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CHAMBER QUARTLERY

VOLUME 3 | ISSUE 4 | WINTER 2022

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On the cover



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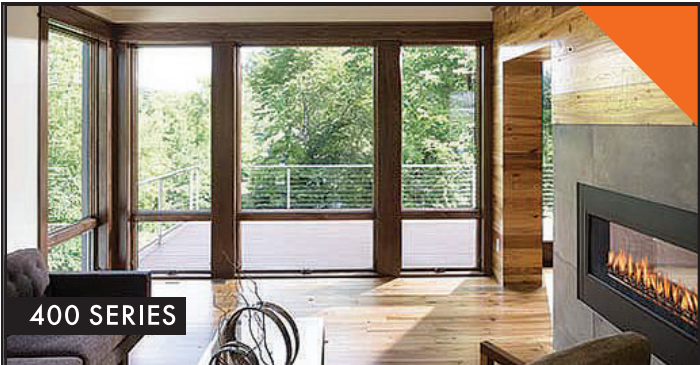
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Editor: Justine Paradiso  
Director of Production: Megan Gloss  
Design: Anthony Frenzel

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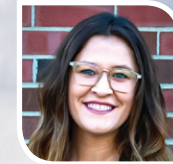
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# WELCOME FROM THE CHAMBER PRESIDENT /CEO



**H**oliday Greetings and welcome to the winter edition of the CQ!

Tis' the season to invest in your Ho-Ho-Home-town!

When it comes to getting the most out of our hard-earned dollars and we often look to strategies that provide a return on investment. One of the best and frequently taken for granted ROI's is the return on investment when you buy-local.

When you buy local you are making a personal investment in your community that returns roughly 70% of your purchases back into local activity. Consider every purchase a vote you make with your wallet. Buying locally means you are stimulating the local economy and in turn you help shape our unique character, charm, and personality.

The "shop local" marketing message is a common theme throughout communities across the nation, especially this time of year. However, we cannot just say "Shop Locally!" and expect to keep our economy vibrant and healthy. We have to do more. We have to be intentional. We have to take the time, and make the commitment spend our dollars here at home and support local businesses with our presence and patronage.

Use our "Keep it Home for the Holidays" campaign as your opportunity to commit to buying local. Shift your purchasing to your hometown where those dollars are reinvested in our community. You can use the Chamber's membership directory included in every issue of the CQ as your go-to buyers' guide for goods and services. Show the love for local this holiday season.

Make the most out of your purchase power this holiday season and keep your dollars home for the holidays.

Sincerely,

*Molly Grover*

President & CEO, CCE, IOM  
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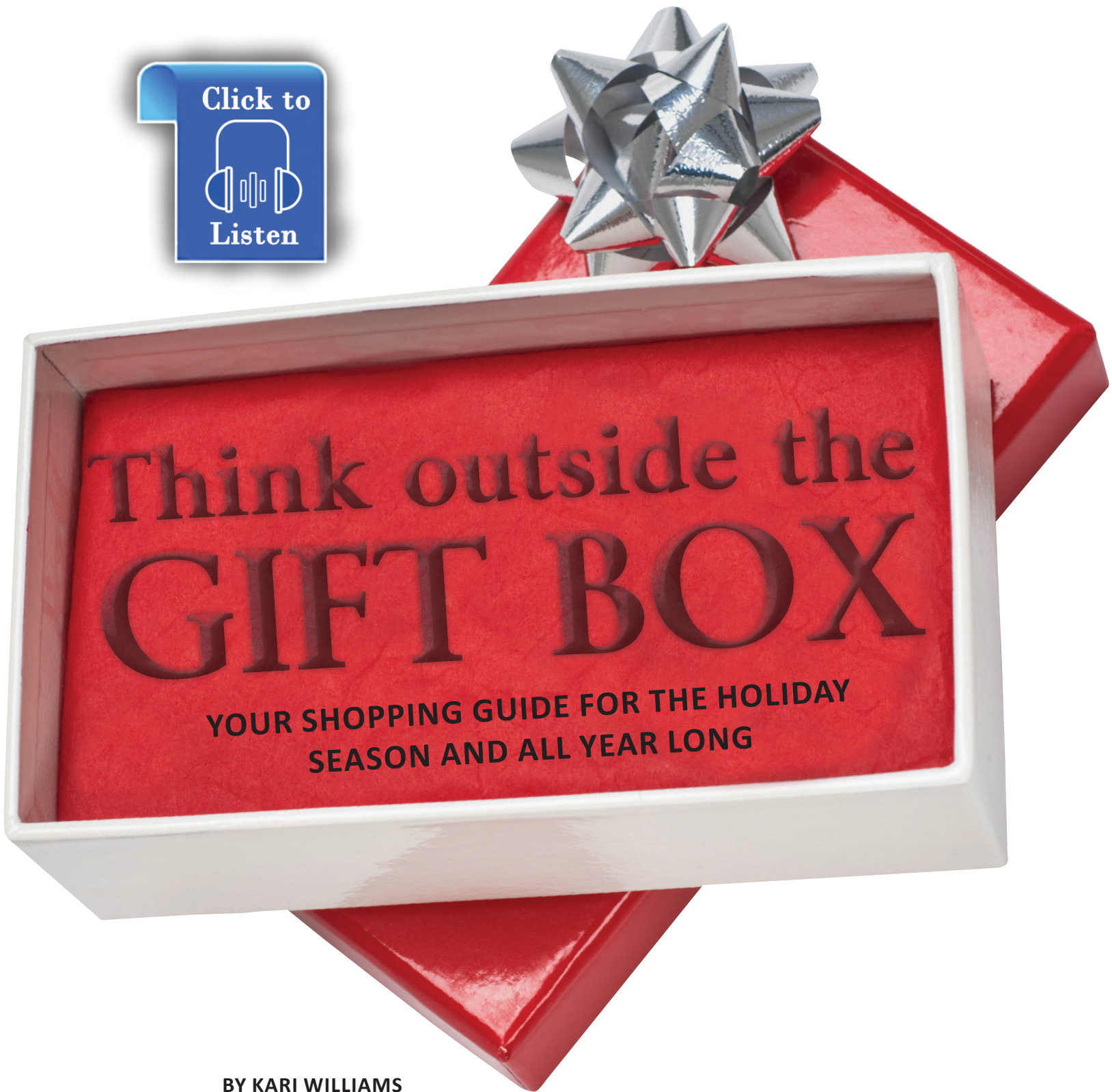
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**BY KARI WILLIAMS**

**H**oliday retail sales could increase up to 6% in 2022, according to management consulting company Deloitte. But in the greater Dubuque area, gift options extend beyond Black Friday sales for tangible items.

Continued on **page 16**



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# GIFT OF MEMBERSHIPS: SUNDOWN MOUNTAIN



The slopes at Sundown Mountain.

This year marks half a century that Sundown Mountain has been able to offer the gift of membership in the Dubuque area.

General Manager Mark Gordon said the resort has grown “exponentially” – especially in its first decade. In its first season, for example, Sundown had just a two-person chair lift, one rope tow and a single building. Now, the site, spanning 85 acres, has 21 trails of varying difficulty, two lodges, two terrain parks and more.

The resort’s most popular offerings include its season pass and the Weekend Warrior pass. Gordon said the Weekend Warrior option began five years ago.

“We start our season with our open house and season pass sale, and that’s the second Sunday in November,” he said. “It’s always the last time people in the area can get a pass and save \$100.”

Gordon said the “biggest segment” at the resort is children, whether they’re interested in learning to ski or just want



Skiers ride the chairlift at Sundown.

to enjoy the social activity at the lodge.

“It’s a great gift to get the kids off the computer games,” he said.

Gordon also has seen growth in the 40- to 50-year-old demographic.

The family owned ski resort, according to Gordon, is a “family friendly area” that welcomes everyone from those interested in joining a ski team to those who aren’t “really into traditional athletics,” but want a space to enjoy themselves.



People enjoy the slopes at Sundown Mountain.





# GIFT OF SERVICE: TIDINESS PROJECT

**“** I try to bring some humor and a little light heartedness to the work day ... It's kind of painful for the homeowner to have someone come in and help them. I pride myself with becoming quote-unquote friends after the process. **”**

**Heather Davis**

The Tidiness Project as a gift of service is a way for friends and family to “think outside the box,” according to founder Heather Davis.

“It’s a perfect gift for someone who has everything already, literally,” she said. “It’s easy for the gift giver too.”

Her niche has become dealing with clutter and “chronic disorganization,” she said.

“That seems to be where there’s a huge need for it in the community,” Davis said.

Her process includes a free consultation, where she and the client get to know each other and she’s able to see the spaces that will be organized. That, she said, allows her to return with a plan.

“I always work one-on-one with clients and homeowners,” she said. “I’ve never done any organizing without them there. I just find that being the third party that doesn’t have any emotional connections to their things ...

it becomes a lot easier to let things go.”

Plus, Davis said The Tidiness Project, which she started last July, is a way to jump start resolutions.

“I try to bring some humor and a little light heartedness to the work day,” she said. “... It’s kind of painful for the homeowner to have someone come in and help them. I pride myself with becoming quote-unquote friends after the process.”



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# GIFT OF ENTERTAINMENT: PHOENIX THEATRES

Phoenix Theatres has been in Kennedy Mall since April 6, 2018, and is the only theater in the area with heated, reclining seats, according to owner Cory Jacobson. And there's a consistent price policy.

"We don't upcharge for any of that," Jacobson said.

Showings typically cost \$5 in the afternoon till 5 p.m., then \$8.75 for evening showings. Children and senior tickets cost \$5 all day.

"Certain folks have loyalty programs. Our loyalty program is we give you what I feel is a price I would want to pay to see a movie 365 days a year," Jacobson said.

Plus, he said the prices haven't been raised since opening at Kennedy Mall in 2018.

"Our business in Dubuque has literally never been better, particularly over the summer,"

he said.

The movies, according to Jacobson, are for people looking for a night out or a day with their family – think dinner and a movie.

"I think we really exist in a different space [than streaming services] ... We've got great products in 2024, and 2023, so we're really excited where all this is going right now," he said. "We are expecting a really full release schedule next year and in the last quarter of this year."

For those considering Phoenix Theatres as a gift of entertainment, Jacobson said that in addition to all auditoriums being fitted with premium sound systems, there's also the ability to reserve seat tickets ahead of time through the website or mobile app.



Cars drive through Louis Murphy Park in Dubuque to experience Reflections in the Park.

# GIFT OF GIVING: HILLCREST FAMILY SERVICES REFLECTIONS IN THE PARK

Reflections in the Park has been Hillcrest Family Services' central fundraising event for nearly 30 years. It has grown from one volunteer wanting to do something for the company to "very much a community holiday event," according to John Bellini, chief business development officer.

"It's a family event from our perspective," Bellini said. "You can get together, listen to Christmas music over the holiday season. Get together with friends, colleagues, family members ... that's what brings people together."

For the past couple of years, Reflections in the Park has raised more than \$200,000

annually, with funds going directly to Hillcrest programs. Funds from previous events have gone toward the PATH program, homeless prevention program, Mentor Dubuque and the mental health center.

The most rewarding part of Reflections in the Park, according to Bellini, is connecting with volunteers. He said more than 200 volunteers help make the displays a reality.

This year's event kicks off with a walk-through event from 6-8 p.m. on Nov. 23 at \$10 per person and continues nightly as a drive-through experience from 5-10 p.m. Nov. 24 to Jan. 1 at \$10 in advance or \$12 at the gate.



Phoenix Theatres in Dubuque.



# GIFT OF EXPERIENCES: XTREME DANCE

Xtreme Dance is known for its elite competition, but that shouldn't make others shy away from the studio, according to owner Kylie Goedken.

"You don't have to be the elite competition route, you can just want to do it for fun," she said.

Kylie and her mother, Tracy, own Xtreme Dance, 1075 Cedar Cross Road, having purchased it in 2020. It resides at its original location under the original name Tessa Medinger used to establish the studio more than a decade ago.

"Our team went from like 50 to now we have almost 90. We've been trying to grow it," Kylie said. "We're really competition based, so a lot of people know us for being very competitive in the dance world. We're also trying to grow our recreational name."

Dancer ages range from 18 months to 18 years for recreational and competition classes. Xtreme Dance also has an all-start competition team, Iowa Elite. The studio offers a range of dance styles from jazz, hip hop and lyrical to ballet, contemporary and musical theater.

Kylie said there also are "mommy and me" and morning preschool classes.



Xtreme Dance performs during Bellevue Heritage Days.

The most popular classes, according to Kylie, are for ages 7 to 10, 4 to 7 and preschool. Classes run from September to the end of May, with an annual recital in June. The studio always is taking new

enrollments, which can be made through the registration tab on its website.

As of press time, Xtreme Dance was offering one free trial class to potential clients in any classes that have available space.

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# GIFT OF GIFTS: DOLAND JEWELERS

Jewelry is a good traditional gift over the holidays because it's a "symbol of love," according to Nick Doland, co-owner of Doland Jewelers.

"Here we try our best to make it easy on the guy because a lot of times they come in with zero ideas ... A lot of times we know the customer, so we already know what she's wearing and kind of guide him on to the next gift," Doland said.

The family owned jewelry store has been a Dubuque staple since the 1990s, and, according to Doland, continues to

see growth "year after year."

"A lot of it is repeat customers that we've treated well, and we're always looking to add new customers to that as well," he said. "A lot of new customers come to us by way of engagement rings and wedding bands."

While engagement rings and wedding bands are popular year-round, Doland said they "pick up a bit during the holidays."

"With family back in town [or you're] going to see family, you figure it's a good time to propose," he said. "The biggest

increase though is in what we would consider fashion jewelry."

Those items can be as basic as diamond-stud earrings – "which we think every woman should have in her jewelry wardrobe," Doland said – or tennis bracelets and diamond pendants.

"We pride ourselves on staying on top of trends," Doland said. "We always want to have what's popular available, and we run a broad range of products."

Customers can grab stocking stuffers for less than \$100 all the way up to big diamonds, according to Doland.



Nick Doland is the co-owner of Doland Jewelers in Dubuque.



Bridal rings at Doland Jewelers.



A view inside Doland Jewelers.



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# NEW KID ON THE BLOCK

## *Project Rooted*



Whitney Sanger, cofounder and president of Project Rooted, holds a basket full of seed kits in the Caradco Building in Dubuque.

**A** mother to five children, Whitney Sanger started to notice the way society viewed food “in our community specifically” and wanted to do something about it.

“And I realized just how much of an impact food has on the body, the mind, every aspect of our life,” Sanger said. “And so, I remember just being very in tune with what my kids were eating and how it affected their body ... [and] then started to think of all the children and families that just don’t have the luxury to choose ... when it comes to healthy eating, access to healthy foods.”



Continued on page 24

# Interiors... by design

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So in 2019, the idea for Project Rooted was born, and Sanger founded the group with Brazen Open Kitchen's Kevin Scharpf. The goal for the duo is to create a community in which children are healthier and "more connected to real food," according to the Project Rooted website.

Project Rooted is involved with a lot of community projects, one of the largest being The Rooted Box – a program in which first graders throughout Dubuque receive DIY snack kits that introduce them to local foods and local growers.

"There are fun healthy recipes they can use at home .... We use creativity and get to explore and see where food comes from through virtual field trips," Sanger said.

The project also includes "Rooted Bucks," which are \$5 certificates that can be used at any area farmers market.

Project Rooted joined the Dubuque Area Chamber of Commerce a few months ago, as of press time, following the organization's five-year strategic planning. The hope, according to Sanger, was to look at how Projected Rooted can build more partnerships in the community.

"[We] know the power of networking is so incredibly important in all aspects of your life," she said.

The benefits of joining the chamber, she said, are going to continue to develop



**Volunteers prepare vegetables to put in no-cost lunches for school children organized through Project Rooted at Convivium Urban Farmstead in Dubuque.**

over time as the relationship builds and new ways to market the organization are developed.

The chamber is "so intertwined" in advocacy, particularly in relation to local food and education, according to Sanger,

which will provide learning opportunities as their relationship grows.

Plus, because Project Rooted is so new, Sanger said, they don't have a physical space and have related heavily on partnerships.



**Sanger helps prepare vegetables for no-cost lunches.**



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# BEEN AROUND THE BLOCK

## *Theisen's Home, Farm, & Auto*



A customer browses through Theisen's in Dubuque.

**T**heisen's Home, Farm & Auto has been a Dubuque staple since 1927, starting out with a single storefront and selling just batteries and tires. But in the decades since, the company has expanded to two dozen stores across Iowa and Wisconsin and more than 1,000 employees.



Continued on page 28



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—Tim Althaus, President and Whiskey Buyer

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# PLATTEVILLE, Wis. HOLIDAY EVENTS

Nov. 19 - Craft Fair

Nov. 25 - Free holiday movie

Nov. 25-Dec. 20 - Jolly Jingle

Shop Local Promotion

Nov. 26 - Small Business Saturday

Nov. 26 - Santa Stroll on Main St.

Nov. 27 - Artists Sunday

Dec. 2-3 - Katie's Garden Winter Wonderland

Dec. 2-Jan. 1 - Katie's Trees of Light Display

Dec. 2, 9, 16 - Hometown Friday Nights  
with carriage rides, roasted chestnuts & more!

Dec. 3 - QueenB Radio Auction

Dec. 9 - Katie's Garden Winter Wonderland

Dec. 10 - Quota Club Fancy Cookie Sale

Dec. 14 - QueenB Radio's

Interview with Santa

Dec. 16 - Katie's Garden

Singing Santa



adno-311206

FOR DETAILS, VISIT [WWW.PLATTEVILLE.COM](http://WWW.PLATTEVILLE.COM)

The company's most recent change was to eliminate automotive tire sales, repairs and automotive service, BizTimes.biz reported in February. However, warranty repairs for power equipment and power sports purchases were implemented. No employees were terminated as part of that process.

In 2019, Theisen's was named the Dubuque Area Chamber of Commerce's Business of the Year.

"We try to be as involved in Dubuque as we can be, and it is nice to be recognized for the work that we do," Peter Theisen told BizTimes.biz at the time.

In addition to serving as a go-to resource for the community in the retail sphere, Theisen's does its part to give back as well through the Theisen's More for your Community Grant Program.

Agencies that meet certain criteria within a 60-mile radius of a Theisen's location can receive funds to "jumpstart and/or sustain projects, which most effectively and directly serve the basic needs of families and children which include food, shelter, education, safety and health," according to the Theisen's website.

The grant program puts \$350,000 annually back into the community.

The farm store's Dubuque location has been at its current site on Dodge Street since 1979, with expansions in 2003 and 2009.



Customers shop for hunting clothing at the Theisen's store in Dubuque.



Customers shop for clothes at Theisen's store in Dubuque.

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# THROUGH THE CAMERA LENS



YP enjoyed a night on the Dupaco Voices rooftop to honor the YP Champions who promote YP in their organization. Huge thank you to Joe Hearn and the Dupaco team for letting us use their space.



Tama-Lea Lorenzen (center) was the YP speaker for our September luncheon. Tama-Lea shared How to Recognize and Apply the 6 Tools of Personal Influence.

# THROUGH THE CAMERA LENS



Joni Ernst and Ryan Sempf.



Joni Ernst and Molly Grover.



Rick Lorenzen, Joni Ernst and Allie Kutch.



Joni Ernst and Dan Sullivan

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# THROUGH THE CAMERA LENS



Leadership Dubuque class of 2023 spent a beautiful day at Four Mounds rope course with Seth Sample and his team from Team Building Blocks to work on, you guessed it, team building.



# THROUGH THE CAMERA LENS



Chamber staff pose for a picture with candidate Michael Franken at Politics & Eggs.



Chamber staff pose for a picture with Representative Ashley Hinson at Politics & Eggs.

Chamber staff pose for a picture with candidate Liz Mathis at Politics & Eggs.



Chamber staff pose for a picture with Senator Chuck Grassley at Politics & Eggs.



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# RIBBON CUTTINGS



**Tri-State Independent Blind Society 50 year anniversary**  
Date: 7/20/2022  
1068 Cedar Cross Road



**St. Stephen's Food Bank 40th anniversary**  
Date: 7/21/2022  
2811 Kackson St.



**Viking Cruise**  
Ribbon Cutting Date: 9/6/2022  
Port of Dubuque



**Viking Cruise**  
Ribbon Cutting Date: 9/6/2022  
Port of Dubuque

# RIBBON CUTTINGS



## Legacy Made Xperience LLC

Ribbon Cutting Date: 9/8/2022  
1486 Central Ave.



## Resurrection Elementary School

Ribbon Cutting Date: 8/21/2022  
4320 Asbury Road



## Holy Ghost Early Childhood

Ribbon Cutting Date: 9/18/2022  
2981 Central Ave.



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# RIBBON CUTTINGS



## District 20

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2400 Kerper Blvd, Suite B60



## Dubuque Food Pantry

Ribbon Cutting Date: 9/22/2022  
1598 Jackson St.



## River City Logistics

Ribbon Cutting Date: 9/15/2022  
131 W. 10th St.

# RIBBON CUTTINGS



**Fox Den Motel and Kitchen Brigade**  
 Ribbon Cutting Date: 9/22/2022  
 920 Main St.



**A&G Electric**  
 Ribbon Cutting Date: 9/1/22  
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# RIBBON CUTTINGS



## American Queen Cruise

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Port of Dubuque



## American Splendor Cruise

Ribbon Cutting Date: 8/12/2022  
Port of Dubuque



## American Dutchess Cruise

Ribbon Cutting Date: 7/28/2022  
Port of Dubuque