

**PICTURE PERFECT** "I have always loved taking pictures. I can't remember a time when I didn't have a camera of some sort handy. I love the idea of seeing different perspectives of things, different lighting, different angles. I have always wanted to capture small moments that tell a story about an event. I went from instamatic cameras, to polaroids, to film and 35mm cameras. I have bought different lenses and tried my hand at landscapes, people watching, and closeups. I studied in France all through college, and then traveled a lot throughout Europe, so naturally I wanted to take pictures of everything: monuments, people, food. Then I had a child, so needless to say, at 28 years old, she has a closet full of scrapbooks to share with her future children! I also love to scrapbook and create stories that will hopefully survive a few generations. I have taken several classes, some in person, and now some online, which have challenged me to continue to grow and improve. I have done several family weddings as a 2nd shooter, a lot of dance recitals and sporting events, and even a newborn session during the beginning of COVID when the mom didn't trust anyone else with the baby yet. I'm not a fan of those stressful events, but I'm usually willing to give it a try if the people are patient and don't expect a lot of editing. I make a lot of cards and canvases with my prints, and who knows, someday maybe I'll have a booth at the local farmers' markets! For now, it's a very therapeutic and relaxing hobby for me," said **Mel Cramer**.

**SEMPER FIDELIS** "From 1997-2001, I served in the US Marine Corps (Infantry), and from 2004-2008 in the US Army National Guard (Combat Medic/Combat Arms Advisor). The military was a great experience for me. It taught me discipline, teamwork, goal setting, leadership traits, and a will to accomplish. Virtues that I truly needed to learn as a young adult. I do miss the camaraderie with the Marines, Sailors, and Soldiers I served with," said **Pat Farley**.



**GET CREATIVE** "I am a ceramic artist, and I create everything from pottery to jewelry to sculpture. I create imaginative abstract ceramic sculptures which are inspired by nature. I focus on the growth and movement in my sculptures. I love creating art, and it runs in the family. My mom is a painter, and it started when my mom took me to the Des Moines Art Center when I was 13 years old to take my first pottery class. Ever since, I loved clay and wanted to create pottery for a living. During my college years, I figured out I loved to create clay sculptures. I have sold and shown my artwork at the Des Moines Art Festival, Marion Arts Festival, NewBo Art Festival, and Waukee Arts Festival. I like to create my art and sell during the summer festivals to get my artwork out there and create a name for myself. I have shown in many galleries and exhibitions, most recently including my solo exhibition *Regain*," said **Madalyn Loring**.

**PAGEANT PRINCESS** "I won *Little Miss Iowa* when I was seven and again when I was twelve. My mom entered me in the contests. I think she enjoyed the process and activities more than I did. My *talent* portion of the contest when I was 12 was playing *Proud Mary* on my saxophone and doing a ventriloquist bit. I don't miss it. I don't believe girls should be taught that they are judged on their appearance. I threw away the scale when my own daughters started obsessing with their weight. I believe we should teach girls (and boys) to focus on other aspects. Like just being nice to people and being confident in who you are," said **Jeri Jass**.



## LONG LIVE ROCK N' ROLL

"I play drums. I have since I was 17. I've always loved music and when I was able to afford a drum set, I bought one. I've been in a few different bands since I was probably 19. We played around Iowa and have recorded in several studios around the Midwest. We've been played on a few radio stations in central Iowa and of course our newer stuff is on all the streaming platforms. My favorite part is playing with my lifelong best friends and having an outlet to be creative and, of course, it's a stress relief. COVID put a halt on almost everything, so we haven't played live in quite some time, but we've been making records," said **Dave Burtnett**.



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