuable experiences and skills along the way. Through my volunteerism, I've been rewarded by creating a network of support, camaraderie, and incredible, long-lasting friendships.

Communities like ours face various challenges every day. However, for North Iowa, the spirit of volunteering remains a driving force for positive change that has the ability to transcend cultural, economic, and social barriers. We are reminded daily that collective action, no matter how small, can create an incredible impact, and I feel incredibly lucky to be a part of it.

Emily Adams is a North Iowa Navigator and the Office Manager for the Dental Center of North Iowa.

# Volunteer Opportunities

You'll quickly learn, North Iowans are servant-leaders. There is no shortage of ways to help your new neighbors, and the NIACC Volunteer Center is one way to identify the right volunteer opportunities for your time and interests. Our schools celebrate young people who give back through the "Silver Cord" program, recognizing students who volunteer for at least 160 hours during their four-year high school career. Listed are some of the Chamber member organizations who would appreciate your help.



43 North Iowa  
john@43northiowa.org | (641) 424-8708  
www.43northiowa.org

Alzheimer's Association  
iowa@alz.org | (515) 440-2722  
www.alz.org/iowa

American Cancer Society  
tina.coleman@cancer.org | (515) 341-3564  
www.cancer.org

Boy Scouts of America-Winnebago Council  
jim.madison@scouting.org | (641) 424-2962  
www.winnebagobsa.org

Central Gardens of North Iowa  
info@centralgardensnorthiowa.com | (641) 357-0700  
www.centralgardensnorthiowa.com

Cerro Gordo Clean Energy District  
cerrogordocleanenergydistrict@gmail.com | (515) 724-2255  
www.cerrogordo.energydistrict.org

Cerro Gordo County Community Foundation  
johndrury91@gmail.com | (641) 330-6851  
www.cfneia.org/affiliates/cerrogordocounty

Cerro Gordo County Farm Bureau  
cerrogordo.county@ifbf.org | (641) 423-5824  
www.iowafarmbureau.com

Charles H. MacNider Art Museum  
macniderinformation@masoncity.net | (641) 421-3666  
www.macniderart.org

Charlie Brown Preschool and Child Care  
director@charliebrownpreschools.com | (641) 424-0065  
www.charliebrownpreschools.com

Child & Adult Care Food Program  
director@charliebrownpreschools.com | (641) 424-0065  
www.charliebrowncildcare.com

Child Care Resource & Referral  
childcare@episervice.org | (319) 231-9405  
www.iowaccrr.org

Clear Lake Arts Center  
info@clearlakeartscenter.org | (641) 357-1998  
www.clearlakeartscenter.org

Community Health Center of Mason City  
(641) 450-0601  
www.chcfd.com

Community Housing Initiatives  
aliciar@chihousing.com | (712) 262-5965  
www.chihousing.com

Community Kitchen of North Iowa, Inc.  
mcitymeals@gmail.com | (641) 424-2316  
www.communitykitchennia.com

Comprehensive Systems, Inc.  
jackbrown@comprehensivesystems.org | (641) 423-2663  
www.comprehensivesystems.org

Crisis Intervention Service  
cis@CISHELPS.org | (641) 423-0490  
www.cishelps.org

Exchange Club of Mason City  
tim@schupickcpas.com  
www.nationalexchangeclub.org

Friends of the 457  
dandawilson@netconx.net | (641) 423-5328  
www.friendsofthe457.org

Friends of the Family  
erin@fofia.org | (319) 234-0232  
www.fofia.org

Goodwill of the Great Plains  
mcm@goodwillgreatplains.org | (641) 424-8338  
www.goodwillgreatplains.org

Greater Iowa Youth For Christ  
dschuknecht@giyfc.org | (641) 424-9440  
www.greateriowa.yfc.net

Habitat for Humanity of North Central Iowa/Habitat  
ReStore  
melissa@habitatnci.org | (641) 424-8978  
www.habitatnci.org

Healthy Harvest of North Iowa  
info@healthyharvestni.com | (515) 337-2445  
www.healthyharvestni.com

Humane Society of North Iowa  
hsni@hsni.org | (641) 423-6241  
www.hsni.org

Iowa State University Extension  
xcerrogordo@iastate.edu | (641) 423-0844  
www.extension.iastate.edu/cerrogordo

KCMR-FM Inspiration 97.9FM  
kcmr@kcmrfm.com | (641) 424-9300  
www.kcmrfm.com

Kinney Pioneer Museum  
kinneypioneermuseum@yahoo.com | (641) 423-1258  
www.kinneypioneermuseum.org

League of Women Voters North Iowa  
jrramaeker@gmail.com | (641) 420-4904  
www.LWVNI.org

LifeServe Blood Center  
Shay.Willis@lifeservebloodcenter.org | (800) 287-4903  
www.lifeservebloodcenter.org

MAC Midwest Autism Center  
sara.lindquist@mnautism.org | (952) 767-4200  
www.mnautism.org

Main Street Mason City  
director@mainstreetmasoncity.com | (641) 494-0003  
www.mainstreetmasoncity.com

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lifeservebloodcenter.org | 800.287.4903 | lifeserve.info/schedule

Mason City Earth Day  
missy.nicholson@gmail.com | (641) 512-5415

Mason City Family YMCA  
thertzelt@masoncityymca.org | (641) 422-5999  
www.masoncityymca.org

Mason City Lions Club  
dennis.reidel@midwestroofingcompany.com | (641) 424-4114  
www.iowalions.org/masoncitynoon

Mason City Noon Kiwanis  
mckiwanisnoon@gmail.com | (641) 424-2281

Mason City Noon Rotary Club  
rotarytreasurer@gmail.com | (641) 210-9876

Mason City Sunrise Rotary  
tscoffey67@gmail.com | (641) 430-3836  
www.masoncitysunriserotary.org

Mason City Youth Hockey Fundraiser  
mchockeygolfouting@gmail.com | (641)-812-2503

Mollie's Mission  
molliesmission@yahoo.com | (515) 650-3139  
www.molliesmission.org

Mosaic  
(641) 585-3050  
www.mosaicinfo.org

North Iowa Community Action Organization  
cdavis@nicao-online.org | (641) 423-8993  
www.nicao-online.org

North Iowa Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA)  
crystal.engstrom@dia.iowa.gov | (641) 421-3080  
www.childadvocacy.iowa.gov

North Iowa Events Center  
office@northiowafair.org | (641) 423-3811  
www.northiowaeventscenter.org

North Iowa Landlord Association  
xandrew@msn.com | (641) 512-0485  
www.northiowalandlords.com

North Iowa Youth Center  
rkbmedic38@yahoo.com | (641) 420-6609  
www.niyouthcenter.com

One Vision  
(641) 357-5277  
www.onevision.org



# ReStore

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Peace Center of North Iowa  
revleannecdm@gmail.com

River City Morning Kiwanis  
rivercitykiwanispresident@gmail.com | (515) 996-5437  
www.rivercitykiwanisclub.com

River City Society for Historic Preservation  
info@stockmanhouse.org | (641) 423-1923  
www.stockmanhouse.org

Salvation Army  
geffory.crowell@usc.salvationarmy.org | (641) 424-4031  
www.centralusa.salvationarmy.org/western/MasonCity

United to Serve with Passion and Purpose  
brad.b@cabincoffee.net | (641) 425-0431  
www.unitedtoserve.org

United Way of North Central Iowa  
info@unitedwaynci.org | (641) 423-1774  
www.unitedwaynci.org

Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW Post 733)  
ccfoell@gmail.com | (641) 423-2020

Wright on the Park, Inc.  
director@wrightonthepark.org | (641) 423-0689  
www.wrightonthepark.org

and make straight paths for  
that what is lame may not  
but rather be healed.

*Worship*

# Worship

Faith is an important part of life for the majority of North lowans. According to the Pew Research Center, 77% of lowans consider themselves Christian – which is reflected in the number of churches in the region. But there is growing diversity in the worship landscape. North lowa is home to people of Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, and Hindu faiths. Whatever faith you subscribe to, attending worship services can provide another way to grow your social circle and strengthen your family bond.

Experts suggest using your relocation as an opportunity to evaluate what is truly important to you in a new place of worship. Relevant Magazine recommends spending about 80% of your time church-shopping at places that fall within your traditional values, and 20% of your time experimenting. They also recommend visiting a church outside of regular worship hours, perhaps attending a small group or volunteer opportunity. This will help you find the right setting with the right people for you.



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641-423-0536 • TRINITY-MC.ORG



The following churches are members of the Chamber of Commerce and welcome your participation:

Calvary Chapel Mason City  
adamt@calvarymasoncity.com | (641) 781-1615  
www.calvarymasoncity.com

First Baptist Church  
secretaryfbcmc@gmail.com | (641) 424-3481

First Congregational United Church of Christ  
firstchurchinmc@gmail.com | (641) 423-0105  
www.firstchurchinmc.org

First Covenant Church  
office@firstcovenantchurch.com | (641) 423-6359  
www.firstcovenantchurch.com

First Presbyterian Church  
firstpresbymc@gmail.com | (641) 424-4273  
www.fpc-mc.com

First United Methodist Church  
(641) 423-4905  
www.firstunitedmethodistchurchmc.org

Grace United Methodist Church  
pastorcraig@mcwesley.org | (641) 423-5727  
www.mcgumchurch.org

Holy Transfiguration Orthodox Christian Church  
orthodoxchurch.masoncity@gmail.com | (641) 423-6238  
www.holytransfiguration.ia.goarch.org

Praise Community Church  
office@praisecc.org | (641) 421-1701  
www.praisecc.org

River City Church  
info@rivercitychurch.co | (641) 903-5519  
www.rivercitychurch.co

Rolling Acres Christian Reformed Church  
racrcsec@msn.com | (641) 424-1369  
www.rollingacresrc.org

Salvation Army  
geffory.crowell@usc.salvationarmy.org | (641) 424-4031  
www.centralusa.salvationarmy.org/western/MasonCity

St. Paul Lutheran Church  
(641) 423-7749  
www.stpaulmc.com

St. James Lutheran Church  
stjamesofficemc@gmail.com | (641) 423-4702  
www.stjamesmc.org

St. John's Episcopal Church  
sjecmc@gmail.com | (641) 424-1300  
www.stjohnsmasoncity.org

Touched by Grace  
tbgracemc@gmail.com | (641) 530-3718  
www.vicfmc.org

Trinity Lutheran Church  
pam.fike@trinity-mc.org | (641) 423-0536  
www.trinity-mc.org

## *The Power of Healthy Relationships in Mason City*

By Dan Schuknecht

In the fast-paced world of life, with so many things competing for our time and attention, the significance of building healthy relationships cannot be overstated. These relationships form the foundation of a thriving community, creating a positive ripple effect that extends beyond individual interactions. When we intentionally notice and love others well, we consistently find that we are better together.

In a world where we can be quick to speak and slow to listen, I believe it's crucial to recognize the importance of our relationship with God. Maintaining a deep spiritual foundation brings a sense of purpose and identity. Integrating faith into our relationships adds a deeper sense of belonging which helps us grow in compassion and empathy for others.

Taking time to listen and love each other is key in this journey of building strong connections, especially if you are new to the community. In a world filled with noise, the simple act of attentive listening and expressing care can bridge gaps and strengthen bonds that help our community to thrive.

As you navigate life in Mason City, take some time to evaluate the opportunities in this guide to prioritize the value of genuine relationships, because we are better together!

Dan Schuknecht is the Regional Director for Greater Iowa Youth for Christ.





# *Active Seniors*

North Iowa is a great place to retire! With access to quality healthcare, a wide variety of living options, and opportunities for social interaction, it's easy to see why so many people choose to spend their "golden years" in our area.

Seniors have the choice of several independent living facilities, assisted-living complexes, nursing homes and adult day care/health facilities. For those wishing to remain at home, the Meals on Wheels program helps seniors maintain good nutritional health without the worry of preparing meals.

When it comes to social interaction, senior centers in Clear Lake, Mason City and Ventura offer a well-rounded calendar of activities each month, and the Mason City Family YMCA has a variety of programs to help sustain your health and meet new people!

## LIVING/CARE FACILITIES

Country Meadow Place  
director@countrymeadowplace.com | (641) 423-7722  
www.countrymeadowplace.com

Good Shepherd Health Center  
ian@goodshepmc.org | (641) 424-1740  
www.goodshepherdhealthcenter.org

Heritage Care & Rehabilitation Center  
jfisher@abcmcorp.com | (641) 423-2121  
www.abcmcorp.com

Homestead Assisted Living  
(641) 423-4809  
www.homestead-assistedliving.com

IOOF Home & Community Therapy Center  
info@ioofhome.net | (641) 423-0428  
www.ioofhome.com

Manly Specialty Care  
kgomez@careinitiatives.org | (641) 454-2223  
www.careinitiatives.org

Oakwood Care Center  
kthoe@abcmcorp.com | (641) 357-5244  
www.abcmcorp.com

Pilgrim Place  
carol.sage@rhf.org | (641) 423-1215  
www.rhf.org/location/pilgrim-place

TimberCrest at Glen Oaks Community  
kboyd@onevision.org | (641) 355-1203  
www.glenoakscommunity.org

## SENIOR CENTER

Mason City Senior Activity Center  
seniorcentermc@yahoo.com | (641) 423-1502

## SENIOR ASSISTANCE

Elderbridge Agency on Aging  
elderbridge@elderbridge.org | (641) 424-0678  
www.elderbridge.org



Glen Oaks Community is designed for Active, 55+ adults in beautiful Clear Lake. Glen Oaks offers exceptional modern amenities including an indoor heated swimming pool, hot tub, fitness center, gymnasium, club room, community center, theater, and walking trails.



Kimberly Boyd, Property Manager  
200 Glen Oaks Drive, Clear Lake, IA 50428  
641-355-1203 | kboyd@onevision.org  
www.glenoakscommunity.org

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# *Working Here*

New career opportunities are waiting for you in North Iowa. Also waiting for you? A short commute time, financial institutions that treat you like family, and resources for entrepreneurs who want to launch or grow their business. Read on to find where you fit in the North Iowa economy.



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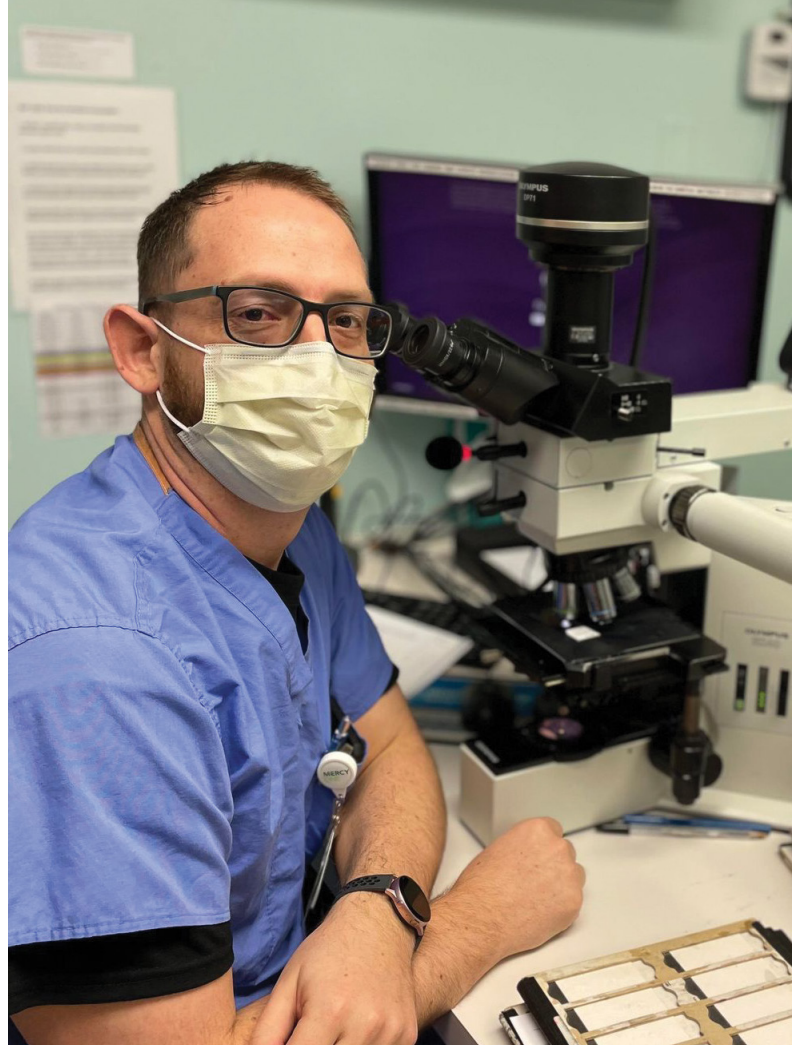
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## *Career Opportunities*

Chances are, employment opportunities are one of, if not the, top reasons for a move to North Iowa. With unemployment well below the national average, jobs are plentiful in the region. This means you'll quickly find the answer to the all-important question, "Where am I going to work?"

Mason City was founded on cement and brick-and-tile industries. While manufacturing is still the largest employment sector, today, Fortune 500 companies work hand-in-hand with local, family-owned businesses in North Iowa, offering positions at any skill level.

The area's largest employer is MercyOne North Iowa Medical Center. The medical center and its industry partners provide jobs that add over \$314.3 million to the local economy.

Other leading employers include the Mason City Community School District, One Vision, Sukup Manufacturing, Smithfield, Cargill, CURRIES, Masonite Architectural, McKesson Corporation, Woodharbor Cabinetry, Kraft Heinz, and Mason City Clinic. North Iowa is on the leading edge of renewable fuel creation, hosting ethanol plants, a bio-diesel plant and several wind farms. The region is served by two Class I railroads, Union Pacific and Canadian Pacific (DM&E), one short-line railroad (Iowa Traction Railway), and the Manly Terminal rail intermodal.

The Chamber of Commerce is one place to start your employment search. If you know what field you are interested in, you'll have good luck going directly to company websites. You may also turn to one of our employment agencies for guidance. Many of our largest employers use these agencies as their primary hiring tool.



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The Chamber of Commerce is one place to start your employment search. If you know what field you are interested in, you'll have good luck going directly to company websites. You may also turn to one of our employment agencies for guidance. Many of our largest employers use these agencies as their primary hiring tool.

43 North Iowa  
john@43northiowa.org | (641) 424-8708  
www.43northiowa.org

Cor-Tech LLC  
(770) 671-0444  
www.cor-tech.net

Express Employment Professionals  
masoncityia@expresspros.com | (641) 423-5613  
www.expresspros.com/masoncityia

Manpower  
masoncityia@manpower.com | (641) 421-7430  
www.manpower.com

QPS Employment Group  
ian.anderson@qpsemployment.com | (641) 423-1292  
www.qpsemployment.com

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One important consideration in your relocation is, how far will your paycheck go? Mason City participates in the Cost of Living Index to provide you with an accurate comparison between cities. The good news is, our region compares favorably to neighboring communities. When you look at larger metropolitan areas, you'll find your dollar stretches even further.

According to the 2022 Council for Community and Economic Research report, Mason City has a Cost of Living Index of 88.9. By comparison, Manhattan in New York City - the most expensive place to live - has an index of 227.0. The least expensive locale in the study is Harlingen, Texas, with an index of 77.1.

Assuming you are offered a \$75,000 salary in North Iowa, here is what you would need to make in other Midwest communities to live a comparable lifestyle:

Chicago, IL: \$101,500

Ames, IA: \$80,150

Madison, WI: \$86,800

Kansas City, MO: \$80,000

Minneapolis, MN: \$83,500





*Transportation*

## DAILY COMMUTE

One of the best parts about life in North Iowa is the ease of getting from Point A to Point B. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the average commute to work for those living in Cerro Gordo County is less than 15 minutes. If you live or work in Greater North Iowa, state highways connect the majority of surrounding towns with Mason City – meaning your drive to work should take less than 30 minutes.

Mason City Public Transit is open to the general public, including those with disabilities. Buses operate from 6:30AM-6PM, Monday-Friday. For route information, call (641) 421-3600 or visit [www.masoncity.net](http://www.masoncity.net).

Many residents ride their bike to work or school, and our bike route system makes this easy and safe. Rideshare and taxi services are also available.

## REGIONAL TRAVEL

North Iowans can enjoy the perks of a small community, while knowing the amenities of larger cities are a short drive away. Day excursions to the Twin Cities or Des Moines are a breeze - you'll spend just two hours in the car getting to either metro area. Waterloo/Cedar Falls, Ames, and Rochester, MN are even closer.

At the Mason City Municipal Airport (MCW) enjoy daily roundtrip flights to Chicago - a convenient option for business or personal travel. North Iowa Air Service offers accommodations for private flights.

Long distance bus services are available from the Mason City Municipal Airport to Minneapolis, Kansas City, and Des Moines. North Iowa Bus Company operates charter bus services out of Mason City. Call (641) 424-2600 for more information.



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[www.flymcw.com](http://www.flymcw.com)





# Money Management

Moving to a new community often means moving your financial accounts, as well. North Iowa is home to a mix of local banks, national banks, and credit unions, offering a range of choices to suit all needs.

Finding a new bank can be an intimidating part of the relocation process. The American Bankers Association recommends finding answers to the following questions to identify your "banking personality."

- What is your goal in establishing a banking relationship (i.e. to save money, have a checking account, get a loan)?
- How much money can you keep on deposit each month, and how many checks will you write?
- Will you be buying a home or car in the near future?
- What savings products are offered?
- What time of day do you do most of your banking? This may make a difference in whether you want a financial institution located near your home or place of work.
- What electronic banking services would you like to have?

In addition to finding answers to these questions, take a minute to think about how comfortable you feel at the branch. Relationships are important!

The following financial institutions are members of the Chamber of Commerce. We encourage you to explore your options and see which is the best fit for you. Those listed in bold are sponsors of the Community Concierge service.

## **BANKS**

Clear Lake Bank & Trust Co.  
contactus@clearlakebank.com | (641) 423-2457  
www.clearlakebank.com

Farmers State Bank  
jaydenharris@fsbbanks.com | (641) 424-3053  
www.fsbbanks.com

First Citizens Bank  
info@myfcb.bank | (641) 423-1600  
www.myfcb.bank

First Security Bank & Trust  
kschwery@1stsecurity.bank | (800) 272-0159  
www.1stsecurity.bank

NSB Bank  
courtney.smidt@nsbbank.com |(641) 423-7638  
www.nsbbank.com

U.S. Bank  
tiara.schriever@usbank.com | (641) 494-2166  
www.usbank.com

Wells Fargo Bank  
deanne.l.jakoubek@wellsfargo.com | (641) 423-1720  
www.wellsfargo.com

## **CREDIT UNIONS**

CENT Credit Union  
support@centcu.org | (641) 424-2368  
www.centcu.org

Iowa Heartland Credit Union  
cu@iowaheartland.org | (641) 424-5391  
www.iowaheartland.org

North Iowa Community Credit Union  
mjurgens@niccu.com | (641) 424-2281  
www.niccu.com



**Mason City East**  
*451 South Illinois*

**Mason City West**  
*2650 4th St SW*

**1933 - 2023**



## FINANCIAL SERVICES

CFO Systems, LLC  
cmarchand@cfosystemsllc.com | (641) 420-2742  
www.cfosystemsllc.com

Chad Harrison, CPA PLLC  
office@chadharrisoncpa.com | (641) 243-7400  
www.chadharrisoncpa.com

Clear Lake Bank & Trust Co.  
contactus@clearlakebank.com | (641) 423-2457  
www.clearlakebank.com

Edward Jones - David Stine | Holly Johnson  
david.stine@edwardjones.com | (641) 424-0441  
www.edwardjones.com/us-en/financial-advisor/david-stine

Edward Jones - Jason Geving, Financial Advisor  
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www.edwardjones.com

Edward Jones - Matt Sonquist, Financial Advisor  
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www.edwardjones.com/us-en/financial-advisor/matt-sonquist

Edward Jones - Missy Freund, Financial Advisor  
missy.freund@edwardjones.com | (641) 903-2530  
www.edwardjones.com/us-en/financial-advisor/missy-freund

Edward Jones - Sara Carlsson, CFP  
jenny.verstegen@edwardjones.com | (641) 423-2093  
www.edwardjones.com/us-en/financial-advisor/sara-carlsson

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amanda.kaufman@fairwaymc.com | (641) 430-9343  
www.home.com

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Farm Credit Services of America  
(641) 423-2862  
www.fcsamerica.com

Farmers State Bank  
jaydenharris@fsbbanks.com | (641) 424-3053  
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james\_paape@glic.com | (641) 420-1072  
www.financialarch.net

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# Business Resources

## Chamber of Commerce

We are a membership-based organization more than 650 strong whose members provide more than 16,000 jobs in the region. We work for the success of our members, and we strive to promote and educate to ensure the future growth of North Iowa. Our mission is to promote progressive community and economic development to benefit Chamber members and the North Iowa region.

### VISION

Our vision is grounded in our mission and we challenge ourselves to paint a picture of the region we want to be: a place with well-designed community programs and economic development best practices that assist free enterprise to create jobs and prosperity. Tomorrow's headlines will be the product of actions we're taking today behind the scenes to keep North Iowa vibrant.

### LEADERSHIP

The Chamber of Commerce provides leadership on key issues and strategic policy recommendations to stimulate economic growth in North Iowa. Such growth is achieved by creating an environment conducive to business success, which leads to job expansion and increased state and local revenues.

In addition, the Chamber provides two signature programs with a rich tradition of helping to shape future leaders: Leadership North Iowa and YIELD. People who commit to our leadership programs are difference-makers; our loyal sponsors and supporting businesses are a strong testament to their effectiveness.

### ADVOCACY

The Mason City Area Chamber of Commerce is a 501(c)6 organization. We are non-partisan, but we do take positions on issues at the local, state, and federal level to stimulate economic growth opportunities for local business. We challenge our elected officials to be responsible stewards of taxpayer money and to invest in programs and policies that will enable North Iowa to grow.



CENTRAL BANK

NORTH IOWA REGIONAL  
COMMERCE CENTER



## North Iowa Corridor Economic Development Corporation

The North Iowa Corridor Economic Development Corporation works to help retain and expand existing businesses, attract new business, foster entrepreneurship, and to promote a quality, well-trained workforce in Mason City, Clear Lake, and Greater Cerro Gordo County. If you are relocating your business as well as your family, the Corridor can offer information on prospective development sites or buildings, workforce demographics, and potential incentives or loans.

## John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center/ Small Business Development Center

Whether you are thinking about starting a business or growing an existing company, the John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center (JPEC) offers business tools and educational opportunities to assist you. If you are looking for assistance with exploring financial resources, developing a business plan or networking sessions, the staff at the JPEC are eager to meet with you to discuss your business operation. JPEC is located on the North Iowa Area Community College campus in Mason City.



# *Learning Here*



Education is valued in North Iowa, and our state has invested in its students. Iowa four-year-olds can attend preschool at no extra cost to parents, and high school students may take college courses without paying any added tuition. Lifelong learning is also a priority, with options for adults of all ages to continue building their knowledge base.



# *Child Care & Preschool*

Child care access and affordability is an issue that is impacting parents, caregivers, and businesses in North Iowa and across the nation. In Cerro Gordo County, more than 300 children are on waiting lists for care; meanwhile, child care centers are struggling to hire quality caregivers. Child Care Works is a multi-tiered plan for addressing these issues and coordinating solutions to child care shortages, declining child care workforce, and reliability of child care for working families.

The centerpiece of the initiatives is the Child Care Works Wage Supplement Program, which is increasing child care center staff salaries by \$2 an hour. This funding primarily comes from local businesses and municipalities, and is coupled with a state match for a total investment of nearly \$1 million annually. Other initiatives include a child care subsidy for providers, the Child Care Ready certification program at Mason City High School, and ongoing advocacy efforts to develop sustainable solutions to the child care industry.

## Championing Child Care Access

By Pamela Lampman

Workforce Retention is at the forefront of many businesses in the Cerro Gordo County area. CURRIES, a leading manufacturer of steel door and frame openings in Mason City has become a Child Care Champion Sponsor with the Child Care Works Initiative. CURRIES has had great success throughout its history and currently employs over 700 employees from nearly 50 surrounding Iowa communities.



Affordable, accessible childcare for all families is not a simple issue, especially when looking at hours of care that are outside the norm. CURRIES supports a 24-hour operation and employees struggle to find childcare beyond the 6AM-6PM standard daycare hours.

CURRIES culture is guided by their values through their CARE Connections program. The purpose of this program is to create a world class employee life cycle experience by regularly connecting with employees to help keep them engaged and navigate their work experience. Through these interactions, employees work with human resources, the leadership team, and co-workers to identify areas that can be improved. One topic is reliability and how important it is to be on time, dependable, and to build product for on time delivery. Reliable childcare is a crucial piece in making this happen.

CURRIES is very excited to work with their employees, the community, and businesses to support, invest and be part of the Child Care Works Initiative. This program has made it possible for CURRIES employees to work with human resources and connect them to childcare without being on a waiting list.

In talking with CURRIES employees who are first-time parents, they were very nervous about finding quality care for their child. "Stressed out" was how they described thinking about the process. As they tried to get into a childcare center, they ran into waiting lists, not because the centers were at full physical capacity, but due to not having the workforce to accommodate more children. By CURRIES partnering with the Child Care Works Initiative, and employees communicating with human resources, they were easily connected with the child care center of their choice – and they were not put on a waiting list. Employees have reported that their children are very happy, healthy, and well taken care of. The centers provide well-rounded interactions, and the child's daily activities are communicated with parents.

CURRIES has engaged with its employees, saw the need to become an active partner in the community, and now offers this benefit to all employees. The impact this benefit brings to CURRIES is a happy employee that is at work every day, reduced hiring and recruitment costs, and greater workplace productivity.

Pamela Lampman is the Director of Human Resources at CURRIES and serves on the Mason City Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors.



# Child Care & Preschool

Early childhood education is a community value. Thanks to state funding, four-year-olds are able to attend free preschool in public school districts and at many child care centers. In addition, parents can choose from several quality private programs and integrated day care/learning environments.

Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) is a program to support quality child care throughout the State of Iowa. CCR&R is available to assist families in selecting child care providers who best meet the needs of a child and their family. They also offer information for families about financial assistance programs. Child Care Consultants provide on-site consultation to licensed preschools, centers, nonregistered Child Care Home providers, and Child Development Home providers. All CCR&R services are free of charge. Their referral line is open from 8AM-4:30PM, Monday-Friday. Call toll-free 855.299.0499 to learn more.

## MASON CITY

Charlie Brown Preschool and Child Care Centers are non-profit organizations with the mission of providing a stable, nurturing environment to children that encourages social, emotional, and developmental growth through building positive relationships in a preschool and child care setting. Services include care for special needs children, infant and toddler care, preschool classes, and before and after school care. All 3- and 4-year-old children attending full-time daycare at Charlie Brown receive free preschool education. Centers are located in Mason City and Clear Lake. Call 641.424.0065 to learn how to enroll your child.

Newman Catholic Childcare & Preschool has provided a quality and nurturing environment for North Iowa families since 1986. Their mission is to educate individuals in a caring and faith-filled environment that focuses on the individual learner. Inspired by Christ, our Newman Catholic faculty and staff, families, and parishes are committed to forming disciples to lead, love, and serve. They serve about 180 families in the North Iowa area, caring for children ages 6 weeks to 12 years old. Newman Catholic Childcare & Preschool is located on the same campus as Newman Catholic Schools, which provides added convenience for parents who have older children as well. For enrollment information, call 641.423.0168.

Sugar Plum Preschool has been located at Trinity Lutheran Church since 1967. It became a collaboration with the Mason City Family YMCA in 2009 and became an official program in the Spring of 2012. Sugar Plum Preschool is licensed by the State of Iowa and is open to all children ages 3-5. Preschool is free for all four-year-olds enrolled in the program. Contact Sugar Plum Preschool at 641.424.9316 for more details.

Tug's Daycare & Preschool is a year round, full day program serving children ages 6 weeks to twelve years old. The center features a library, computer center, outside equipment, and much more. Preschool programs are available for ages 3, 4, and 5. In addition to the daycare center, Tug's offers before- and after-school programs at nearby Jefferson Elementary. Tug's is conveniently located near Mason City Middle and High Schools. For more information call 641.424.9023.



**Newman Childcare and Preschool**

**OUR MISSION:**  
Newman Childcare and Preschool is a six-week to twelve years old childcare and preschool program that welcomes all children and families. Our children are provided care in a nurturing environment that focuses on the individual child. Our Newman Childcare and Preschool staff are committed to providing peace of mind to parents by offering quality care, enriched development, and positive life experiences for their children.

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[www.newmancatholic.org/preschool-and-daycare](http://www.newmancatholic.org/preschool-and-daycare)



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[www.iowaccrr.org](http://www.iowaccrr.org)

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(800) 475-0804

### Referrals

[childcare@caeiowa.org](mailto:childcare@caeiowa.org)  
(855) 244-5301

Funding provided by the Iowa Department of Human Services  
through the Child Care Development Fund



*K-12 Education*

Quality education to ensure a quality workforce is a shared community value in Iowa. The state has taken a proactive approach to transform its public education system, with a focus on student achievement and meeting the skills gap. To get a complete look at how school districts in North Iowa are performing, take a look at the Iowa School Report Card, published annually by the Iowa Department of Education.

## Mason City

### MASON CITY COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Welcome to the Mason City community! We couldn't be more excited that you are here. As you work through the many details related to relocating and starting a new school, I want to take a minute to share some of the great things you can expect when you join us in the Mason City Community School District. As a public school district, we proudly serve all students in preschool through twelfth grade in a broad and diverse setting. We have a home for you here – this truly is a place you can belong and grow.



Here in the Mason City Community School District, we help you develop your competitive advantage as you build a solid foundation of academic knowledge and skills, develop technical competencies, and learn the professional skills that will prepare you for success in adult life.

With access to a full spectrum of extra supports all the way through a wide range of college credit and work-ready courses, we meet you where you are and move you toward your fullest potential. You can be exactly who you are and follow YOUR path here in the Mason City Community School District.

Whether you have a passion for cooking, working on cars, building, exploring music and arts, or competing in sports, there is a program in place or a path to create one. You can explore your passion or find one here in the Mason City Community School District.

Through all these experiences, you will develop the most critical life and work skills – creativity, communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and more. We are in the business of growing the next generation, and you can thrive here in the Mason City Community School District.

Students in the Mason City Community School District typically attend one of four neighborhood elementary schools in grades K-4: Harding, Hoover, Jefferson, and Roosevelt Elementaries. We also offer an excellent preschool program and Transitional Kindergarten for our students who need a bridge between preschool and kindergarten. For grades five and six, students attend Lincoln Intermediate School, followed by John Adams Middle School in grades seven and eight. Many high school students attend Mason City High School, but we also offer different options in Mason City Virtual Academy and Mason City Alternative School.

We can't wait to meet you. We are happy to show you around our campuses and answer any questions you may have. Feel free to reach out via email at [bexman@masoncityschools.org](mailto:bexman@masoncityschools.org) or via phone at 641-450-5002.

Bridgett Exman Dunn is the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction for Mason City Schools

- K-6 student to teacher ratio: 21:1
- Student to device ratio: 1:1 iPads in K-2, 1:1 Chromebooks in 3-12

## NEWMAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

Newman Catholic is an early childhood through twelfth-grade Catholic school that welcomes students of all faiths while serving the parishes of North Iowa. Our students are educated in a caring and faith-filled environment that focuses on the individual learner. Inspired by Christ, our Newman Catholic faculty and staff, families, and parishes are committed to forming disciples to lead, love, and serve.

- Student to Teacher Ratio: 17:1 in K-8, 9:1 in 9-12
- Students pursuing post-secondary education: 98%
- Member of the National Catholic Education Association
- Accredited by the State of Iowa

### Enrollment Process:

Families interested in enrolling students K-12 should contact communications and enrollment coordinator Heidi Kuhl at [hkuhl@newmancatholic.org](mailto:hkuhl@newmancatholic.org) or by calling 641-450-0828.

The possible transfer and parent(s)/guardian are asked to complete an informational interview to begin the process. Students will be considered for enrollment once the Application for Admission has been completed and returned, and a copy of the student's transcripts, discipline record, and attendance record are received.

## NORTH IOWA CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

North Iowa Christian School (NICS) offers non-denominational Christian-based education to K-12 students. Their mission is to equip children to live lives that glorify God, to be servant leaders with character, and to realize their God-given potential through Biblical, Christ-centered education. NICS is accredited through Christian Schools International (CSI) and has qualified teachers who use positive learning strategies in a warm, caring atmosphere.

- Student to teacher ratio: 15:1
- Student body consistently scores two grade levels above national average on standardized tests
- Post-secondary education opportunities available through partnership with NIACC as well as online opportunities

### Enrollment Process:

Registration information and applications are available online at [www.northiowachristian.com](http://www.northiowachristian.com). New families to NICS will be contacted to schedule a school tour, family interview, student testing time (if needed) and financial counsel. Once these are completed, families will be notified of acceptance.

## Greater North Iowa

## CENTRAL SPRINGS COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

The mission of Central Springs Community School District is to cultivate a positive learning environment that engages and empowers all students. The district emphasizes the need to educate the whole child: academically, physically, emotionally, and socially in a world where its kids will become the leaders of change. Students from Nora Springs, Manly, Hanlontown, Plymouth, and Rock Falls attend school in this district. Elementary Schools (PK-3) are located in Manly and Nora Springs, Middle School (4-8) in Nora Springs, and High School (9-12) in Manly.

- Student to teacher ratio: 16:1
- Student to device ratio: 1:1 iPad or Chromebook
- Graduation rate: 95%

### Enrollment Process:

For enrollment information, contact the District Office at 641.454.2211.



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### CHARLES CITY COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Charles City Community School District aims to engage, inspire, and empower students and staff in order to maximize learning. Students from Charles City and surrounding communities attend school in Charles City. The district includes Washington Elementary School (PK-3), Lincoln Elementary School (3-4), Middle School (5-8), and High School (9-12). The district-wide Talented and Gifted program begins in elementary school, and Advanced Placement and dual-credit options are available for kids at the high school level. Student to teacher ratio: 15:1

- Student to device ratio: 1:1 Chromebook Program
- Graduation rate: 98%

#### Enrollment Process:

If you would like to meet with a representative of the Charles City Community School District for a tour or to meet a principal for your child's prospective school, please contact Justin DeVore by calling 641.257.6500 or by emailing [jdevore@charlescitieschools.org](mailto:jdevore@charlescitieschools.org).

### CLEAR LAKE COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Clear Lake Community School District's mission is to ensure a high level of learning for all; Vision is to create an environment empowering students, staff, and community to develop passionate, innovative, adaptable learners prepared to embrace the challenges of the future. The district includes Clear Creek Elementary (PK-5), Clear Lake Middle School (6-8), and Clear Lake High School (9-12). Clear Lake has been recognized by Solution Tree as a Model Professional Learning Community at Work District. Clear Creek Elementary has been recognized as a Distinguished Project Lead the Way Launch School.

- Student to teacher ratio: 15.7:1
- Student to device ratio: 1:1 iPads K-2 and Chromebooks 3-12
- Graduation rate: 96.8%

#### Enrollment Process:

Online registration is available at [clearlakeschools.org](http://clearlakeschools.org), or call the school district at 641.357.2181.

### GARNER-HAYFIELD-VENTURA COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Garner-Hayfield-Ventura Community School District is a vibrant, student-centered school district located in North Iowa. Elementary (PK-8) and High School (9-12) students attend school in Garner.

- Student to teacher ratio: 14:1
- Student to device ratio: 1:1 Chromebook Program
- Graduation rate: 100%

#### Enrollment Process:

Registration information is available at [ghvschools.org](http://ghvschools.org) or by calling 641.923.2718.

### NORTHWOOD-KENSETT COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

The mission of the Northwood-Kensett Community School District is to create healthy, educated, ethical, and productive citizens. A rigorous curriculum challenges each student to excel with an emphasis on principles of high quality instruction and clear expectations for what is taught. A progressive staff development program has been implemented for the future growth of the staff and to promote an educational system that is preparing students and staff for the future that awaits.

Students who reside in Worth County receive a \$75 back-to-school gift card from the Worth County Development Authority (WCDA). Every qualifying high school senior receives a WCDA scholarship to pursue higher education (\$13,355 per graduate in 2023).

- Student to teacher ratio: 12:1
- Student to device ratio: 1:1 Laptop Program
- Graduation rate: 97%

#### Enrollment Process:

Enrollment information is available at [nwood-kensett.k12.ia.us](http://nwood-kensett.k12.ia.us) or by calling 641.324.2021.



**MASON CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**We offer a full range of programming to meet our students where they are today and prepare them for a bright future.**

- ✓ A broad array of extracurricular activities and clubs - from fine arts to robotics and athletics
- ✓ Community partnerships to offer programs like mountain biking and community college courses
- ✓ Work-based learning programs, such as welding, healthcare pathways, child care certification, and lifeguard training

641-421-4400   
[www.masoncityschools.org](http://www.masoncityschools.org) 

We welcome you to the Mason City Community School District, a place where everyone can belong!

### RRMR COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Rudd-Rockford-Marble Rock School District is committed to providing an environment conducive to developing lifelong learners capable of being successful, responsible, contributing members of an ever-changing world. Students in both Elementary (PK-6) and Secondary (7-12) grades attend class in Rockford.

- Student to teacher ratio: 14:1
- Student to device ratio: 1:1 Laptop Program
- Graduation rate: 99%

#### Enrollment Process:

Enrollment information is available at [www.rockford.k12.ia.us](http://www.rockford.k12.ia.us) or by calling 641.756.3813.

### WEST FORK COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

The West Fork Community School District is dedicated to creating successful learners, citizens, and leaders. The district is comprised of several communities, including Chapin, Dougherty, Meservey, Rockwell, Swaledale, Sheffield, and Thornton. Students in grades Preschool-1 attend school at Sheffield Elementary, 2-5 grades attend Rockwell Elementary, 6-8 grades attend Middle School in Rockwell, and grades 9-12 attend High School in Sheffield.

- Student to teacher ratio: 12.4:1
- Student to device ratio: 1:1 Chromebook Program
- Graduation rate: 99%
- 20% of instructional staff hold master's degrees

#### Enrollment Process:

To take a tour of West Fork Community Schools, call the Sheffield campus at 641-892-4160 or the Rockwell campus at 641.822.3234. Registration forms and information are also available at [westforkschool.org](http://westforkschool.org).





## *Building a Working Relationship Through Work-Study Programs*

By Cassandra Solano

Apprenticeships are an amazing opportunity for our North Iowa workforce. Through an apprenticeship, students receive hands-on learning and employers can recruit long-term employees, which is beneficial for both parties. I started an apprenticeship program for accounting in 2023 with North Iowa Area Community College (NIACC) and YohnCo, and through this partnership I was able to further my education and career simultaneously.

Working with NIACC's Director of Emerging Workforce Solutions and my manager at YohnCo, we were easily able to customize the program to best fit my needs and the needs of the company. My on-the-job training with the accountant is paid, as well as my class time, which allows a healthy work/life balance. I have been able to share some of the skills from my courses with my peers in my current position. Gaining knowledge that I can apply on the job instantly gave me more confidence and pride in my work.

The President at YohnCo encourages employees to look into available courses offered by NIACC. Whether it is the diesel program, accounting, or soft skills, YohnCo is happy to invest into continuing education for employees. I am eager to continue to grow with the company that saw potential in me and supported my professional development. We are fortunate that North Iowa has many opportunities for students and for employers who value investing in their employees to strengthen the workforce.

Cassandra Solano is a NIACC student and Accounting Apprentice at YohnCo.



# *Continuing Education*



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NIACC TO FRIENDS AND FAMILY\***



**NORTH IOWA AREA  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE**



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\* CCSSEE Survey 2023

It is the policy of North Iowa Area Community College not to discriminate in its programs, activities, or employment on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, creed, religion, and actual or potential family, parental or marital status. If you have questions or complaints related to compliance with this policy, please contact the Human Resources Director, EEO/AA Officer, 550 College Drive, Mason City, IA 50401 or via telephone at 641-422-4211 or [HumanResources@niacc.edu](mailto:HumanResources@niacc.edu).

## NORTH IOWA AREA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Business and Educators in North Iowa work together closely to ensure our students are well-prepared for the workforce. Mason City is home to North Iowa Area Community College (NIACC), which serves a nine-county region in North Iowa. In addition to traditional degree programs, NIACC boasts many excellent continuing education and training courses, which are heavily utilized by industries throughout North Iowa.

NIACC is home to a Diesel Technology Center, Health Simulation Center, and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) wing to provide traditional and continuing education students with innovative, state-of-the-art learning facilities.

NIACC believes a good education leads to a prosperous future, for not only the student but also for the family and community of that student. To help facilitate that, NIACC makes every effort to keep tuition low and offers more than \$1 million in scholarships each year.

NIACC boasts a 98% job placement rate and was recognized by the Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence as one of the top 25 community colleges in the nation. It is also an employer of choice, being named 36th on Forbes list of America's Best Small Employers for 2023.

## WALDORF UNIVERSITY

Located in Forest City, Waldorf University is a private liberal arts school offering a litany of associate, bachelor's, and master's degree programs both on campus and online. Faculty and staff work one-on-one with students to ensure they are confident and capable in reaching their full potential, providing encouragement each step of the way. More than 90 percent of Waldorf graduates are employed or continue their education within six months of graduation.

## BUENA VISTA UNIVERSITY

Buena Vista University (BVU), based in Storm Lake, IA, operates a satellite campus at NIACC, which offers convenient online and hybrid undergraduate programs and graduate programs. BVU has transfer agreements with Iowa's community colleges and offers terms designed for working adults. BVU's Strategic Partnership division partners with employers to offer their employees and family members education benefits and partner grants.

## COSMETOLOGY SCHOOL

Students can earn their Iowa license in cosmetology, nail technology, and massage therapy in Mason City.

## Professional Development

These Chamber members provide a wide array of opportunities for professional growth and development.

IowaWORKS North Iowa  
region2web@iowa.gov | (641) 422-1524  
iowaworkforce.org

Chamber of Commerce - Serving North Iowa  
chamber@masoncityia.com | (641) 423-5724  
masoncityia.com

NIACC Continuing Education & Lifelong Learning Institute  
cereg@niacc.edu | (641) 422-4358  
www.niacc.edu





# Special Needs Resources

If you or a family member has special needs, it's incredibly important to know that the community you are moving to has access to the care your loved one depends on to thrive and succeed. North Iowa's school districts are welcoming to students of all needs and will ensure your child has the tools required to learn and grow. In addition to the medical services available in the region, there are also several non-profits and businesses in North Iowa that are committed to supporting and improving the lives of people with different abilities.

## 43 NORTH IOWA

43 North Iowa has personal and flexible programming to support its clients to engage in life, to achieve emotional stability, and move to become self-sufficient. Staff in various programs provide guidance and support for people to make choices to navigate their experiences healthily.  
43northiowa.org | (641) 424-8708

## COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEMS, INC.

Comprehensive Systems, Inc. is a private, nonprofit, community-based corporation whose mission is to support individuals with special needs in North Iowa. A wide range of services are provided in Charles City, Osage, Mason City, New Hampton, Cedar Falls, and Waterloo.  
comprehensivesystems.org | (641) 423-2663

## CREST SERVICES

Crest Services is a not-for-profit provider of in-home care and programs providing services to individuals with mental disabilities, developmental disabilities and traumatic brain injuries.  
www.crestservices.org | (641) 548-4931

## MAC-MIDWEST

MAC-Midwest, located in Clear Lake, provides therapeutic services for children ages 18 months to 21 years who have autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Their services utilize several therapeutic modalities, including applied behavior analysis (ABA) therapy. MAC's services are center-based and in-home, and include speech and occupational therapy, assessment and diagnosis services, and individual and family therapy.  
mnautism.org | (952) 767-4200

## MOSAIC

Mosaic serves more than 5,200 people in 13 states and 750 communities. Services are tailored to meet individual needs and goals, allowing people to be as independent as possible. Services are designed for people with disabilities, mental and behavioral health needs and autism, as well as aging adults.  
mosaicinfo.org | (641) 530-2102

## ONE VISION

One Vision is a nonprofit charitable organization that provides services to more than 300 individuals across 20 communities in North Iowa so they may achieve greater independence through personal choice and community involvement. This includes helping individuals find jobs in their communities, supporting them in homes that meet their needs and wants, and encouraging them to pursue personal interests.  
onevision.org | (641) 357-5277

## REM IOWA COMMUNITY SERVICES

REM Iowa provides quality services to adults and children with intellectual and developmental disabilities and other complex challenges. We also offer services for adults with brain injuries and provide a range of programs, including residential services and day and vocational programs.  
remiowa.com | (641) 424-7075



# Playing Here

When people first move to North Iowa, they are often surprised by the incredible array of cultural and recreational opportunities – not to mention the selection of dining and retail options! As the hub of North Iowa, Mason City offers something for everyone to do in their free time, and greater North Iowa features additional parks, breweries, and shops.



# Recreation

Warm weather or cold, indoors or out, North Iowans have an abundance of recreational opportunities. These are some of the activities locals take advantage of in their leisure time!



## MASON CITY ARENA

Mason City Arena is the largest entertainment venue in North Iowa. Once a former JC Penney store, the City of Mason City decided to revitalize downtown Mason City by building an arena in the former vacant space in Southbridge Mall. This was the first step of a greater plan called the River City Renaissance Project.

Mason City Arena is the home of the North Iowa Bulls NAHL team, the Mason City Toros NA3HL team, Mason City Youth Hockey, and North Iowa Figure Skating club.

In the summer months, the arena hosts concerts, MMA events, graduations, National Night Out, and much more.

## LIME CREEK NATURE CENTER

Lime Creek Nature Center offers year-round activities for the entire family. More than 35,000 people of all ages visit the Nature Center each year. Some take advantage of the 8+ miles of trails that are perfect for hiking, jogging, biking, or skiing. The trail system also includes a unique Easy Access Trail, which allows physically challenged people and families using strollers to enjoy a woodland hike. The area is also listed as one of Iowa's 77 "prime wildlife watching locations," perfect for bird enthusiasts. The Winnebago River winds through the park, making it a prime spot to fish for bass, walleye, northern pike, and more.

## PILOT KNOB STATE PARK

Dedicated in 1923, Pilot Knob State Park is one of the oldest state parks in Iowa. From the "Pilot Knob" tower built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s, one can see great expanses of some of the most fertile farmland in the world. An open air amphitheater, constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s, is surrounded by scenic woods. In the summer, visitors can enjoy bicycling, bird watching, camping, canoeing, fishing, hiking, and horseback riding. In the winter, visit the park for ice skating, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, and ice fishing.

## Bike Trails

With a mix of off-road trails, bike lanes, and sharrows throughout the region, many North Iowans enjoy getting around on two wheels. With the help of a \$5 million Destination Iowa grant, the Bike North Iowa initiative adds new mountain bike trails, a bike park, and an 8-mile stretch of elevated rail trail for cyclists (read more on page 67). So, whether it's a short ride to and from work, or an afternoon trip around Clear Lake, you'll find it's safe and easy to ride in North Iowa.

## Parks/Playgrounds

East Park features 57.6 acres of parkland, right in the heart of Mason City. You'll often see families picnicking at one of the five shelter houses or enjoying a Saturday evening movie at the Historic Band Shell. Prairie Playground is a popular place for kids, and it is located next to the beautifully restored 1912 Minneapolis & St. Louis Steam Locomotive – known around town as the 457 "Rotary Cannonball."

There are several smaller parks tucked into neighborhoods throughout Mason City and Clear Lake, each with its own unique characteristics (38 parks in Mason City alone!). Many include playgrounds, shelters, trails, and access to fishing.

## Golfing

Golfers enjoy hitting the links at several quality courses throughout North Iowa, including Highland Park Golf Course, Legacy Golf Course at the 19, Pine Creek Golf Club, and more. North Iowa Golf offers three lighted driving ranges and an 18-hole miniature golf course, and Twenty Fore Seven Indoor Golf offers simulator bays. The golf season typically starts in April and runs through October.

## Camping

If you love to spend your nights in the outdoors, there are several excellent campgrounds in North Iowa. Enjoy modern camping facilities in your RV or tent at Margaret MacNider Campgrounds, Clear Lake State Park, or McIntosh Woods State Park. If you're looking for a countryside retreat, check out Corn Patch Corner Campground/RV Park, located just south of Mason City. For a more rustic stay, spend the night in your tent at Lime Creek Nature Center. McIntosh Woods State Park also has a unique option to stay in Yurt cabins with a private dock on Clear Lake.

## Fitness Centers

With such an emphasis placed on healthy living, it's easy to see why North Iowa has so many options for getting fit. The Mason City Family YMCA offers an indoor track and pool, fitness classes, and child watch. Other fitness centers in Mason City and Clear Lake offer 24/7 gym access, group classes, boot camp-style classes, yoga, weightlifting, boxing, personal training, and more! Check out a full list of fitness centers at [masoncityia.com](http://masoncityia.com).

### Water Fun

North Iowa features some of the most beautiful rivers and lakes you've seen. Clear Lake stretches across 3,684 acres. It is regarded as one of the top sailing lakes in the Midwest, but it's a perfect setting for all types of boating. Anglers will enjoy catching walleye, yellow bass and more on the lake. Several fishing tournaments take place throughout the year, including Iowa's largest ice fishing tournament – the Yellow Bass Bonanza. The Winnebago River weaves through the region, and it is excellent for kayaking, canoeing, and fishing. The Mason City Aquatic Center is a perfect place to cool down on a hot day.

### WINTER ADVENTURES

When the temperatures drop, Iowans embrace the cold, bundle up, and head outside. Cerro Gordo County Conservation staff ensure nature trails are groomed for cross-country skiing, snow shoeing, and fat-tire biking (yes, you can bike on snow!). You can rent snowshoes or skis from Wayne's in Mason City. Those with a "need for speed" can enjoy snowmobiling through nearly 100 miles of groomed trails in Cerro Gordo County and more than 8,800 miles of trails statewide.

Another popular winter sport is ice fishing. North Iowa lakes are excellent for catching bluegills, yellow perch, and walleye. For those unaccustomed to Iowa winters, you might be surprised to learn that not only is lake ice safe to walk on, in most cases you can also drive your car or truck right on the lake. We take advantage of this each February with the Color the Wind Kite Festival, one of the most unique activities you'll experience.

We're not sure if you'd call it a sport, but sledding is a must-do when it snows. City and county crews prep the best snow hills in the area with tire "ladders" to help make the climb back up the hill a little easier, and flood lights have been installed to ensure families can sled safely after sunset. Free sleds are also available to borrow on-site at the two sledding hills in Mason City.

There are also countless ways to keep warm inside. Spend an evening cheering on the North Iowa Bulls at the Mason City Arena, or catch one of the many youth hockey tournaments that are held there. The Mason City Public Library offers a warm place to observe the beauty of winter from one of the oversized windows that overlook Willow Creek. MacNider Art Museum offers a variety of classes for kids and adults, including throwing clay, learning to watercolor, and "Art Bugs" for the youngest kids. In downtown Mason City, take a cooking class at Simply Nourished or Roots Nutrition Counseling & More.





## *Explore the Outdoors in North Iowa!*

By Matt Curtis

Mason City is setting itself up as the destination for outdoor recreation enthusiasts in 2024 and beyond! In just the past few years we have added miles of mountain bike trails as well as paved trails used by walkers and bikers alike. We are excited to announce the upcoming addition of several mountain bike trails, crafted by one of the leading trail builders in the United States. Multiple trails are set to begin construction in the Spring and Summer of 2024.



Our cycling community is large and growing by the day thanks to clubs like North Iowa Human Powered Trails and The North Iowa Touring Club. This past year we saw miles of new paved bike trails with the completion of the Highline Trail and Birch Drive Trail. Our mountain biking community has significantly grown over the past few years. It's not uncommon to have over 20 riders join in on weekly bike rides through our single-track mountain bike trails. There are also group bike rides for those who prefer road, gravel, and even your slower-paced casual ride around town. This doesn't even count the cyclocross community which annually hosts 'Cannonball Cross' in East Park. This is one of the largest cyclocross events in the state of Iowa.

A long-standing destination for outdoor recreation enthusiasts in Mason City has been Lime Creek Conservation Park. Lime Creek sits on over 400 acres of land which sees use from a wide range of people with adventuring on the mind. It's not uncommon to find bikers, hikers and horseback riders all co-existing on the trails in the summer. During the winter months, it plays home to people adventuring on Fat Tire Bikes, Snowshoes and even Cross-Country Skis.

North Iowa is not just a destination; it's a community of individuals passionate about the outdoors. Join us in celebrating the beauty of nature, the thrill of biking, and the joy of connecting with like-minded enthusiasts. Whether you're a seasoned pro or a novice adventurer, we welcome you to experience the best of outdoor living!

Matt Curtis is the owner of Wayne's Ski and Cycle in Mason City.



CENTRAL BLOCK

BAND F

# Arts & Culture

North Iowa is home to several cultural gems. Many people are surprised to find how much of our popular culture was influenced by people from, or events that happened, right in our community. The rich art and musical heritage of North Iowa lives on in a new generation of artists, musicians, and performers.

## Architecture

Mason City was named by Conde Nast Traveler as one of the "World's Best Cities for Architecture Lovers." Much of that is credited to the work of "America's greatest architect," Frank Lloyd Wright, who left his mark on North Iowa in the early 1900s. Visit the Historic Park Inn, the world's only remaining hotel designed by Wright, or the Wright-designed Stockman House. Pick up a guidebook and take a tour of Rock Crest/Rock Glen Historic District - the largest collection of Prairie School architecture that is unified by a common setting in the world. You may also stop to admire the Mason City Public Library, made famous in the library scene of "The Music Man" and extensively renovated in 2010.

### THE HISTORIC PARK INN

The Historic Park Inn now stands as one of Mason City's finest assets, thanks to the efforts of a group of citizens who were determined to save the architectural masterpiece. The history of this important building shows the passion and fortitude the people of North Iowa for maintaining our community's gems.

Frank Lloyd Wright was commissioned in the early 1900s by local attorneys James Blythe and J.E.E. Markley, who were interested in constructing a new building that would house their law offices, City National Bank, and a much-needed hotel in downtown Mason City.

The hotel first opened to the public in 1910 and was praised for its design and function. However, the farm crisis led to City National Bank's closure, and an elaborate new hotel built just blocks away spelled trouble for the Park Inn. In 1926, the Bank building was converted into retail stores. In 1973, the hotel was remodeled into apartments, but they were shuttered by the city just 15 years later due to neglect.

In 2005, a small group formed Wright on the Park, Inc. a non-profit organization whose mission it was to own, preserve, restore, and maintain the Park Inn hotel. Through grants, fundraising, tax credits, memberships, and a major Vision Iowa grant, Wright on the Park succeeded in gaining the funds necessary for the restoration/rehabilitation to move forward.

Construction began in 2009 to restore the hotel and bank buildings to their original splendor, and work was completed in 2011. The Historic Park Inn Hotel has now enjoyed more than a decade of hosting visitors from all over the world who travel to Mason City to see this piece of architecture history.

## Music

A love for music is deeply entrenched in our region's culture. Tony Award-winning composer Meredith Willson grew up in Mason City, and his influence is remembered at The Music Man Square - which features a museum and offers music lessons for young and old. We celebrate Willson and Mason City's musical heritage at the annual North Iowa Band Festival - the unofficial kickoff to summer in North Iowa. The Historic Surf Ballroom in Clear Lake is best known as the site for Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens and The Big Bopper's final performance in 1959, but it continues to be a hot music venue for high-profile entertainers. If you're a musician yourself, there are many opportunities to pursue your passion. Sing in one of Mason City's choral groups; the River City Barbershop Chorus, Una Vocis, or the North Iowa Choral Society; or play with the Mason City Municipal Band, the New Horizons Band, the North Iowa Concert Band, or the North Iowa Symphony Orchestra.

### THE MUSIC MAN SQUARE

Meredith Willson's impact on Mason City can best be understood with a visit to The Music Man Square. Walk through the doors and you're instantly transported to the streetscape seen in the award-winning 1962 movie, *The Music Man*. Inside, the Meredith Willson Museum is dedicated to the Mason City native's lifelong achievements. Next door is Willson's boyhood home, restored to depict what Willson experienced growing up in North Iowa.

But The Music Man Square is more than just a museum - it's a place where music is learned and celebrated. Children enjoy weekly, interactive music lessons in the Madison Park room; the New Horizons Band and River City Barbershop Chorus hold rehearsals in the space; and celebrations are held in the Reunion Hall, including weddings, reunions, and more.

### THE SURF BALLROOM & MUSEUM

"There are few buildings in existence today that represent a complete shift in our musical history. As the last concert venue for Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens and J.P. "the Big Bopper" Richardson, the Surf is the bedrock of where the sound and attitude of rock and roll changed forever." This is the inscription the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum wrote on a plaque, dedicating the Surf Ballroom as a historic rock and roll landmark. To residents in North Iowa, the Surf Ballroom & Museum represents an important part of our past and our present.



The original Surf Ballroom opened its doors in 1934 along the shores of Clear Lake. After a fire in 1947, the new ballroom was constructed directly across the street, in its current location. Decade after decade, the best musicians of the era included a stop at The Surf Ballroom on their national tours. Such was the case in 1959, when Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens, The Big Bopper, and Dion brought the Winter Dance Party to Clear Lake. It would be the final concert for three of music's brightest stars, and it made a lasting mark on the Surf Ballroom and North Iowa.

Today, the stage at The Surf Ballroom & Museum regularly features everything from local bands to celebrity musicians – who are thrilled for the opportunity to play a show at this historic venue. During the day, The Surf is open to visitors who may take a self-guided tour of the museum for a suggested \$5 donation. It may also be rented for weddings and private parties.

As a testament to its ongoing significance in music culture, in 2019 the Academy of Country Music Awards nominated The Surf Ballroom & Museum as Venue of the Year - Small Capacity. And its impact is growing as construction kicks off on the \$20 million Surf District Streetscape and Music Enrichment Center. It goes to show, the music lives on at The Surf!

## *Art*

North Iowa is the proud home of the Charles H. MacNider Art Museum, which houses an impressive collection of American art. View work by Grant Wood (a common visitor to the region), Thomas Hart Benton, and the puppets of Bill Baird (a Mason City High School graduate). You'll recall seeing Baird's marionettes in the movie *The Sound of Music*.

Temporary exhibits, films, concerts, art classes, an art library and a sales/rental gallery make the museum the cornerstone of the local arts community.

Our love for art is also seen on our streets. The River City Sculptures on Parade outdoor sculpture walk winds through downtown Mason City, featuring the works of 80-plus well-regarded sculptors from around the world. As you're walking, you'll see prairie-style murals painted on the backs of many downtown buildings – a testament to Mason City's commitment to highlighting art in unexpected places.

Several Mason City buildings include the work of artist Bob White, who developed and perfected the fused glass technique. View his creations at the First Presbyterian Church, Greek Orthodox Church, First Congregational UCOG, and the MacNider Art Museum.

## *Theater*

If you have a love for the theater, Mason City has a lot to offer. The Mason City Community Theatre offers an array of quality performances throughout the year and gives local actors a chance to hone their craft. The award-winning Stebens Children's Theatre displays the talents of area youth in productions tailored to a younger crowd. Classes are offered year-round for kids ages 7-18. If it's big names you want to see, the North Iowa Performing Arts & Leadership Series brings them to the heart of Iowa. The stage of the 1200-seat North Iowa Community Auditorium brims with talent that spans the world. Talented entertainers and musicians, Broadway shows, ballet companies, bestselling authors, and captains of industry grace the stage each year.

## *At Home*

By Tammy Hertzell

When we moved here in 1999, it was to be closer to family in Minnesota and for my husband to teach mathematics at North Iowa Area Community College. What we found was home. A community that lifts up the arts, celebrates outdoor activities, is welcoming and works together to do amazing things.

I love and appreciate works of art. Mason City is filled with pleasing architecture, sculptures, theatre, live music, murals, and people who make these treasures. It is wonderful to live alongside these individuals, to support them and feel the blessings of their skills. Minutes spent in discussion with a potter, a musician, a young thespian, an artist or a farmer at market are all possible and accessible for minimal or no cost.

Big dreams, honest efforts and kind acts are a few of the things that make people here the best. A group of citizens joined together to restore the Historic Park Inn; now an anchor and attraction. The Iowa Film Festival was founded in 2007 by two talented individuals and pulls in video submissions and viewers from all over. After a historic flood in 2008, citizens united to help one another and to save shared services like the sanitation plant. In every festival, parade, and event you will find individuals offering their time and talent.

Come. Sit, listen, wander, discover. Whether it is for an afternoon, a weekend, or a lifetime, you can find a sense of home here too.

Tammy Hertzell is a North Iowa Navigator and the Executive Director of the Mason City Family YMCA.



## Shopping & Dining

As the business hub for the region, Mason City is where residents in greater North Iowa and beyond come to do much of their shopping. National retailers like Target and Wal-Mart operate alongside locally-owned specialty shops, ensuring you can find just about anything you are looking for without the need to travel to a larger city (but if you do need something in particular, Minneapolis and Des Moines are just two hours away!). Clear Lake's main street offers a variety of quaint shops, including antiques, flowers, and clothing stores.

When it comes time to eat, you can't go wrong in North Iowa. You'll see many of the fast-food or chain restaurants you know and love, and, though they are national brands, many of these franchises have been owned and operated by the same local families for decades. There is also a variety of local restaurants, some of which have been serving diners for 100+ years! You'll find many of the dishes have Greek influence, a throwback to the immigrants who came to work in Mason City at the turn of the century.

Iowa is also becoming a haven for craft beer lovers. More than 115 breweries are serving up pints across the state. North Iowa proudly boasts some of the best craft beer in the state. With two breweries in Mason City, one in Clear Lake, others in Northwood and Lake Mills, and a unique coffee shop/brewery in Hampton, you'll enjoy (responsibly) sampling your way across the region.



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# *The Spice of Life! ...and some mild options, too.*

By Paul Blong

Mason City offers a great variety of dining, snacking, and dessert options for a town just shy of 30,000 people. There's something for everyone's taste buds, and many of the best establishments in town are locally owned and operated. I have done my best to offer up a summary of some "mainstays" and "can't misses":



**Breakfast:** Village Court and LD's Filling Station are the champions of breakfast in Mason City -- your favorite breakfast items, in respectable portions, at a reasonable price. They are always hopping! I'm also a sucker for Hy-Vee breakfast -- their skillet, omelets, and French toast are some of the best.

**Burgers and Sandwiches:** Blue Heron offers some of the best burgers in town. My go-to is the Firecracker Burger (add an egg and bacon -- what a delicious mess), and don't forget a side of cheeseballs. Awe'z Sandwich Shop has famous loose-meat sandwiches, root beer floats from the barrel in a frosty mug, and delicious malts -- all in a classic diner setting. State Street Deli specializes in amazing deli sandwiches made right in front of you -- a perfect lunch spot.

**Pizza:** For big, delicious slices of authentic New York-style pizza, check out The Corner Pizza and Alehouse. Pipe Dream Pizza is another fantastic option, offering authentic wood-fired pizza with unique ingredients that hit the spot. Both locations also offer a handful of craft beers from area breweries.

**Mexican Food:** The Happy Donkey downtown has the best tacos in town! All of their tacos are delicious, but a must-have is the Pork Chop and Bacon Taco. Another great Mexican restaurant with platters, plates, fajitas, and combos is Las Palmas Mexican Restaurant. Just let your friendly server know what you're in the mood for and they are sure to steer you in the right direction.

**Fine Dining:** You haven't had the best steak in Mason City until you've had a steak from Northwestern Steakhouse! Make sure to double-down on the side of Greek pasta! Established in 1920, the line continues to stretch down the sidewalk well before they open. Prime N Wine is another fine dining establishment you will only find in Mason City, offering a variety of steak, seafood, and pasta. Finally, Pasta Bella is the place to be for great pasta, and their parking lot proves it. They also have fantastic steaks, pizza, sandwiches, and even the soup is amazing.

**Dessert:** Once you've had a chance to sample some of the delectable bites around town, make sure you polish off your palate with a sweet treat from The Olde Creamery or Birdsall's Ice Cream. Birdsall's is a Mason City landmark that you have to experience again and again. Finally, venture to Clear Lake for the best cookies I've ever had (and I've had A LOT of cookies) at Cookies, etc. right by the lake.

Paul Blong is a North Iowa Navigator and Account Executive for Gordon Fleisch Company.



# *Annual Events*

There is always something to do in our community! Here are a few of the family-friendly events North Iowans look forward to each year.



# Annual Events

## SPRING

Mason City Chamber Ag Breakfast | Mason City  
Chick Fest | Charles City  
Earth Day Festival | Mason City & Clear Lake  
Walleye Classic | Clear Lake  
North Iowa Band Festival | Downtown Mason City  
TRI Clear Lake | Clear Lake

## SUMMER

Mason City Farmers Market | Central Park, Mason City  
Friday Night Live | Central Park, Mason City  
MacNider Arts Festival | MacNider Art Museum, Mason City  
Cannonball Day | East Park, Mason City  
Charles City Challenge Whitewater Festival | Charles City  
Mason City Pride Fest | Downtown Mason City  
July 3rd Fireworks | Mason City  
July 4th Celebration | Clear Lake  
North Iowa Fair | North Iowa Events Center, Mason City  
Thursdays on Main | Clear Lake  
CLASS Car Show | Clear Lake  
Britt Hobo Days | Britt

## FALL

Ethnic Lunch by Central Park | Downtown Mason City  
Mason City Civil War Reenactment | East Park, Mason City  
Craft Beer Shindig & Street Food Fair | East Park, Mason City  
Harvest Festival | Clear Lake  
Artoberfest | MacNider Art Museum

## WINTER

Home for the Holidays | Mason City  
Christmas by the Lake | Clear Lake  
Winter Dance Party | Surf Ballroom, Clear Lake  
Mason City High School Follies | NIACC Auditorium, Mason City  
Yellow Bass Bonanza | Clear Lake  
Color the Wind Kite Festival | Clear Lake

## Every Season, A Celebration

By Brett Bachtle



Mason City is a community that pulsates with local pride throughout the year, thanks to its spectacular annual events. From cultural celebrations to family-friendly gatherings, these events not only contribute to our unique identity, but foster a sense of togetherness among residents.

As the warm summer breeze fills the air, Mason City Municipal Band Concerts serenade the city every Thursday evening from May to July. The melodies echo through the downtown plaza, inviting residents to relax and enjoy the enchanting tunes. Then, return to Principal Pavilion for Friday Night Live, a weekly concert series that transforms the city into a stage June through August.

Start your weekends at the Mason City Farmers Market, nestled in the heart of Central Park. Here, local farmers and artisans come together, offering locally grown produce, handmade crafts, and a palpable sense of community.

Mark your calendars for the iconic North Iowa Band Festival, a tradition that dates back decades. Each Memorial Weekend, this event showcases marching bands from across the region, turning the city streets into a symphony of sound and color.

The North Iowa Fair follows suit with thrilling carnival rides, live entertainment, and livestock exhibits, facilitating a deeper connection between our urban and rural lifestyles.

Speed enthusiasts, rejoice! The Mason City Motor Speedway is a must-visit, offering thrilling races that rev up the excitement for residents and visitors alike.

Winter brings the thrill of hockey, harmony, and holiday fun! Head to the Mason City Arena and join the crowd in cheering on the NAHL North Iowa Bulls. The NIACC Performing Arts and Leadership Series offers Tony award winning shows, Grammy Award winning artists, comedy, and internationally acclaimed speakers. As the year winds down, the city transforms into a festive wonderland during Home for the Holidays, a day full of holiday markets, kids' activities, and more.

In a place where every season brings a new reason to celebrate, Mason City's diverse calendar will not only enrich your life but make you feel right at home.

Brett Bachtle is a North Iowa Navigator and the Brand Accelerator & Engagement Specialist at Visit Mason City.

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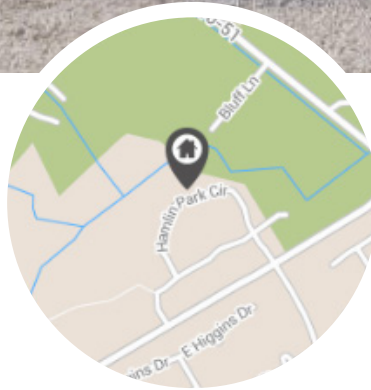
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*Moving Here*

# Community Concierge

Moving to a new community means new opportunities, new experiences, and new friends. However, it is challenging to navigate the relocation process in an unfamiliar place. The Community Concierge is here to help!

The Community Concierge is a service designed to help prospective residents learn more about the North Iowa region and to assist families as they settle into their new home. Many Mason City Chamber of Commerce members are investing in new employees by referring them to the Community Concierge for personalized relocation services, but anyone who is new to town is encouraged to call us for a complimentary welcome meeting. This allows us to get to know you and provide advice and recommendations to help you adjust to your new home. We focus on helping the entire family – everything from finding a temporary rental home to exploring childcare options.

In addition to the information provided in this guide, you will find a variety of resources on the Chamber's website, [www.masoncityia.com](http://www.masoncityia.com). We also encourage you to contact one of our North Iowa Navigators – our region's community champions who can help get you settled and feeling at home. This group of volunteers serves as 'regional ambassadors' and can help you as a newcomer feel welcomed and connected, all while offering knowledge of the regional lifestyle, recreation, schools, healthcare, real estate, and industry and career opportunities. Profiles of each Navigator are displayed online, complete with bio information, areas of expertise, and an opportunity to connect for additional information.

Since questions and needs will continue to arise long after your boxes are unpacked, you are always welcome to come to us for help. We love living in North Iowa, and we are excited to share our passion for this community with you!

## New in Town

By Maya Horvath



Come March of my senior year at the University of Kentucky, I was offered an associate position at Cargill. What a wonderful opportunity to kickstart my career in Environmental Health and Safety under the guidance of a company where safety is a priority and employees have generous benefits! It even came with a relocation package to ensure that my move was as smooth as possible. The kicker? The job was in Mason City, Iowa.

I think it's safe to say that Iowa is a best-kept secret. Beyond the reputation of "Midwestern nice" and endless corn, I had no clue what Iowa would be like. I shouldn't have been nervous. Finding housing was an easy (and affordable!) task, registering my car and becoming an Iowa resident took less than 40 minutes total, and it didn't take long at all to get connected in the community. Mason

City is fortunate to have an active and well-connected Chamber of Commerce. My first week in town, Allyson Krull gave me a tour of the city and a welcome basket as part of Cargill's investment in the Chamber's Community Concierge program. Through her guidance, I was able to find organizations, events, and local businesses that aligned with my interests.

By month two, I had explored Friday Night Live in Mason City, the farmers market, Lime Creek Nature Center, several LGBTQ Pride festivals in the area, and more! By month four, I had seen the Perseids meteor shower in the gorgeous clear night sky, visited the renowned Historic Park Hotel, canoed at the nature preserve, hunted fossils at the Fossil & Prairie Park Preserve, played bingo and sung karaoke at several bars, volunteered at the Community Kitchen, and was a regular gamer at Now and Then.

More than six months in, I have met some of the kindest, most welcoming folks and easily integrated into the midwestern lifestyle. I truly hope that everyone looking at relocating to Mason City will find the same level of fulfillment that I have – from their career to their home life and extracurriculars!

Maya Horvath is the Environmental Health and Safety Associate at Cargill Kitchen Solutions.

# Moving Resources

Navigating the home-buying and moving process is much easier when you have someone to call for help! While you can always call the Community Concierge for more information, you may also turn to one of our many experienced realtors, property managers, and moving companies for assistance. With such a wealth of reputable realtors, we recommend contacting several offices to find the right fit for you. Realtors listed in **bold** are sponsors of the Community Concierge service.

## Realtors

American Realty & Management Inc.  
info@americanrealty-ia.com | (641) 424-6705  
www.americanrealty-ia.com

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fred@benchmarkagribusiness.com | (641) 424-6983  
www.benchmarkagribusiness.com

Century 21 Preferred  
dodie.wilkins@century21.com | (641) 424-9400  
www.c21northiowa.com

Clear Lake Bank & Trust Co.  
contactus@clearlakebank.com | (641) 423-2457  
www.clearlakebank.com

EXIT Realty Mason City  
brian.m.carlson@hotmail.com | (641) 424-3005  
www.exitrealtymc.com

Fox Auction Company  
frank@foxauctioncompany.com | (641) 420-3243  
www.foxauctioncompany.com

Greater Mason City Board of Realtors  
gmcbor@gmail.com | (641) 423-1972  
www.masoncitymls.com

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pamhildebrand@yahoo.com | (641) 423-5055  
www.hildebrandrealestate.com

Jane Fischer and Associates LLC  
Jane@janefischer.com | (641) 424-4663  
www.janefischer.com

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mcquaidagency@cltel.net | (641) 357-3330  
www.mcquaidagency.com

Nora Springs Insurance  
office@noraspringsins.com | (641) 749-2505  
www.noraspringsins.com

Realty One Group Welcome Home  
krystle@rogwelcomehome.com | (641) 430-7654  
www.realtyonegroup.com

Schoneman Realtors, Inc.  
greg@schonemanrealtors.com | (641) 423-0500  
www.schonemanrealtors.com

## Rental Properties

American Realty & Management Inc.  
info@americanrealty-ia.com | (641) 424-6705  
www.americanrealty-ia.com

City Center Apartments  
ejkia@msn.com | (641) 424-6722  
www.masoncityapartments.com

Community Housing Initiatives  
aliciar@chihousing.com | (712) 262-5965  
www.chihousing.com

EXIT Realty Mason City  
brian.m.carlson@hotmail.com | (641) 424-3005  
www.exitrealtymc.com

TimberCrest at Glen Oaks Community  
kboyd@onevision.org | (641) 355-1203  
www.glenoakscommunity.org

Legacy Manor of Mason City  
janderson@anchor-group.org | (641) 494-9335  
www.legacymanormasoncity.com

M&E Enterprises  
petersbrandon75@yahoo.com | (641) 530-0288

North Iowa Corridor EDC (Egloff House)  
admin@northiowacorridor.com | (641) 423-0315

Pilgrim Place  
carol.sage@rhf.org | (641) 423-1215  
www.rhf.org/location/pilgrim-place

Spring Lake Townhomes & Suites  
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springlaketownhomesandsuites.com

The Clausen House  
theclausenhouse@gmail.com | (641) 425-3700  
www.vrbo.com/1493407

The River  
info@therivermasoncity.com | (641) 243-5803  
therivermasoncity.com

Tierney Properties  
xandrew@msn.com | (641) 425-7317  
www.tierneyproperties.com

Westview Corporation  
(641) 424-6705

## *Moving Companies*

Jeffrey Auto Repair Service (Authorized Penske Truck Rental Location)  
info@Jeffreyrepair.com | (641) 423-1310  
www.Jeffreyrepair.com

O'Brien Moving & Storage  
matt@obrienmoving.com | (641) 423-7915

## *Home Furnishing Rental*

Arona Home Essentials  
aronas35@aronaco.net | (641) 423-0450  
aronarents.com

## *Utilities & Necessary Services*

### **Natural Gas & Electrical Service**

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### **Water & Sewer Service**

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City of Clear Lake  
(641) 357-5267 | [cityofclearlake.com](http://cityofclearlake.com)

**Solid Waste & Recycling Service**  
Absolute Waste Removal  
(641) 357-4517 | [absolutewasteremoval.com](http://absolutewasteremoval.com)

City of Mason City  
(641) 421-3610 | [masoncity.net](http://masoncity.net)

Waste Management of Northern Iowa  
(641) 243-6003 | [www.wm.com](http://www.wm.com)

**Large Item Disposal/Hazardous Waste**  
Landfill of North Iowa  
(641) 357-5452 | [www.landfillnorthiowa.org](http://www.landfillnorthiowa.org)

**Cable/Internet Providers**  
CL Tel  
(844) 759-2589 | [www.cltel.com](http://www.cltel.com)

Mediacom  
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Metronet Inc  
(855) 769-0936 | [www.metronetinc.com](http://www.metronetinc.com)

OmniTel Communications  
(641) 749-2531 | [www.omnitel.biz](http://www.omnitel.biz)

Router12 Networks LLC  
(641) 420-7180 | [www.router12.net](http://www.router12.net)

**Cellular Phone Services**  
Cellular Advantage - US Cellular  
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Electronic Engineering Company  
(641) 423-6818 | [www.connectingyou.com](http://www.connectingyou.com)  
Eternity Wireless  
(641) 424-0454 | [www.eternitywireless.com](http://www.eternitywireless.com)

T-Mobile  
(641) 530-6118 | [t-mobile.com](http://t-mobile.com)

US Cellular  
(641) 425-8100 | [www.uscellular.com](http://www.uscellular.com)

**Newspaper**  
Globe Gazette  
(641) 421-0500 | [www.globegazette.com](http://www.globegazette.com)

**Driver's Licenses**  
Iowa Department of Transportation  
(515) 244-8425 | [iowadot.gov](http://iowadot.gov)

**Vehicle License/Registration**  
Cerro Gordo County Treasurer  
(641) 41-3033 | [www.cgcounty.org](http://www.cgcounty.org)

**Animal Licenses**  
Animal Medical Hospital  
(641) 423-6834 | [amhiowa.com](http://amhiowa.com)

City of Mason City  
(641) 421-3610 | [masoncity.net](http://masoncity.net)

Humane Society of North Iowa  
(641) 423-6241 | [www.hsni.org](http://www.hsni.org)

**Voting Registration**  
Cerro Gordo County Auditor's Office  
(641) 421-3034 | [www.cgcounty.org](http://www.cgcounty.org)

# Moving Checklist

Moving is stressful, but being prepared can help make the process easier. Here is a checklist to help you prepare for your upcoming relocation:

## TWO MONTHS BEFORE

- Organize Moving Files. If you're doing it digitally, organize a folder where you can keep all of your move-related paperwork and notes. If you prefer the old-fashioned way, buy a notebook/binder to keep you organized.
- Should It Stay or Should It Go? This is a great time to thin out your possessions. If you are downsizing, be mindful of what will fit in your new space.
- Find a Moving Company. We have several options listed in this guide or on [masoncityia.com](http://masoncityia.com). Take time to call and ask questions so you don't feel rushed.
- Get Supplies. Ideally, you'll want to pack up in stages, so buy the boxes, tape, markers, etc. you need now.
- Notify Schools. You've likely already researched the new school your child will be attending. Be sure to notify your current school that you will be leaving, and request the transcripts/forms your child will need to transfer.

## ONE MONTH BEFORE

- Medical Records: Get copies of your family's medical records, and begin researching a new family doctor.
- Book a Moving Company: You've already done the research, now it's time to confirm the date and time.
- Start Packing. Begin the arduous process of packing by boxing up the non-essentials. Don't forget the labels!
- Set Up Utilities. Notify your current utility services of your move and call to establish service in your new home.

## THREE WEEKS BEFORE

- Raid the Pantry. You don't want to move food if you don't have to. Plan ahead so you don't have a full refrigerator/pantry when moving day comes.
- Change Your Address. Head to [usps.gov](http://usps.gov) to change your home address and set up mail forwarding services. Notify banks and credit cards of your new address.
- Check Your Car. The last thing you need is to have car problems on your way to your new home. Have your car serviced, and don't forget to notify your auto insurance about your new address.

## TWO WEEKS BEFORE

- Pack, Pack, Pack. Don't forget to clearly label your boxes... and resist the urge to mark "miscellaneous" on them! Ensure your valuables are in a safe place, and remember to move them yourself.

## ONE WEEK BEFORE

- Cleaning Time. Whether you do it yourself or hire help, be courteous to the next family by leaving your home in good condition.
- Pack Your Suitcases. Anything you need right away should go in a separate bag, and take it with you in your vehicle. If your truck gets delayed, you'll know you have what you need.
- Don't Forget Your Pet. If you have a furbaby, make sure they are ready for the move. Pack a small bag with their necessities (food, toys, bones, kitty litter) and make a plan for safely transporting them to your new home.

## MOVING DAY

- Important Documents. Remember that organizing notebook/file? Have it at the ready for last-minute questions.
- Greet the Movers. Be ready when the movers arrive, and help them identify any large or fragile items before they get started. Have your contact information, new address, and directions printed for them. Finally, make sure you sign and keep a copy of the moving inventory list to ensure everything gets to your new home.
- Final Sweep. Before the truck leaves, do a final walkthrough of your home to ensure nothing was left behind and no damage occurred during the moving process.

## ONCE YOU ARRIVE

- Change the Locks. Unless you're moving into a newly-built home, you don't know how many keys may be floating around. A locksmith can easily take care of this and give you peace of mind.
- Meet the Neighbors. Introduce yourself to the families who live around you. Chances are, they're excited to meet their new neighbors and welcome you to North Iowa.

*Welcome Home!*





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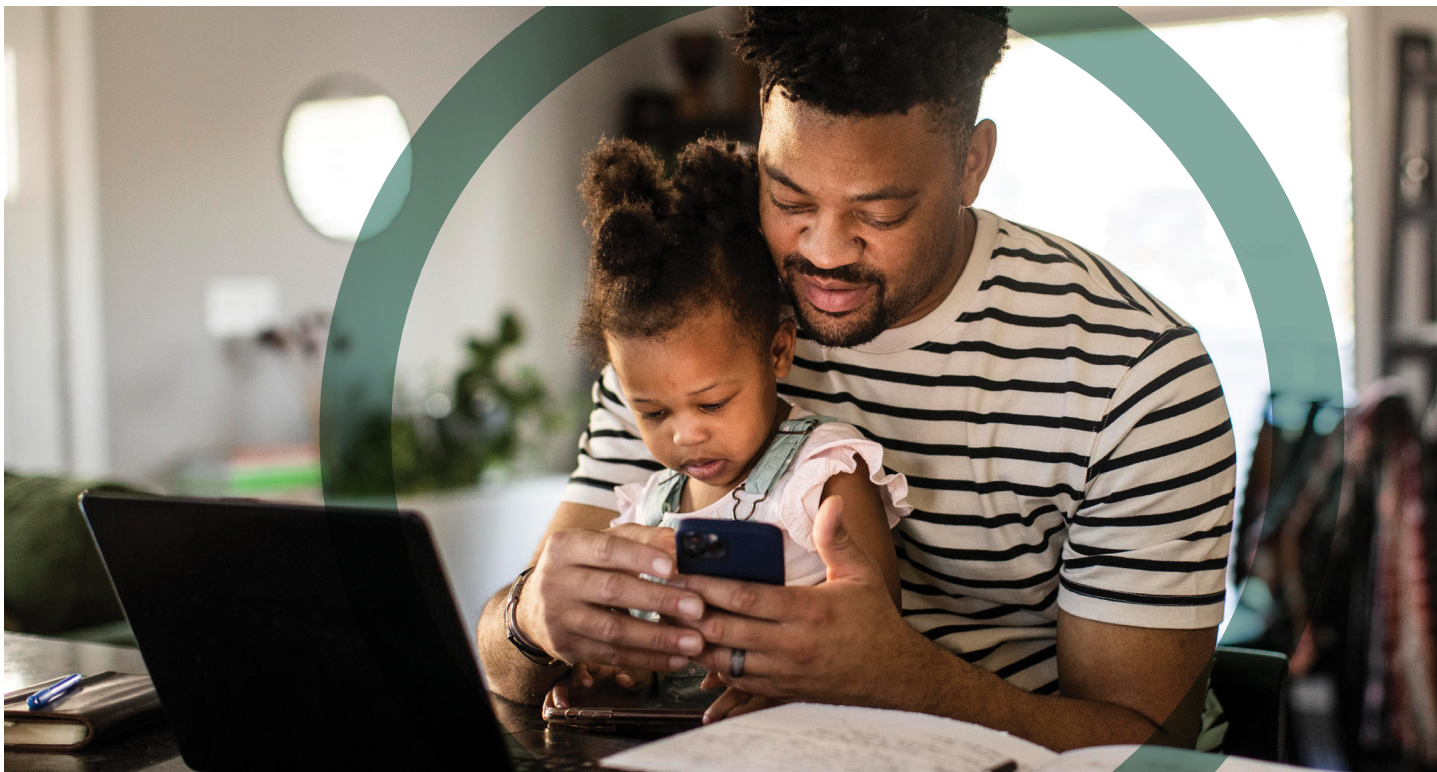
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