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TRI-STATE NEWS FOR YOU

NOVEMBER 2023

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Nicole Hutchison

PROFILE

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Wellness Center,
Spa and Salon**

a dream made reality

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LOCAL COMPANIES EMPHASIZE THE IMPORTANCE
OF NORMALIZING THE DISCUSSION OF MENTAL HEALTH

On the cover: Brad Thies and Kristi Marshall, with Hirschbach

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ON THE COVER



Hirschbach is a local company that takes mental wellness seriously.

Photo by
Dave Kettering

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ON THE WEB

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Mental health in the workplace

While health and wellness have long been a topic of discussion in the workplace, only recently has mental health and wellness been getting the attention it deserves.

It's a simple recipe: Healthy employees — inside and out — are happier, more productive and tend to stick around longer.

Local companies are leading the charge, as well, and we've checked in with a couple who take mental health seriously



Megan Gloss



Anthony Frenzel

NEXT MONTH

It's time for the annual look ahead again, this time looking forward to 2024, its challenges and its opportunities.

Have a story idea? Interested in writing for BizTimes? Email megan.gloss@thmedia.com and tony.frenzel@thmedia.com.

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Dave Kettering
Kristi Marshall
and Brad Thies
are the health and
wellness directors
for Hirschbach in
Dubuque.

Wellness of the mind

Local companies emphasize the importance of normalizing the discussion of mental health

BY CHRISTOPHER STEINBACH

Mae Hingtgen sees her work as a battle against misperceptions surrounding mental illness.

“Just as your heart or your liver could get sick and you would not hesitate to seek treatment, your brain gets sick,” said Hingtgen, who is chief executive of Mental Health/Disability Services



Mae Hingtgen

for the East Central Region. “We’re trying to normalize that people’s brains can get sick, and they should not hesitate to seek help. It’s really a campaign to reduce the stigma around mental illness.”

One of her goals in that campaign is for employers in the tri-states to create opportunities for their employees to speak out and address any brain health concerns they might have.

“We have to acknowledge that some people experience brain health concerns,” she said. “And when we normalize it, we say it’s OK to need help and help is available.”

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Dubuque-based Hirschbach Motor Lines is one employer in the area that has implemented multiple initiatives to help the 225 employees at its corporate offices improve their overall brain health.

Brad Thies joined the company two years ago as its wellness coordinator. After graduating from the University of Dubuque with a degree in exercise science, Thies has worked for 20 years with athletes, from high school to the professional level, trained geriatric populations and run a CrossFit gym. He previously ran a wellness program at Platinum Supplemental Insurance in Dubuque.

“I’ve worked with country artists, musicians, kind of all walks of life,” he said. “To me, brain health is defined as the pursuit of happiness. What brings you great joy in life and what factors cause negative feelings. Life is full of ups and downs.”

Thies encourages his coworkers at

Hirschbach to ask themselves if they are:

- Surrounding themselves with positive or negative thinkers?
- Pushing themselves to reach their full potential or holding back from pursuing their dreams?
- Feeding their minds and bodies with nutritious foods?
- Unplugging daily from devices while being outside, enjoying the fresh air away from distractions?

“Sitting down, being able to answer those questions honestly, that’s a great place to

start to see where you’re at,” Thies said.

The wellness program he oversees includes everything from group exercise classes to pickleball and basketball courts that employees can use during their breaks. Chiropractors and massage therapists bring their services to Hirschbach’s corporate office once per week.

“We have quiet meditation space for someone who needs to take a break away from their desk. It’s a comfortable recliner-

Continued on page 8

IN HER WORDS

“We have quiet meditation space for someone who needs to take a break away from their desk. It’s a comfortable recliner and a private area. There are a couple of those spaces in our work environment.

We also have quiet workspaces — four private cubicle spaces if someone needs a quiet environment to work, depending on the project they are working on.”

Kristi Marshall

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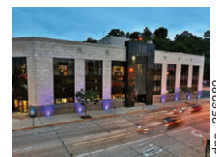
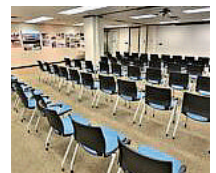
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er and a private area,” said Kristi Marshall, the wellness administrator at Hirschbach. “There are a couple of those spaces in our work environment. We also have quiet workspaces — four private cubicle spaces if someone needs a quiet environment to work, depending on the project they are working on.”

The company uses a smartphone app programed with workouts for its fleet of drivers who wish to be healthier while on the road.

“Many of them will do the workouts at truck stops or at night when they pull over to rest,” Thies said. “I program workouts that they can do daily. Some of them will do three workouts a week, some will do five to seven workouts a week. All are short workouts, maybe 10 to 20 minutes — just something simple to keep them healthy on the road, help to help them dial in their focus and ultimately sleep better and drive safer.”

The goal is to start small so that no one

Continued on page 10

Heidi Vosberg chats with Brad Thies (center) and Kristi Marshall at Hirschbach in Dubuque.

Dave Kettering



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IN HIS WORDS

“Just making small changes, whether it’s helping them pick out a healthier option at a gas station, rather than getting a regular pop, they could switch to a water. Instead of getting two slices of pizza, getting one slice. Little habits like that will build over time.”

Brad Thies

Continued from page 8

is immediately intimidated.

“Just making small changes, whether it’s helping them pick out a healthier option at a gas station, rather than getting a regular pop, they could switch to a water,” Thies said. “Instead of getting two slices of pizza, getting one slice. Little habits like that will build over time.”

Marshall estimates that more than half of the company’s employees utilize at least some of the wellness offerings.

“It obviously varies depending on the service, but we try to offer a spectrum of (services) depending on what people’s needs or desires are, whether physical

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Continued from page 10

activity is something that helps them or whether they need quiet space.”

Over time, the company should also see benefits from its wellness program if it leads to increased productivity and fewer insurance claims being filed by its employees, as well as fewer sick days being used.

There is better teamwork, Thies said, because many of the employ-

ees look forward to coming to work, doing their workouts with likeminded colleagues and discussing their day at work.

“It creates good camaraderie around the office, positive energy,” he said.

The bottom line is that it helps the company’s bottom line.

“Our outreach and the things that we do come from a place of caring,” Marshall said. “Those positive side effects that come along with it are icing on the cake.”



Body & Soul

A dream made reality

BY ANGELA JONES



Jessica Reilly

Stacia McDermott (from left), Mary Emily Duba, Allyson Winter and Mary Kay McDermott practice yoga at Body & Soul Wellness Center and Spa in Dubuque.

Just after Julia and Scott Theisen first met and were getting to know one another on two continents (England and the U.S.), they were already sharing their intentions for a life together. One of the intentions became, essentially, Body & Soul Wellness Center, Spa and Salon, which really started as “a dream, an idea,” Julia said.



Scott Theisen

So when Scott felt drawn to the Fountain Park property, even in the rough shape it was once in, the dream started taking on physical shape.

“He would visualize the space and place 2x4s where doors and corridors would be,” Julia said. “He set up the basic main layout we still have. And our intention became reality. Love really is the best fertilizer.”

Continued on page 14



Julia Theisen owns Body & Soul Wellness Center and Spa in Dubuque.

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Body & Soul — which includes a yoga studio, counseling center and salon — will be celebrating its 20th year in Dubuque in June. Scott and Julia have been at the helm of the business, and it’s difficult to imagine it not being a strong, local presence in the wellness world. Despite changes and challenges, Body & Soul has proven that it not only has staying power but also that it has found an effective formula for offering services that many need for wellness and self-care.

“There have been many fluctuations, ebbs and flows,” Scott said. “We have asked ourselves, ‘Are we going to make it?’”

For a while, the business expanded to include services in the Roshek building and a café, Inspire, in the Millwork district. These expansions stretched them a little thin and they felt they were losing sight of doing what they loved, so they scaled back to focus on offerings at Fountain Park.

But not many businesses are around for 20 years without its share of struggles and growing pains.

In part, struggles have come about relatively recently from Julia’s health fight with breast cancer and from the global pandemic, and even a number of years ago with abrupt changes in personnel, as happened

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Kristi Obbink sits at the front desk of Body & Soul Wellness Center and Spa.



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Laura Fernandes (left), a cosmetologist at Body & Soul Wellness Center and Spa, gives pedicures to Lisa Harmon (middle), of Otter Creek, Iowa, and Jan Gill, of Dubuque.

Continued from page 14

in 2010.

“When five team members left to open their own businesses in 2010, it was a big change,” Julia said. “But we had to get creative and trust the process. When that happened, I spent a lot of time focusing on it and I took my eye off the ball (of the business).”

Julia’s way to counter the challenge was to create a TEDx Dubuque Talk called “Being in Your Own Lane.” This helped bring back her focus, and the company soon rebounded with Scott working as a counselor (he has a license in mental health) and with hiring two new counselors.

In addition to counseling, Body & Soul offers yoga and yoga teacher training (now in its 13th year), spa and massage and sa-

lon services (in a space that was once their Pilates studio). They had also have run the Yoga and Oneness Festival for five years before COVID, which is also around the time Julia learned of her breast cancer diagnosis.

“Treatment was my main focus after I found out,” Julia said. “And I learned how expensive it is to have to treat cancer. The out-of-pocket cost is incredibly expensive. I made a plea to the holy spirit that if I got past this, I’d help others in the same boat, I’d shift the dial.”

She started an online program called Resilience Over Cancer that strives to help cancer patients see their way through the ordeal. It has become her “passion project” that she plans to continue into the foreseeable future. For her, this seems like a natural evolution from her days as a nurse in England and working with kids who had cancer.

“In the modern world, our bodies have a higher toxic load,” Scott said. “And we need to face the effects in one way or another.”

Because of this, it’s more difficult to remain healthy on any level. It makes sense, then, that Body & Soul is intentional with what is offered to help alleviate some of the toxicity.

“When we started 20 years ago, the mind-body connection was not so well understood,” Julia said. “We have to work not just with our bodies but with our overthinking minds, too.”

What the Theisens have become deeply aware of is how counseling services have become normalized. Where it used to be something hidden, it’s now accepted. The spa, too, supports brain health because the two — body and mind — are not disconnected.

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Katie Deining (left), a cosmetologist at Body & Soul Wellness Center and Spa, gives a manicure to Jean Wuebbels, of Scales Mound, Ill.



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Continued from page 15

“When you start (counseling), something shifts,” Scott said. “You begin to feel more worthy. People begin to feel that they deserve this part of wellness.”

While Julia and Scott lead their business, they are grateful not to have to do it on their own, and they have a reliable and energetic staff to thank for that. To start, when Julia had to pull back to focus on healing during cancer treatments and Scott was supporting her, they found that Julie Drake was a natural fit for the leadership team, and she became the manager to run the day-to-day business operations.

But the entire staff supports the business by supporting one another, whether as needed emotionally or by tending to the small tasks that make everyday things easier. Body & Soul has a system for acknowledging these efforts, too.

“In the back office, we keep a little box for people to add slips of paper to, with written comments of things they’re grateful of what someone did or said,” Scott said. “We’ll share these and pick someone to receive a free service.”

It’s an action that goes a little further to support their business.

“People step up more,” Julia said. “It’s the little things; they connect the team.”

In the wellness business, it helps to ensure that the work space is charged and humming with positive and clear energy. It’s likely that people pick up on these things even if they don’t know they are doing that, so the staff makes sure to extend the positivity to vendors and mail carriers, too.

The services connected to Body and Soul are now well established, and Julia and Scott intend to deepen those offerings. Their near future plans are to remodel their final space and to continue providing the most effective services in wellness—in body, soul, and peace of mind.

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Faces in Business

Nicole Hutchison, PT, CSCS

Integrative Health and Nutrition Coach, Owner and CEO at
Statera Integrated Health and Wellness Solutions, LLC

BY KEN BROWN • PHOTOS BY JESSICA REILLY

Nicole Hutchison, owner and CEO at Statera Integrated Health and Wellness Solutions, is a physical therapist, certified strength and conditioning specialist, health coach and integrative nutrition coach.

Hutchison's passion is promoting health and wellness as a mind, body and spirit experience.

Working with men, women and mature teens to help clarify their goals, she then offers learning, support and accountability to assist clients in achieving those goals.

Hutchison grew up in southern Missouri and learned the values of faith, family and work early on. She lived on the beef cattle ranch her dad's family owned, and she also worked in the clothing store owned by her mom's mother.

Hutchison graduated from the University of Missouri in Columbia in the spring of 1996 with a physical therapy degree. In the fall of 1996 she married her soulmate, and 27 years later they have two young adult children, an 8-year-old yellow lab and a 5-month-old goldendoodle, which they are training to be a therapy dog for Statera.

She and her husband are passionate about the mission at Statera, and also they share passions for travel, cycling, camping, hiking and food and wine. In her free time, she enjoys reading, quilting, scrapbooking and jewelry making.

Tell us about your field and what attracted you to it.

I was not someone who knew exactly what they wanted to do when I went to college, yet I was always drawn to helping professions. I considered being a teacher, a mental health therapist, a child life specialist.

I was fortunate to have an opportunity to shadow with a few professionals at a local hospital and fell in love with physical

therapy. Working one-on-one with individuals to get to the root of what they were struggling with physically and help them to heal was truly fulfilling.

After practicing for 15 years, I expanded my training to a certified strength and conditioning specialist, health coach and integrative nutrition coach as I was seeing the importance of a broader focus on mind, body and spirit wellness in the work with my clients. What is happening for us men-





tally and emotionally also impacts us physically and vice versa — our healing also needs to include work for the person as a whole.

From there, God gave me a vision for a wellness clinic where like-minded providers from a wide variety of disciplines could all work together for client care. Statera is literally a dream come true.

How has your field changed in the time you've worked in it? How have you adapted?

Physical therapy, as well as health care in general, have certainly changed over the course of the last 27 years. We continue to learn and adapt evaluation and treatment techniques according to science.

Although we have the most advanced technology and medical treatment options ever available, we continue to get sicker and sicker. My vision is for what is currently a “sick-care” system will learn the importance of mind, body and spirit wellness and become more of a “health-care” system. Rather than attempting to “fix” patients with medications, let’s look for the root of what’s going on and address that through lifestyle modifications, complementary therapies and traditional medicine as needed. And as health care professionals, no one of us can be all things to all people — let’s work together to collaborate in care for our clients, encouraging them to be an active participant in their healing.

Is there a person or people who have had a tremendous impact on you?

I would not say any one person or people have had a tremendous impact on me, but I would say there are many who have impacted me personally and professionally. Over the years I have had spiritual leaders and advisors, friends, family members, teachers, business advisors, colleagues and speakers and authors I have learned from but have also been a valuable source of support and encouragement.

Do you have any advice for young people and/or new graduates?

Let go of black-and-white thinking and follow your dreams. Work does not have to simply be a way to live — you can live to work. Find where your passions and your gifts and talents intersect. Ask questions and learn from your elders — we may not seem to know much, but if you give us a chance, we may know more than you think.

Is there a story or an anecdote that illustrates your philosophy either in life or in



Nicole Hutchison (right) talks with Jodi Stricker, of Dubuque, at the facility in Dubuque.

DO YOU KNOW THE NEXT PERSON TO BE FEATURED?

Do you know someone with an interesting perspective? Is there someone in your organization who has a compelling story to tell? Let us know and they could be featured in a future edition of Faces in Business. Email tony.frenzel@thmedia.com and megan.gloss@thmedia.com with your suggestions.

your chosen field?

My philosophy in life and career is to live mindfully and with purpose. I regularly re-evaluate my top core values, and whether how I am currently living reflects those core values. God, myself and my family, my career.

What have you found to be the most valuable resource for learning? Are you an on-the-job learner or do you prefer another way?

I love to read, listen to books and podcasts and continue my learning through courses for spiritual growth, personal growth and professional growth. Then challenge myself to put what I’ve learned into practice — what works well I keep and continue using, what doesn’t work well I tweak or let go of.

Math vs. creativity. People person vs. introvert. Slow and steady vs. quick and nimble. Where do you fall on those divides? Do

you believe there even is a divide?

Life is not black and white, there tends to be a lot of gray. I believe labeling ourselves or others as “introvert or extrovert” limits their view of themselves, how they show up in their lives, and their ability to flourish. For example, I love to spend time with others, teach classes, do public speaking — yet I need my alone, quiet time as well. Labeling myself as an introvert or extrovert would limit me from allowing myself to experience both and enjoy the different ways they each fuel my soul.

How has your professional life helped you grow as a person?

The learning and growth I’ve experienced in my professional life — the degrees and certifications, what I’ve learned in working with my clients and colleagues, experiencing the steep learning curve of opening my own small business out of my home and expanding into opening Statera — have all deepened my sense of purpose in my life. Learning more about myself — who I am, how I respond to the world around me and why I respond that way — have all contributed to growth in my own self-confidence as well as in my relationships with others. It is my belief that personal growth and professional growth go hand in hand.

How do you strike a work/life balance?

Striving to live true to my core values — and practice what I preach about mind, body and spirit, health and wellness.

IN HER WORDS

Let go of black-and-white thinking and follow your dreams. Work does not have to simply be a way to live — you can live to work. Find where your passions and your gifts and talents intersect.

Happy 25th birthday, Google!



**KATHIE
ROTZ**
Unity
Consulting

She is a leadership consultant and John Maxwell certified speaker, trainer and coach with the Dubuque business

Where were you on September 27, 1998, when Google was introduced into our world? How did you operate without this organizational tool? I remember traveling with printed directions, researching with encyclopedias and memorizing facts and jokes. These tasks have become easier with inventions utilizing the World Wide Web, allowing us to do more in the same amount of time.

Rory Vaden, author of “Procrastinate on Purpose,” calls this talent “multiplying your time” — spending time on things today that will create more time tomorrow. Rory suggests we filter every task through a funnel by choosing how to eliminate, automate and delegate.

Online tools like GPS, virtual libraries and Google fall into the “automate” category. No longer do I need to use my time studying a map before traveling. I also have more space in my home and office without large bookshelves taking up space for history, facts or stories. Nor do I need to depend on my brain to remember information with a search database at my fingerprints.

Recently, this instant retrieval of content has taken a creative turn with the introduction of artificial intelligence. Entrepreneurs Daiany Nascimento and Sara Carlstein are creating an intelligent parent assistant powered by AI, bringing together the best child experts to empower millions of parents. Envision a world where every parent has easy access to expert advice and a supportive community when navigating childhood.

This tool came to be because the creator of the new technology spent up to a year after childbirth experiencing sleepless nights and foggy days, trying to be

everything to her family. She has tried to do more with the same amount of time, including researching sleep training tips for her infant, keeping a smooth running

home complete with clean clothes and healthy meals and finding a few minutes for a nap to rejuvenate her energy.

She struggled to find more minutes in her day for these needed tasks. The worst part was once she spent hours becoming a sleep expert for her newborn, her daughter grew into a new development stage. Without this creative, automated solution, the spiral would continue.

Imagine being a well-rested new parent with an automated tool to tell you what you need and when you need it while navigating a new lifestyle, like when your child is about to go through a sleep regression or when to expect the temper tantrum phase to start. The digital parent assistant will ensure you stay ahead of your child’s development by using AI to help anticipate the child and mother’s evolving needs. This automation will prepare you to navigate through these unavoidable challenges with confidence, similar to how your GPS tells you when and where to turn on your travel journeys.

What new opportunity do you wish you had time to invest in?

Maybe there is an automated solution available to replace your mundane tasks or maybe you have a creative idea that would transform our world!

Follow Daiany and Sara’s progress on their new automated tool at www.mellow.ie.

KATHIE SAYS

Online tools like GPS, virtual libraries and Google fall into the “automate” category. No longer do I need to use my time studying a map before traveling. I also have more space in my home and office without large bookshelves taking up space for history, facts or stories.

Don't be the pouty kid: Seeing the U.S. economy's reality



DR. RICHARD BAKER, AIF
Fervent Wealth Management

He is the founder and executive wealth advisor

I used to have a friend with a pouty kid. I remember seeing a picture of the kid crying while sitting in the middle of dumped-out Halloween candy. He had everything he wanted and still wasn't happy.

Let me explain how investors are doing the same thing right now.

Last week's Commerce Department report showed that the U.S. economy is hitting its stride, so why are Americans so pessimistic about the economy? There is too much focus on emotions and not enough on reality, which is affecting the stock market.

Here's some positive reality.

The GDP is rocking. Last week's gross domestic product third-quarter report was 4.9%, which is more than double what it was for the second quarter and higher than before the pandemic.

The same goes for the job market. The unemployment rate is 3.8%, just barely above what it was in December 2019. The job market is back to normal.

An end of the earnings recession. It looks like the third-quarter earnings are at a 5% year-over-year increase in S&P 500 earnings and twice that if you take out energy stocks.

RICHARD SAYS

The good news is that from a seasonal market perspective, November has been the strongest month since 1950 for stocks. The November-December combo is the best two-month period since 1950. Lastly, November-April is the strongest six-month period of the year since 1950.

The US economy is in a good place, but Americans are feeling negative.

Here are some negative emotions.

- Consumer confidence declined again in October for the third consecutive month.
- 63% of people in a recent Wall Street Journal survey rated the strength of the U.S. economy as "Not so good/Poor."

That negativity has carried over to the average American's investment strategy. There have been three months of stock selling, leaving stocks at nearly oversold levels according to value. Stocks were negative more than 2% in October, making it the third negative month in a row.

I think Americans are still concerned with rising grocery and gasoline prices. There is also a lot of negativity about our political situation and the wars in Ukraine and Israel.

America, keep your head up. Things are better than you think.

The good news is that from a seasonal market perspective, November has been the strongest

month since 1950 for stocks. The November-De-

Continued on page 22



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Continued from page 21

ember combo is the best two-month period since 1950. Lastly, November-April is the strongest six-month period of the year since 1950.

Undoubtedly, 2023 has been challenging with its economic and war surprises. But with an unemotional and balanced view of the economy and the markets, I see some positives that might push stocks higher by year end. Stick with your long-term investment plan, and don't get caught up in the short-term negativity.

So, all that to say is, don't be the pouty kid. It's easier to dwell on the negative things around us than the positives. America, keep your head up. Things are better than you think.

Have a blessed week.

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Undoubtedly, 2023 has been challenging with its economic and war surprises. But with an unemotional and balanced view of the economy and the markets, I see some positives that might push stocks higher by year end. Stick with your long-term investment plan, and don't get caught up in the short-term negativity.

sults. All indices are unmanaged and can't be invested in directly.

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A prime battle: Amazon faces an antitrust crusader

JON
TALTON
The
Seattle
Times

He is a business
writer with the
publication.

SEATTLE — Antitrust law was once simple, or so it seems now, when the Sherman Act was passed during the Gilded Age in 1890 and used by President Theodore Roosevelt more than a decade later to make him “the Trust Buster.”

Today, in our Digital Gilded Age, laws meant to protect customers and ensure competition have gone through so many alterations that proving, much less breaking up, monopolies is exceedingly difficult.

Now our trust buster is Lina Khan, chair of the Federal Trade Commission, and she’s set her sights on Big Tech, including Google and especially Amazon.

As my colleague Lauren Rosenblatt recently reported, the commission has sued Amazon, alleging the company employed anti-competitive, illegal practices to create a monopoly and raise prices for customers. Seventeen states joined in the suit, although not Washington ... yet.

In addition, The Wall Street Journal reported that Amazon also “used an algorithm code-named ‘Project Nessie’ to test how much it could raise prices in a way ... to improve its profit on items across shopping categories, and because of the power the company has in e-commerce, led competitors to raise their prices and charge customers more.”

Yet proving all this is easier said than done.

For example, Project Nessie ran only from 2015 to 2019, and using algorithm-based methods to assess prices is hardly confined to Amazon. University of Pennsylvania law professor Herbert Hovenkamp, called the Dean of American Antitrust Law, posted on the former Twitter, “Nessie sounds like pretty standard behavior in imperfectly competitive markets, and it happens every day.” California regulators investigated Nessie and found nothing amiss.

The Seattle-based tech giant has denied the commission’s allegations, but also received backing from an unlikely source. New York Times columnist Farhad Manjoo argued that a 1945 lawsuit against Alcoa defined a monopoly as controlling 90% of a market.

He wrote, “Amazon’s share of American retail is nothing close to that, and even its slice of the overall e-commerce business (is) around 40%.”

While Amazon reported North American sales of \$316 billion in 2022, Walmart’s sales for the same period were \$393 billion. And all this is a small portion of the \$7 trillion annual retail sales in the United States.

Looking back, antitrust enforcement in America has several important milestones.

In addition to Roosevelt’s successful breakup of the Northern Securities trust in 1904, which controlled all the major railroads across the northern United States, he initiated suits against 43 other major companies with monopolistic power.

After the Rough Rider was out of office, the Sherman Antitrust Act was used again to break up Standard Oil, led by John D. Rockefeller, America’s first billionaire. It was split into 43 companies, including those that became the “Seven Sisters” such as Texaco, Standard Oil of California and Standard Oil

of New York (Mobil).

In the 1980s, the government forced the breakup of AT&T, which controlled 80% of its market. And as Seattleites well know, the Other Washington spent a decade in antitrust pursuit of Microsoft (which controlled about 90% of its market).

Yet antitrust actions carry unintended and unpredictable consequences. For example, the old Ma Bell was split into Regional Bell Operating Companies. But most of these reconstituted themselves into corporate giants, including, yep, AT&T. The new AT&T has a combined market share of nearly 64% nationally in landlines and cellular service.

Microsoft wasn’t broken up and is stronger than ever after its lost decade. The former Beast of Redmond is among the most admired companies in America.

Interpretation of the law changed considerably, too. Robert Bork, who was denied a Supreme Court seat (by a Senate Judiciary Committee chaired by a guy named Joe Biden), was highly influential in altering the focus of antitrust. Instead of market share, the measure largely changed to “consumer welfare” and “economic efficiency.”

Thus, from the 1970s on, industries became more concentrated and more imprisoned by the demands of Wall Street.

Despite the lawsuit and criticism, the company continues to attract small businesses to use its expansive e-commerce network.

According to Amazon, “most sellers tell us they choose to sell in the Amazon store because it’s a great value ... in a store that many customers trust, they get access to powerful tools, services and programs to drive their business growth, and sellers can do all of this at a cost that is typically lower than their alternatives.”

But Amazon faces a formidable opponent.

As a law student at Yale, Khan, now chair of the FTC, wrote a 2017 paper titled The Amazon Paradox.

It argued: “Although Amazon has clocked staggering growth, it generates meager profits, choosing to price below-cost and expand widely instead. Through this strategy, the company has positioned itself at the center of e-commerce and now serves as essential infrastructure for a host of other businesses that depend upon it.”

One of her remedies was to restore traditional antitrust enforcement. Now she has the means to attempt it.

Still, the commission will be required to prove in court that small businesses and customers are really being hurt by Amazon.

Michael Carrier, a law professor at Rutgers University, told the Financial Times: “When you hear things like Amazon is increasing price and degrading service, these could be real issues, but the question is, are they supported? Is the FTC able to show that these are real harms that consumers are suffering?”

We’ll find out. With Seattle’s largest private-sector employer and major taxpayer in the crosshairs, the stakes are large.

JON SAYS

Yet antitrust actions carry unintended and unpredictable consequences. For example, the old Ma Bell was split into Regional Bell Operating Companies. But most of these reconstituted themselves into corporate giants, including, yep, AT&T.

RISING STARS CLASS OF 2023 BREAKFAST



Dave Kettering

People attend the Rising Star Awards Ceremony at the Diamond Jo Casino.



Guest speaker Katie Thomas, president and CEO of Honkamp, P.C., speaks during the ceremony.



THM Executive Editor Amy Gilligan emceeds the event.

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Why Choose A Union Contractor?

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RISING STARS CLASS OF 2023 BREAKFAST

Sailu Aryal



Kevin Finke



Richard Fullmer



Nate Harold



All photos include Stacey Hines (left), with Dubuque Bank and Trust, along with Luke Rodham (right) with the Telegraph Herald.



Dave Kettering

The 2023 Rising Star recipients Kevin P. Meyers (from left), with Kunkel & Associates; Kassy Herrig, with Cottingham and Butler; Andy Ney, with Paramount EMS; Jack Mescher, with Hills and Dales; Arantxa Martinez Resendiz, with University of Dubuque; Dr. Nate Harold, with MedOne Pharmacy Benefit Solutions; Renee Hesselman, with Honkamp, P.C.; Sarah Knabel, with Bob & Lou's; Erin Powers Daley, with Northeast Iowa Community College; Kevin Finke with Dubuque Bank & Trust; Sailu Aryal, with Dupaco Community Credit Union; and Lieutenant Richard Fullmer, with the Dubuque Police Department.

RISING STARS CLASS OF 2023 BREAKFAST

Kassy Herrig



Renee Hesselman



Sarah Knabel



Arantxa Martinez Resendiz



Jack Mescher



Kevin P. Meyers



Andy Ney



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SALUTE TO WOMEN



Jessica Reilly

Keynote speaker Yindra Dixon speaks during the Salute to Women Awards at Diamond Jo Casino in Dubuque.



Leslie Shalabi, who received the award for Woman of the Year, speaks at the event.



A. Alanda Gregory, who received the award for Woman of Innovation, speaks at the event.



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SALUTE TO WOMEN



Mae Hingtgen, who received the award for Woman Who Makes a Difference, speaks at the event.



Callie Mescher-FitzGerald, who received the award for Woman to Watch, speaks at the event.



Jessica Reilly

Leslie Shalabi (from left), Mae Hingtgen, A. Alanda Gregory and Callie Mescher-FitzGerald were recognized during the Salute to Women Awards on Oct. 4.

STATE OF THE CITY LUNCHEON



The State of the City luncheon took place on Oct. 3.

Jessica Reilly



Dubuque Mayor Brad Cavanagh speaks during the State of the City luncheon.



The State of the City luncheon took place at Hotel Julien Dubuque.

Scan the code to see more pictures at:
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BUSINESS AFTER HOURS



Visitors chat and mingle at the October Business After Hours.

Stephen Gassman



Exit Realty hosted the Business After Hours.



The event took place on Oct. 17.



Visitors chat and mingle at Exit Realty.



The next Business After Hours will take place on Tuesday, Dec. 19, at Verena Street Coffee, 720 Verena Court.

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KENNEDY MALL

HIRED: Bobbie Jost has joined as marketing director.

MEDICAL ASSOCIATES CLINIC

HIRED: Paige Ortiz, ARNP, has joined the cardiology department.

UNIFIED THERAPY

HIRED: Ireland Garrett has joined as a certified occupational therapy assistant.

MI-T-M

PROMOTED: Clinton Francois to equipment division manager. Francois has been with the company since 2016.

HIRED: Amanda Moore as director of human resources. She will oversee human resources operations, safety, training and development, recruitment and employee relations.

COTTINGHAM & BUTLER

HIRED: Casey Amling as executive assistant.

HIRED: Marissa Kluesner as account administrator.

HIRED: Abigail Paul as utilization management assistant.

HIRED: Kelsey Klar as account administrator.

HIRED: Renee Reuter as claims coordinator.

HIRED: Sarah Miles as client service representative.

HIRED: Austin Bisping as claims coordinator.

HIRED: Jessica Barr as claims coordinator.

HIRED: Colton Slinger as data analyst.

HIRED: Kate Dean as executive assistant.

WOODWARD PRINTING SERVICES

PROMOTED: Ben Riley to press trainee 3 and Chris Whyte to press operator.

TH MEDIA

HIRED: Amanda Hasenbank as an account executive for retail sales. In her new position, she will provide advertising and marketing services to businesses and maintain relationships with vendors, venues and clients in Guttenberg, Sherill, Peosta, Epworth, Farley and Dyersville in Iowa.

HONKAMP, P.C.

HIRED: Jackie Carl as a principal.

BIZ LOCAL

HESS AWARDED FOR MERITORIOUS SERVICE



Hess

Susan M. Hess, attorney at Hammer Law Firm, was awarded for meritorious service from the Iowa Defense Counsel Association at its annual meeting and seminar. She was also recognized by the board for service from 2017-2023 and as past president of the organization.

DUBUQUE COUNTY PUBLISHING FIRM ACQUIRES 3 LOCAL MAGAZINES

ASBURY, Iowa — A Dubuque County publishing company has acquired three Dubuque-area magazines.

Beginning in November, RTN Publishing will be publishing Julien's Journal, a lifestyle magazine; CHOICES for Fifty Plus, a magazine for readers ages 50 and older; and Tri-State Home Trends, a magazine dedicated to the housing industry, according to a press release.

The release states that the three magazines were purchased from G.A. Publishing.

RTN Publishing was founded and is owned by Robin and Terri Nichols, of Asbury. Robin Nichols has more than 30 years of experience in the publishing industry, has founded two companies and has started several magazines.

Current Julien's Journal publisher Gina Siegert; John Moran, a key employee; and the entire editorial staff will remain with the magazine, according to the release.

ROOFING COMPANY RECEIVES GOLD MEDAL AWARD

Jim Giese Commercial Roofing, of Dubuque, received the Versico Roofing Systems' 2022 Gold Medal Quality Award, which recognizes Versico contractors that have consistently provided superior craftsmanship and high-quality installations.

TRAVEL DUBUQUE RECEIVES BEST OF AWARD

Travel Dubuque received a 2023 Best of Meetings Today Award, which acknowledges the top meeting facilities and destination marketing organizations in North America and the world.



Loy Bedolla Santos Ávila Gibson Hunsley Ross Engelkens White Foley



Madrid Mortonson Locklear Foster Acosta Baker Medley Shows

Continued from page 34

DUTRAC COMMUNITY CREDIT UNION

HIRED: Nicole Loy as assistant branch manager for the Maquoketa, Iowa, office.

SEDONA STAFFING SERVICES

HIRED: Karla Bedolla as a front desk coordinator and Valeria Santos Ávila as an account manager.

MEDONE PHARMACY BENEFIT SOLUTIONS

HIRED: Adrian Felix Garcia, Tarnisha

Gibson, Lindsay Hunsley, Josh Vance, Cassandra Rice, Shannon Vercher and Lyndsey Leverette as member advocates.

HIRED: Jared Cox as director of consumer programs.

HIRED: Christina Tessmer as a patient care coordinator.

HIRED: Natalie Ross and Tabi Engelkens as pharmacy clerks.

HIRED: Bryan Miranda as a pricing & operations analyst.

HIRED: Jenn Free as a data entry specialist.

HIRED: McKenna White as a pharmacy technician.

HIRED: Abby Foley as an account manager.

HIRED: Ofelia Madrid as a senior account manager.

HIRED: Jackson Rigdon as an IT help desk technician.

PROMOTED: Grace Mulgrew to clinical programs coordinator.

PROMOTED: Liz Mortonson to data analyst.

PROMOTED: Brenda Locklear to clinical review coordinator.

PROMOTED: Hannah Foster and Ashley-Nicole Acosta to senior member advocates.

PROMOTED: laToya Baker to pharmacy Care Coordinator.

PROMOTED: Christie Medley to plan administration specialist.

PROMOTED: Michaela Shows to data entry lead.

PROMOTED: Mariah Morris to clinical programs coordinator II.

Continued from page 34

STAVER RECEIVES SERVICE AWARD

John Staver, utility commission treasurer for Cuba City (Wis.) Light & Water, received the WPPI Energy Community Service Award. It acknowledges utility managers and public officials who demonstrate commitment to volunteerism in their community.

BURBACH RECEIVES CREDENTIALLED MANAGER DESIGNATION

Dubuque Assistant City Manager **Cori Burbach** received the Credentialed Manager designation from the International City/County Management Association. This recognizes members with significant experience as a senior management executive in local government and who have demonstrated a commitment to high standards of integrity and to lifelong



Staver Burbach Dodds

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SCHAUER RECOGNIZED AS HOSPITAL HERO

The Iowa Hospital Association recognized **Christina Schauer**, of MercyOne Dubuque Medical Center, as a Hospital Hero. The award recognizes outstanding hospital employees who go above and beyond the call of duty with no expectation of award or recognition.

EAGLE RIDGE RECEIVES 3 STELLA AWARDS

Eagle Ridge Resort & Spa, of Galena,

Ill., received three Stella awards: Silver Medal in the Best Renovation in the Midwest for Stonedrift Spa and Bronze Medals in Best Golf Resort in the Midwest and Best Sustainability Initiative in the Global category.

COMMUNITY FIRST BANK RECEIVES EDUCATION AWARD

The Wisconsin Bankers Foundation recognized Community First Bank with an Excellence in Financial Education award. **Ann Cooley**, regional director of the bank's Lancaster, Wis., branch, will receive a certificate of recognition from the foundation.

DODDS BOARD CERTIFIED IN DERMATOLOGY

Melissa Dodds, of Medical Associates, passed the 2023 APPLIED Examination and is board-certified through the American Board of Dermatology.

How LA made the internet what it is

BY BRIAN MERCHANT

The influencers have won. Digital media institutions are crumbling. We have pivoted to video. The internet of the 2020s is dominated by a handful of platforms — Instagram, TikTok, Spotify, YouTube — and the creators who rule them. Now even the mighty entertainment industry is in their thrall.

The story of how we got here is the subject of Taylor Lorenz's compelling and expansive new book, "Extremely Online" — and it is, at heart, a story about the allure of fame, the desire to perform for a living and how companies seeking to profit off of those base impulses encourage the hopeful to commoditize their personal experience.

It is, in other words, a story of Los Angeles.

"The entire content creator industry is based in L.A., and really emerged from L.A.," Lorenz tells me. "Let's not forget that the first platform that launched the influencer space was Myspace, and that was based in L.A."

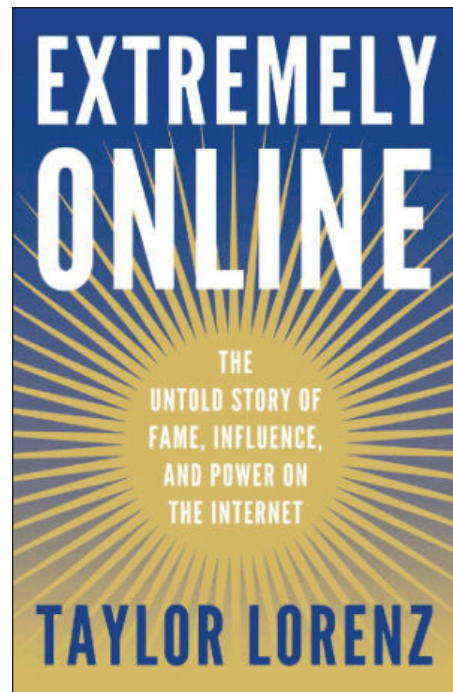
It's true, Myspace, the first globally dominant social media network, emerged not from Cupertino or Menlo Park or another bastion of Greater Silicon Valley but from a small subset of employees working for the marketing firm EUniverse in L.A.

A key thrust of Lorenz's book is that the internet we know today was shaped as much by its most influential users — whom platforms both cater to and actively promote — as it was by the coders, founders and businesspeople who erected the digital infrastructure.

When folks decry the current state of the web and how it's dominated now by personality-driven content of the sort found on TikTok, Instagram, YouTube and Twitch, they typically point to algorithms that incentivize wild behavior and companies that emphasize engagement and profit over quality and public concern.

But that narrative does leave out a key ingredient: The people who excel at offering up their wild behavior for public consumption — the people who create, as we might say in the 2020s, the engagement. And which city has the highest population density of eager and skilled performers per capita, perhaps in the world? L.A. It stands to reason, as Lorenz does, if engineers in the Bay Area hardwired the internet's body, then Los Angeles is its beating heart.

"I spoke to content creators for this book that said that they felt like until they moved to L.A., they weren't a real content creator," she says. "I think that this is because, de-



Contributed

spite the fact that people think of the rise of social media as synonymous with Silicon Valley, as I argue in my book, these platforms are very heavily shaped by users, and specifically power users — content creators."

And, she adds, "almost exclusively, those content creators have been in L.A."

It's a cliché as storied as the American Dream itself — setting out for Hollywood with a suitcase and aspirations of stardom — but it's also an undeniable reality of how the local economy functions, and those dreamers are a latent and highly valuable resource for all those platforms, to put it in crass terms.

Ever since Myspace Tom and his cohort founded that social network here, there's been not only an active supply of talent but an increasingly sophisticated pipeline constructed to connect that talent to the Myspace of the moment.

In 2009, as Lorenz notes, the first so-called content house was established to accommodate full-time creators who made videos for platforms such as YouTube — the Station, in Venice Beach. Since then, as creators found success gathering followings, an array of talent agencies and independently owned media companies have sprung forth. This of course has been the most double-edged of swords, but Lorenz is keen to point out that the new landscape made room for a lot of voices that old media and legacy Hollywood studios were ignoring.

The rise of the influencer economy, she says, "has been a real positive force for a lot of marginal folks, like the beauty bloggers, catering to women of color who were ignored and maligned," even though "a lot of people like to focus on the bad, the Jake Pauls."

Regardless, despite being overshadowed by the major studies and goliath entrants like Netflix, L.A.'s influencer economy now stands to be worth half a trillion dollars in coming years, Lorenz says, citing a report from Goldman Sachs.

Critics have knocked Lorenz's book for being overly sympathetic to the influencers fighting their way to the top in this new ecosystem, but I've found the book to be rather agnostic in its approach — reporting on a new frontier of entertainment that might sound foreign to many, but that is an undeniable force in cultural and economic life. And in our chat, she's plenty critical of the industry she covers, where the influence of its creative laborers far eclipses any protections and regulations.

She talks about rampant burnout in the industry, as creators work around the clock to produce content for their fans — creators who, as in every industry, are overwhelmingly not as rich or successful as the paragons they get associated with. She talks about mental health issues among those who've become famous too fast, and scams that plague the influencer economy.

Worst of all, she talks about the lack of guardrails for creators, especially children.

"There's an enormous amount of child labor in this industry — and this was true of Hollywood, by the way — with kids as young as 13 creating content," Lorenz says.

She credits SAG-AFTRA for recognizing the emergent mode of media, and for its recent Influencer Agreement, which sought to institute protections and benefits for creators.

"It's how a bunch of content creators get health care.

"People in East Coast media don't understand how this business operates and they think of these people as taking selfies and making silly videos," Lorenz says. "This is real creative labor. The Hollywood labor ecosystem was faster to recognize that."

It often seems that more than a decade into its existence, few know what to make of the influencer economy, or where it fits in with the story of the internet at large. But we do need to know, as Lorenz adroitly maps out, that the story does not begin and end with Silicon Valley. It runs right through Hollywood.

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