

**GRABER/**  
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father [Lynn], the art of storytelling. In our work, we really find a joy in explaining what we're doing and explaining how [a homeowner's] system works or the differences in the systems you can purchase. We really enjoy and get pleasure in educating and sharing the information that we have with the client or customer."

"Some of these systems are a mystery to the homeowner. They either work or they don't," Shawn says. "If we come along and we can explain a few things, I've heard so much appreciation for [that]."

In a society in which most of us sustain careers as specialists in our chosen field, we depend on others to help us out in most other areas of our lives. We're generally comfortable not knowing everything, but we do want to understand enough to be able to make wise decisions. Making the mechanisms behind complex equipment understandable to a non-specialist takes time and patience, an effort that not every business is willing to expend.

But the Grabers are different.

"I started as a teenager working with my dad, and I saw how interested the customer was in watching this new

furnace being put in," Shane explains. "I thought, you know what, we do this every day, but to them it's once in 20 years. It's a big deal."

"That was where I learned, if they want to watch or if they want to ask questions, embrace it," he says. "It's 10 more minutes for me, but it's once in a lifetime for them."

That empathy and respect for the customer may have trickled down from first generation and founder Dan Graber, who, together with son Lynn, insisted on treating customers like family. They do this in many ways, including showing customers options for equipment that would work best for them and letting them make their own choice; providing fair cost estimates and sticking to them; and by hiring employees that share and express these same values.

"Oftentimes, when we walk into a house, [we think], if this was my own home, and I was going to live here and enjoy the comfort of this home, how would I do it?" Shawn says.

Not every job is easy. Some homes have design flaws that are so fundamental to the structure that they cannot be completely rectified. No one wants to be told their dream home is doomed.

"Your home is more than just a building," Shawn understands. "It's part of your family, it's part of your identity.

You have dreams that involve your house."

No matter the situation, the Grabers always aim to make sure their customers feel taken care of, and by all indications, they do. Fast, courteous, professional, knowledgeable, friendly, kind, helpful, skilled, excellent, top quality, timely, honest, sincere, and impressive are the words customers of Graber Heating & Air have used to describe them online.

Not every family business has willing heirs, and the Grabers have been fortunate in this regard. When asked about how to cultivate a successor, Barry explains that of the four children in his family, he was the only one to commit to the business.

"My dad encouraged us all to try something different," he says. "He said, 'You'll never know if working for Dad as your boss was the right way to go unless you've tried something else.' I appreciated that flexibility. I tried to give that to my sons."

Barry also had four sons, two of which find working for Graber Heating & Air "very rewarding."

"As a boy, I loved going to work, because first of all, we were going on an adventure to save a homeowner from either a hot or a freezing cold house. We got to see firsthand the joy in their face when we were able to save the day. I was also able to learn just by holding the flashlight or whatever I was doing, and it definitely piqued my interest," Shane says.

Shawn agrees; he says in talking with other tradesmen, they often say they couldn't imagine working for their dads.

"It takes a very special work relationship to make that happen," he says. "[Barry has] been very generous and kind to us. He's taken good care of us, and he's made work fun to go to. He's made work interesting, and that makes all the difference."

Looking forward, both Shawn and Shane hope to in-



CHERYL ALLEN/THE NEWS

Inside the shop, vintage metal logos Barry Graber has been collecting from retired furnaces over the last 30+ years. There were over 100 American furnace brands in the 50s and 60s he says, but today only about 5 remain. Son Shane laments that he won't be able to add much to the collection, as today's logos are merely stickers.

spire a love for their work in their own children.

"If they'd love to work with us, we would be so pleased," Shawn says.

Having arrived at their 85th year in business, the team at Graber Heating & Air has much to celebrate, and they hope you'll join them. On Saturday, August 5, they will hold an open house at 1302 Angle Rd. SW, Kalona, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., where they will serve hot dogs and burgers and have a bouncy castle and yard games.

They'll also have a sale on filters, as well as an informative presentation on how to choose effective filters that aren't so restrictive that they prevent your equipment from working.

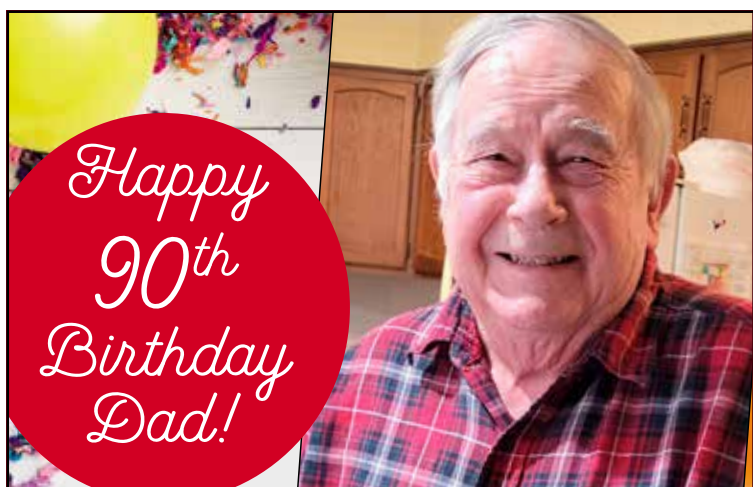
"Our goal is just to have an excuse to invite the community out here, and to say thank you to all the people who have allowed us to be here for 85 years. It's a big deal to us," Shane says. "We love the Kalona community and the overall feeling of family that this town represents."

**THE JOY OF FOAM**



GIOVANNI CORONEL/THE NEWS

Wrapping up the 2023 Summer Reading program, local children enjoyed a fun time with foam just outside the Kalona Library on July 28.



**MAYOR'S CLASSIC CAR CRUISE** **AUG. 5 5PM**

**Kalona IOWA**

If you have a car you'd like to drive in the cruise, please meet at Sinclair Tractor in Kalona around 4:30 p.m. to be ready to start at 5 p.m.!

The cruise will end at Kalona City Park.

Live music by The Do's and Don'ts (50's & 60's Music) & food vendors will begin at 6 p.m.!

Bring Lawn Chairs!

\*Cars that are in the cruise can park in the outfield of Field A.

**GRABER HEATING & AIR**

Celebrate our 85th Anniversary with us!

**Saturday, Aug. 5 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.**

Filters will be 10% off during the open house!

Come join us in celebrating 85 years of family serving yours. We are so thankful for everyone in our Graber Heating Family and would consider it an honor for you to join us in celebrating!

There will be food, a bouncy castle, lawn games, & more!

1302 Angle RD, Kalona

**SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE**

Give a little, or give a lot... it makes all the difference.

Help Federation Bank assist underprivileged students by donating a new or slightly used school item. Supplies will be given to guidance counselors in the local school district to be distributed to students.

All Federation Bank locations will be accepting donations throughout the months of July and August.

When you donate you will be entered into a drawing for a free Visa Gift card for you and your favorite Teacher of your choice.

**Federation Bank**

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**MIDWEST OLD THRESHERS REUNION** AUGUST 31 THRU SEPTEMBER 4, 2023

Admission: Multi-Day \$35 Kids 10 and Under FREE Over 2,000 Exhibits and Attractions

One-Day \$15

All Country Music Shows Free with Gate Admission

Thursday, Aug 31 Crystal Chyle  
Friday, Sept 1 Josh Richards  
Saturday, Sept 2 Jeff Richards  
Sunday, Sept 3 Ryan Scott

**MIDWEST HAUNTED RAILS** Great Train of No Return and The Ghostly Trolley

October 13-14, 20-21, 27-28

Fridays 6 to 10 PM  
Saturdays 6 to 10:30 PM

Cost: \$10 per person (includes all food and drink)

**Drive Thru Holiday Light Park** Nov. 22-30, Dec. 1-31 5:30 - 9 PM

Over 1.5 Miles of Light Displays!!

Admission: Family Yellows \$10 Limo \$25 Mini Coach \$30 Motor Coach \$60

**OLDTHRESHERS.COM**