

THANK YOU

TO POTTAWATTAMIE COUNTY

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS FOR THEIR GENEROUS FUNDING.















Find Your Fire



MINDEN, IOWA





THANK YOU TO OUR CITY SPONSORS



Because of you, we continue our efforts in the success of our rural western Iowa communities. Together, we make a difference. Together, WE ARE WIDA.

Western Iowa Development Association

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER



IN THIS ISSUE



- 1 Sponsor Thank You
- 2-3 Warm WIDA Welcome
 - 4 NEW WIDA Board Member
 - 5 Hitchcock House
 - 6 Small Business Facebook Tips
 - 7 Thank You to WIDA Members
 - 8 Testimonial + Member Info
 - 9 Passport Program
- 10 City of Minden Update
- 11 New Member Spotlight
- 12-13 Upcoming Events
 - 14 Ribbon Cutting Info
 - 15 WIDA Board
 - 16 County Resources
 - 17 Connect With Us

A WARM WIDA WELCOME

MRS. B'S HELPING HANDS

-Bringing Compassionate Care to Your Doorstep

In today's fast-paced world, the goal of living independently and demand for in-home services that comfortably. cater to basic daily living needs is steadily increasing. One such provider makina difference in the lives of families and clients is Mrs. B's Helping Hands, founded by Julie, a dedicated professional with a wealth of experience in social work.

Mrs. B's Helping Hands offers a wide range of in-home services, including assistance cooking, housekeeping, dressing, bathing, medication Hands laundry, administration, client's vehicle, using the engaging importantly, companionship. At the heart of their mission is the commitment to helping clients accessibility and affordability for achieve their

Julie's journey into the field of inhome care began in 1995, after graduating from UNO. She has since held various roles, but her passion for providing direct care to individuals, coupled with her managerial experience, culminated in the realization of her career dream in 2008.

After responding to a Facebook post in 2024 from a man in need of care at home, Mrs. B's Helping officially commenced transportation operations on October 8, 2024, at 8:30 AM. While currently activities, and, most accepting private pay clients, Julie is working toward insurancebased options, ensuring those in need.

We are excited to welcome Mrs. B's Helping Hands to our WIDA community. Cnt'd page 2.

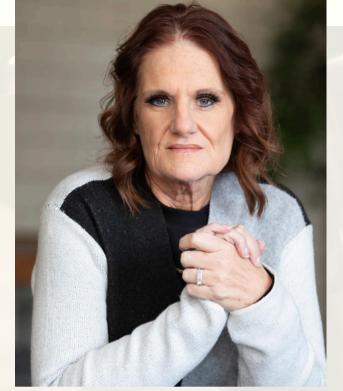
LIVE . WORK . EXPLORE . THRIVE







WIDAIOWA.ORG



Julie Bishop | Walnut, IA

Julie's dedication to her community extends beyond her professional endeavors, as she actively engages in initiatives in Walnut, Iowa. With a strong focus on personal care assistance and social work, Julie stands apart as a caregiver, distinguishing herself from home health aides or CNAs.

The future looks bright for in-home services like Mrs. B's Helping Hands, with the Bureau of Labor and Statistics projecting a 21% growth in demand from 2023 to 2033-a testament to the vital role play such services in supporting individuals and families.

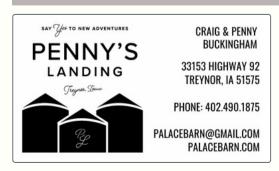
As Mrs. B's Helping Hands continues to evolve, Julie remains committed to providing compassionate care and making a meaningful impact in the lives of those she serves. With the support of

organizations like WIDA (Western Iowa Development Association), her business is positioned for growth and expansion into rural communities. Through guidance and resources from WIDA, she is gaining valuable insight into business development, funding opportunities, and community outreach, further reinforcing the importance of personalized, in-home care services in today's society.

For more information or to inquire about services, contact Mrs. B's Helping Hands today and discover how Julie can help bring compassionate care to you or your loved ones.



Contact Mrs. B's Helping Hands: mrsbshelpinghandsllc@gmail.com 531-203-4507 Facebook: Mrs. B's Helping Hands





Find Your Fire











WELCOMING WIDA'S NEWEST BOARD MEMBER

Meet Jayme

Jayme Busch is the owner of Unique Boutique Iowa in Neola, a small business dedicated to offering quality, affordable clothing and accessories for everyone. She also works full-time as the Development & Events Director for the nonprofit AIM Institute. where she leads community partnerships, fundraising initiatives, and event planning to support AIM's mission of building a strong and diverse tech community.

A native of Bellevue, Nebraska, and a graduate of Bellevue University, Jayme has a diverse background in healthcare, education, community outreach, and business. She is passionate about empowering particularly individuals, Southwest Iowa, through event planning, program development, and advocacy for education and career readiness.

Jayme lives on a small acreage outside of Neola, Iowa, with her husband of 10 years and their three daughters. Their home is also filled with horses and 4-H animals, reflecting the family's love for agriculture and rural life.

In addition to her career, Jayme dedicates time as a travel softball coach and actively participates in

local events, school activities, and volunteer efforts, further demonstrating her commitment to community growth and engagement.















Unveiling Rich History of Reverend George B. Hitchcock

"a hidden basement room that harbored freedom seekers beneath the vigilant eyes of Reverend Hitchcock."

DISCOVER OUR HERITAGE

Immerse yourself in the enchanting world of the George B. Hitchcock House, a distinguished living history museum. Recognized as a National Historic Landmark and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, our museum offers guided tours. unveiling tales of resilience and triumph for just \$5 on Thursdays to Sundays from May to September.

A REVERED LEGACY

Journey back to the year 1853 when Reverend George Hitchcock, in pursuit of his noble ambitions, established a church in Indian town, lowa, alongside supporting the clandestine network of the underground railroad. The saga unfolds as the Hitchcock family resided in a humble cabin before transitioning to the very house we explore today, featuring a hidden basement room that harbored freedom seekers beneath the vigilant eyes of Reverend Hitchcock.



A JOURNEY THROUGH TIME

Since its completion in 1856, the Hitchcock House has witnessed over a century of history, serving as a cherished homestead and farm for the Hitchcock family until eventual neglect. Thanks to the vision and dedication of Zoe Kay and Alice in 1977, the house saw a miraculous restoration, opening its doors for captivating tours in the 1980s.

UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCES AWAIT

Embark on a guided tour through the grounds and various levels of the house, including the intriguing basement where freedom seekers once sought solace. Engage with the poignant history as you stand above the secret room, imagining the struggles and resilience of those who walked these hallowed grounds.

EXCITING UPDATES AND EVENTS

We are thrilled to announce the addition of Venmo payments this year! Stay tuned for a myriad of captivating events, including a possible Civil War reenactment and special days like Pioneer Skills Day. Join us on May 2nd and 3rd from 1-5 for an enriching experience and great photo opportunities!

Stay tuned for updates!

FACEBOOK: George B. Hitchcock House



















5 TIPS WHEN USING FACEBOOK FOR YOUR SMALL BUSINESSES



Using Facebook for your small business can help you reach customers and build relationships. Here are key tips to make the most of your Facebook presence:

- 1. <u>Create a Complete Business Profile</u>: Ensure your profile is fully filled out with accurate information like your business name, address, phone number, and website to build credibility and make it easy for customers to find you.
- 2. Post Regularly and Consistently: Engage your audience with a variety of content, such as promotions, new products, behind-the-scenes looks, and industry news. Posting a few times a week helps maintain visibility.
- 3. <u>Engage with Your Audience</u>: Respond to comments, messages, and reviews quickly. Encourage interaction by asking questions and running polls to build a sense of community.
- 4. <u>Use Facebook Ads</u>: Target a specific audience using Facebook's ad tools, experimenting with different ad formats to see what works best for your business.
- 5. <u>Leverage Facebook Insights</u>: Use the platform's analytics to track engagement and refine your content strategy based on performance data.

COLLINS

CONSULTING INC.

2025 WIDA BUSINESS MEMBERSHIP PACKAGES UPDATED ON PAGE 8



















A VERY BIG WIDA

ALL OUR BUSINESS MEMBERS













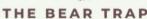














COLLINS









































SWEET VALE CREATIONS



IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY Extension and Outreach











Together, we make a difference. Together, WE ARE WIDA.











Stacie's been great to work with so far. She's incredibly supportive of my small business. When she was delivering the orders she picked up from me, she was talking me up big time to the Avoca office not knowing the clerk is one of my best friends. I assume she did this with every office, but her words were very much appreciated!

Kim Canada | Frosting Inc. Walnut, IA

WIDA Business Membership Levels

BRONZE

MEMBERSHIP



\$200°°

Per Year

- Listed on WIDA website as member
- Listed on WIDA Annual Report as a member
- WIDA membership window decal
- Receive WIDA quarterly e-newsletter
- Access to Ribbon Cuttings for special events
- Promotion of news releases, when made available
- Event postings on WIDA calendar, when made available
- Opportunity for a "Did You Know?" highlight on social media
- Promo flyers on our website, when made available
- Business-card ad in 4 consecutive WIDA e-newsletters
- · Listed in WIDA business directory

SILVER

MEMBERSHIP



\$500°°

Per Year

- Bronze Elements Plus
- Welcome write up in WIDA e-newsletter
- Mini branding photoshoot with Stacie Kinney

BEST VALUE

GOLD

MEMBERSHIP



\$ 1000 °C

Per Year

- Bronze + Silver Elements Plus
- WIDA town landing page sponsor
- · Event organizational checklists
- Tourism venues listed on Travellowa.com
- Front page welcome in WIDA's e-newsletter
- Marketing materials upon request
- Grant review and proofreading upon request











Find Your Fire









Contact Stacie at westerniowadevelopment@outlook.com





The world is waiting





PASSPORT PROGRAM

Spring Gotcha Missing Summer Teaser: Blooming Adventures Await in Southwest Iowa!

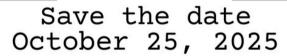
Spring is in the air, and so is the anticipation for summer adventures! Just like the flowers are blooming, exciting things are growing in Southwest lowa.

Remember the Summer Staycation Passports program? We're back for a second year, blossoming with evenmore opportunities to Unleash Your Inner Explorer!

Get ready to discover new hidden gems, conquer thrilling challenges, and win fantastic prizes. We're planting the seeds for an unforgettable summer, and you won't want to miss the harvest!

Stay tuned for the official launch date and all the details. This summer, Southwest Iowa is calling... will you answer?

#SummerStaycationSWIA #ExploreSWIA #SpringIntoSummer #ComingSoon #ruralpassport





If you or your business would like to become a sponsor at this event please email

themercantilemarketavoca@gmail.com for more information













MINDEN CELEBRATES
150 YEARS IN 2025
CONGRATULATIONS, MINDEN!





CITY OF MINDEN SECURES NEARLY \$1.2 MILLION IEDA AWARD TO SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Information from Feb 3, 2025 press release by Bethany Wilcoxon

Minden, Iowa - Community partnerships continue to drive progress forward in tornado stricken Minden. The latest support comes from the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) through a Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery award in the amount of \$1,172,042.

The IEDA award will support the development of three duplexes near Depot Street and Main Street, creating six new affordable housing units. The units will be developed by Habitat for Humanity of Council Bluffs and Neola-based Cook Construction & Remodeling.

"The support from IEDA is truly laying the foundation for new housing in Minden," stated Mayor Kevin Zimmerman. "This funding is helping us to meet our community's needs in a targeted and strategic manner."

The duplexes will be constructed on land the City purchased with support from the Community Foundation for Western Iowa. The Metropolitan Area Planning Agency, which prepared the successful IEDA application, will administer the grant.

"The collaboration that allowed us to be in the position we are today has been unprecedented," said Blake Johnson, Habitat for Humanity of Council Bluffs Executive Director. "We are thrilled to be part of Minden's recovery efforts and are anxious to get started on these six units."

Construction is anticipated to begin in the spring, with the units expected to be listed for sale in the fall. The two bedroom, two bathroom units will each be nearly 1,300 square feet.

For more information on the City's overall tornado recovery efforts, visit mindeniowa.com/recovery.

Randall Cody Branch Manager



Office: Address:

Email: NMLS ID: 712-484-2220 x5501 418 S. Commercial St. PO Box 96, Carson, IA 51525 rcody@rollinghillsbank.com 528217



















NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



RADIANT SUNSET

Hand Poured in Iowa Net weight 80z/226

Sweet Vale Creations | Avoca, IA

SWEET VALECREATIONS | AVOCA

-Where Memories Meet Scents

Nestled in the charming town of Avoca, Sweet Vale Creations is not just a candle company - it's a journey through scents and stories. From humble beginnings as a hobby to a thriving business, we craft pieces that bring joy and nostalgia into your life. Whether you're seeking a cozy candle, a unique breast milk ring, or a refreshing car diffuser, we're here to help you create lasting memories with our handcrafted products.

F S Our scents are more than just fragrances - each one carries a special tale, carefully curated to evoke emotions and memories. Named after the Sweet Vale of Avoca, our business is a tribute to our roots and our commitment to providing safe, quality products. We take pride in using natural ingredients, such as soy wax, to

create clean candles that are safe for your home and family.

At Sweet Vale Creations, we believe in the power of shared stories. One of our favorite customer experiences involved a breast milk piece that symbolized gratitude and friendship. Each interaction with our customers inspires us to keep creating, sharing, and spreading the love



As a business owner, my advice is simple: Stay passionate, seek support, and be true to your vision. The journey may have its challenges, but with dedication and love for what you do, you can overcome any obstacle. Let your passion guide you, and others will follow.

We're proud to be part of the WIDA community, where support

and awareness for rural businesses are nurtured. By staying connected and involved, we can thrive together, making a difference in our community.

How can you support us? Join us at the local farmer's market, engage with us at community events, and spread the word about Sweet Vale Creations. Your support, feedback, and encouragement mean the world to us as we continue to grow and create. Let's build a stronger, more vibrant community together!

Join us on this fragrant journey of memories and scents. Explore our collection, share your stories, and be a part of our Sweet Vale family. Let's create beautiful memories together!



#SweetValeCreations #HandcraftedWithLove #CommunitySupport



#CommunitySupport











HARNESS

DOES YOUR BUSINESS CARD NEED UPDATED?

Email image to:

westerniowadevelopment@outlook.com









UPCOMING EVENTS



St Patrick's Hall, Neola IA

When: Friday, March 7

Friday, March 28 Friday, March 14 Friday, April 4

Friday, March 21

Friday, April 11

Serving Time: 5:00 P.M. - 7:00 P.M.

Adults: \$15.00 - Children (5-10 Yrs.): \$5.00 -Children Under 5: Free

Dinner includes: Fried Alaskan Pollock. Baked Potato, Orsi's Bread, Cole Slaw, Relishes, & Dessert!

(May substitute grilled cheese sandwich for fish)

For Questions, contact the Parish Office at 712.485.2750 For Carry Out's call 712.485.2433







WALNUT, IOWA 51577 PHONE 712-784-3788











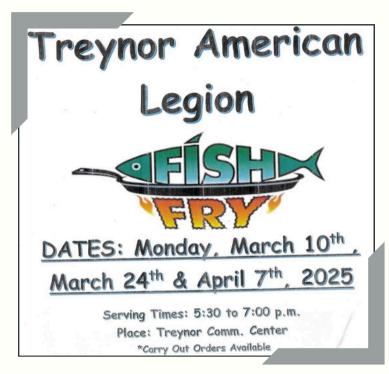






















RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY INFORMATION



Minden Bowl GRAND REOPENING | 209 Broadway St



On your upcoming business milestone! Whether you're opening a new business, celebrating an anniversary, or relocating/expanding an existing business in western lowa, we are thrilled for your success and grateful for the opportunity to assist you in commemorating this special occasion. Our services for ribbon cutting ceremonies are entirely free for businesses in our area.

WHY HOLD A RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY?

This event serves as a significant milestone in the history of your business and presents an excellent photo opportunity to capture the moment. It allows the owner to introduce themselves to the attendees and the wider community, explaining the nature of their business. Additionally, a ribbon cutting ceremony provides a platform to express gratitude to financial backers, employees, family, friends, and business partners. We, at WIDA, can coordinate with city officials, invite our Board of Directors and business members, and promote the event on our website, Facebook page, and newsletter (if submitted ahead). Our staff will arrive with ceremonial scissors and ribbon, as well as capture photos to be shared on our social media platforms and in our next newsletter. We have a wide reach within western lowa, and we want others to hear about your business.

THINGS TO CONSIDER FOR YOUR RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY:

- Who will cut the ribbon? It is common for owners or top executives to perform this honor, but ultimately, the choice is yours.
- When will you hold the event? We recommend Wednesday-Fridays, during the lunch hour, late afternoon, or early evening to attract the largest crowds. It's also advisable to promote the event 3-4 weeks in advance to maximize attendance and exposure.
- What would you like to share before cutting the ribbon? You can express
 gratitude towards those who supported you throughout the journey,
 share the story behind your business, or mention any special offers or
 upcoming events. Please limit your speech to three minutes or one page
 of notes.
- How can you maximize the event? Make sure to invite your family, friends, and clients. Consider hosting a drawing or raffle to collect business cards and expand your database. While drinks, refreshments, decorations, and door prizes are optional, keep in mind that the ribbon cutting ceremony itself is typically short. However, your grand opening celebration with others can continue as long as you wish.















Small Town Feel, Big City Heart.

Meet the WIDA Board

At our core, we are the voice of business, dedicated to supporting members' our success. ultimate goal is to champion and promote the prosperity of our communities.



PRESIDENT Kevin Zimmerman



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Stacie Kinney



VICE PRESIDENT Mike Holton



Brian Shea



Ron Kroll



Susan Miller

MEMBERSHIP DRIVEN **COMMUNITY GROWN**

WIDA continues its efforts to engage members and the community through its website, social media platforms, electronic newsletters (print newsletters as requested), as well as email communication.



Trace Frahm



Jayme Busch

LIVE • WORK • EXPLORE • THRIVE







POTTAWATTAMIE COUNTY RESOURCES

ELECTED OFFICIALS

>>> CARSON

Mayor

Adam Houser

City Clerk

Kristina Hansen (712) 484-3636 carsoncc@futuretk.com

>>> HANCOCK

Mayor

Vince Guyer

City Clerk

Kimberly Gress (712) 741-5665

>>> MACEDONIA

Mayor

Melia Clark

City Clerk

Liz Alff

(712) 486-2323 macedoniacityhall@gmail.com

>>> MCCLELLAND

Mayor

Mitchell A. Kay

City Clerk

Denise Magnuson (402) 670-1062 magnuson1971@gmail.com

>>> MINDEN

Mayor

Kevin Zimmerman

City Clerk

Teresa Tenner (712) 483-2991 ttenner@walnutel.net

>>> NEOLA

Mayor

Karla Pogge

City Clerk

Heidi Erwin (712) 485-2307 neolacityclerk@walnut.net

>>> OAKLAND

Mayor

Brant A. Miller

City Clerk

Marissa Lockwood (712) 482-6811 oaklandclerk@frontiernet.net

>>> SHELBY

Mayor

Ron Kroll

City Clerk

Chris Martin (712) 544-2404 smu2@walnutel.net

>>> TREYNOR

Mayor

Allen Hadfield

City Clerk

Michael Holton
(712) 487-3787
cityhall@cityoftreynor.com







LIVE • WORK • EXPLORE • THRIVE









WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

WIDA is asking our members to keep us in mind when you want to share your business events, successes and information with the community. There is no cost to you as a member. Whether it is exciting news regarding your business or an upcoming event, we will find the perfect way to showcase your information. Send a description of what you would like to share, and we will be happy to place your news in our newsletter and on the WIDA Facebook page.

Send your business news by the 20th of every month to: WesternlowaDevelopment@outlook.com to be included in the newsletter. For more information, you can also call us at (712) 406-6234.

Our members benefit from the visibility that we bring to the local business community, including opportunities to connect with potential customers and partners, as well as access to resources and support to help you succeed. Additionally, WIDA provides a platform for members to share their stories and experiences so that others can learn from their successes. We hope you make the most of your WIDA membership and that it helps you to continue to grow your business!



3 K FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS



801 **INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS**



1,514 NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIBERS

Your generous and ongoing support provides our 501(c)6 nonprofit organization with the resources necessary to promote our members and western lowa communities, advocate for a favorable economic climate and quality lifestyle, and promote overall tourism in the region. Building strong, thriving business communities takes each of us working together, and WIDA is proud to serve as a resource, connection, and voice for business.





