

FREMONT TRIBUNE

PRINT DIGITAL SOCIAL MOBILE

SEPTEMBER 23, 2017



**BUSINESSES
YOU NEED TO
KNOW**

POLYMATH CYBER CAFE offers food, activities

By **Tammy Real-McKeighan**
News Editor

Tammie Ciccarelli can tell you that Polymath Cyber Café offers quick food. But not fast food.

With an array of fresh salads and homemade soups and sandwiches, the café presents a variety of made-to-order food and beverage selections.

“We offer a lot of healthy, homemade options,” says Ciccarelli as she sits amid the calm, sunny atmosphere of the downtown Fremont eatery.

Ciccarelli’s homemade chicken salad and spaghetti have quickly become customer favorites. And she provides customers with daily \$5 breakfast options.

Those who come to the café can find a peaceful place to sip some coffee or tea while reading a good book or playing a board game. Patrons can pop in for breakfast, lunch or dinner.

Patrons also can take part in weekly Trivia Nights and quarterly Date Nights. The café has two, large, flat-screen televisions with a PlayStation and Wii on which customers can play games.

With a 4.9-star Facebook rating and new growth in the historic downtown area, Ciccarelli is looking ahead to the future.

Ciccarelli opened the café in May 2016. Besides the popular chicken salad croissant, her menu includes meatball and ham and cheese paninis and homemade vegetable and chicken noodle soups and Brunswick stew. Salads include the bacon, egg and spinach; grilled chicken; and grilled chicken Caesar salads.

Ciccarelli said the café has 100 percent fruit smoothies, all of which are dairy-free.

“We have had a lot of people come in and ask about those, because most people assume there’s milk in a smoothie,” she said.

Many people today must take care when making food selections. Those who do will find that the café has non-dairy, gluten free, vegetarian and vegan options.



Tammy Real-McKeighan, Fremont Tribune

Tammie Ciccarelli, owner of the Polymath Cyber Cafe, pauses for a moment in her downtown business. The cafe has a variety of homemade foods along with activities such as trivia and date nights. Ciccarelli said she is excited about the new growth that’s bringing more people downtown.

Those watching their weight can make less-caloric selections, too. For instance, there are 16-ounce, all-fruit smoothies that have between 250 and 300 calories. There’s also a lower-in-calories greenie smoothie with spinach and fruit.

Each day, the café has specials which are posted on Facebook. A \$5 breakfast special might include a bacon, egg and cheese croissant and coffee or a veggie omelet panini with tea or hot chocolate.

Lunch specials typically run between \$8 and \$8.50. A lunch and dinner special

could consist of a chicken salad croissant, chips and a drink of choice for \$7.50.

The homemade spaghetti dinner special for \$8.50 consists of a bowl of spaghetti, a side salad of choice, garlic roll and drink.

“Our spaghetti is popular,” she said. “It’s becoming like our chicken salad.”

“We’ve had people come in and say they dreamed about our chicken salad. I’ve had two people say that.”

Besides food, folks can find a little fun at the café as well. It has 15 different games, each, for the PlayStation and

the Wii. There are board games, coloring books and cards.

“We have some groups that come in and play cards,” she said.

Plans are to host a “Walking Dead Watch (television show) Party” on Sunday nights, starting in October.

In the meantime, the café continues to host a Trivia Night at 6 p.m. each Friday.

“We have different teams and there’s a set of questions,” she said.

Trivia players can come by themselves

or with a group.

“We have people who come by themselves and sometimes partner with somebody else,” she said. “Sometimes they play alone.”

The café partners with Fremont’s Keene Memorial Library for this activity. It partners with the downtown Sassafras Bakery and The Wine Experience for the quarterly Date Night.

“We change the mood in here so it’s more of a romantic evening with candles, live music and a special dinner,” she said.

Guests may have wine with their meal and a special dessert. The Wine Experience provides the wine and Sassafras Bakery, the dessert.

“So far, we’ve had two of those (Date Nights) and they’ve been real successful,” Ciccarelli said. “They’re fun and we have a good time.”

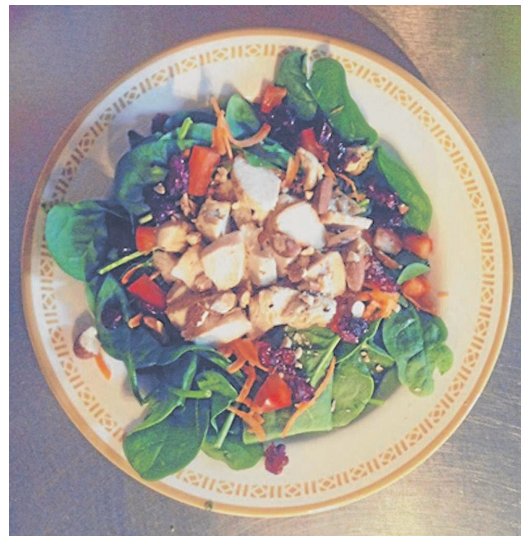
Café hours are 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday-Thursday and 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Fridays. It’s closed Sundays, but available for rental on Sundays or after closing hours on other days for \$50.

Ciccarelli said the café has a family friendly and welcoming atmosphere and offers made-to-order food and beverages.

“We don’t mind making modifications so people can get what they want or need for food and drink items,” she said.

Ciccarelli said she is excited about the new growth that’s bringing more people downtown. Some of that growth in historic downtown area includes the Pop-up Park at Fifth Street and Park Avenue, revitalization of the 505 Building and performances at the May Brothers building.

“It’s making downtown the place to be,” she said, adding, “We already have the charm and atmosphere that the Old Market (in Omaha) has and with all the new businesses and new projects, we’re having more opportunities for exploration.”



The Polymath Cyber Cafe in historic downtown Fremont offers a variety of colorful and healthy food options for customers. The cafe also offers an array of fresh salads and smoothies.

Courtesy photos



**Fremont’s best location for
fabulous food, fun & atmosphere.**

Monday-Thursday, Saturday 9am-6pm
Friday 9am-8pm
Closed Sunday



414 N. Main Street Fremont, NE

www.polymathcybercafe.com



Sam Pimper, Fremont Tribune

A look at the current level of completion inside of the 30,000 square-foot Dillon Family YMCA Aquatic Center.

YMCA placing emphasis on teaching youth to **SWIM**

By Sam Pimper
Fremont Tribune

Jerry Rinne believes that the Fremont Family YMCA is a community hub that provides a little something for everyone.

With its numerous gymnasiums, youth programs, summer camps, ice arena and wellness center, the YMCA is absolutely a world-class facility. In fact, with the completion of the Dillon Family YMCA Aquatic Center, the biggest square-foot Y in the world will reside in Fremont, Nebraska.

And while that's quite a feat, Rinne, YMCA president and CEO, isn't all that concerned about the size of the facility he oversees, but rather the quality of services it provides.

"We always say that we don't care about being the biggest, our goal is really to be the best," Rinne said.

And these services do matter, because they are provided to 10,400 members, 4,000 of whom are children under the age of 18. Mike Robinson, director of membership and marketing, said the goal is to reach the 11,000 member number in the not-so-far future.

One of the major pushes currently being made at the Y is to teach as many area youth to swim as possible. Swim programs have been emphasized and well attended for a number of years, but Rinne said that too many children still aren't proficient in the water.

Statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) show that every day, two children die as a result of drowning. In fact, drowning is the second-leading cause of death for children between the ages of 5 and 14.

With Fremont being home to numerous bodies of water, including the Fremont Lakes State Recreation Area, learning to swim is of the utmost importance.

In November, the Y is adopting a new swim program through the YMCA of the USA, which is revamping some aspects of the way swim lessons are taught. Several classes will be held to work with swimmers of varying skill levels. Rinne said a lot of emphasis is being placed on children being comfortable with their surroundings.

"It's really geared toward younger kids to get them water adjusted," he said. "To make sure that they feel really comfortable in the water."

Currently, Rinne and his staff are working with the Fremont Public Schools District to teach first-graders to swim.

The SwimMates Program, launching in November, consists of four 40-minute-long classes that will span over the course of two weeks or four weeks. The program is free of charge and each class is broken down into two, 20-minute-long instructional sessions.

One group of children will begin in the water and receive instruction, and another group will learn about basic swimming survival skills from an instructor on land before rotating. Children of all



Sam Pimper, Fremont Tribune

Jerry Rinne, president and CEO of the Fremont Family YMCA, walks toward the entrance of the Dillon Family YMCA Aquatic Center. The facility is expected to be completed toward the end of January 2018.

skill levels can participate in SwimMates.

RTG Medical is serving as a valuable partner by paying for instructors, transportation and a towel for each first-grader who completes the SwimMates Program.

Soon, these new swimmers – and the rest of the community – will have the opportunity to utilize the Dillon Family Aquatic Center, which Rinne said is expected to be near completion toward the end of January 2018.

The \$15.3 million, 30,000 square-foot facility, will house one body of water with six 50-meter lanes running east and west, and 12, 25-yard lanes that will accommodate competitive and recreational swimmers at the same time.

In addition, there will be seating for 300-400 people and space for locker rooms, a hot tub, steam room, family changing rooms, a splash pad and diving well.

Once the new facility is completed, the

current lap pool is being transformed into a 5,000-square-foot free weights and CrossFit training area and the current instructional pool will be filled in and covered with turf, providing an approximately 6,000-square-foot multi-purpose area where numerous classes and activities can be completed.

Currently, four swim teams utilize the current pools – YMCA Recreational, YMCA Competitive, Fremont High School and Special Olympics teams.

During his interview with the Tribune, Rinne emphasized how vital a role his staff plays in terms of making the Y what it is for the Fremont community. YMCA staff is comprised of 20 full-time employees, but as many as 500 part-time employees are on the Y's payroll annually.

In addition, no other Fremont organization employs more youth than the Fremont Family YMCA.

"It can be really hard for kids to find jobs, so we really take pride in the fact that we are able to employ so many youth," Rinne said. "Lots of the kids we've employed here not only do great things for the Y, they also end up doing big things throughout the community."

Anybody who doesn't belong to the Y simply needs to drop by and speak to Robinson. With a No Youth Left Behind policy, no child under the age of 18 will ever be turned away. Adults are also eligible for a variety of payment options.

Being a member of the Fremont Family YMCA is a win-win situation because a person becomes immersed in what is essentially its own little community. And there's an awful lot to do in this community.

"There's so many different things people can do, and it's all under one roof," Rinne said. "And that's something that is pretty rare to find these days."



FREMONT FAMILY YMCA

Hazel R. Keene Wellness Center

Sidner Ice Arena

Christensen Family YMCA Camp

**Dillon Family YMCA Aquatics Center
(Opening Soon!)**

STRENGTHENING OUR COMMUNITY

810 N. Lincoln Ave. 402-721-6952



Colin Larson, Fremont Tribune

Dave Pimper of Calton & Associates in his office at 301 E 6th St #110. Pimper has spent over three decades as a financial adviser and specializes in retirement planning.

Pimper offers variety of retirement, financial services

Colin Larson
Fremont Tribune

When it comes to planning for retirement, most Americans are unprepared and uninformed.

According to a recent study by the American College of Financial Services, three in four retirement-aged adults failed

a quiz on ways to make their nest eggs last through retirement.

The study also showed that older Americans between the ages of 60 and 75 have trouble comprehending vital financial topics including investment considerations, paying for long-term care expenses and strategies for sustaining income throughout retirement.

Luckily for those planning retirement in the Fremont area, Dave Pimper of Calton & Associates has over three decades of experience answering those very questions and providing financial planning solutions.

"Most people just don't understand investments because you don't learn it in elementary school, you don't learn it in

high school and you don't even learn it in college," Pimper said.

Pimper is an independent financial advisor who specializes in retirement planning such as Social Security claiming, 1031 Exchanges, 401K and IRA account management, as well as general investments and financial planning.

"We are normally working with people



Colin Larson, Fremont Tribune

Dave Pimper of Calton & Associates office is located at 301 E 6th St #110. Pimper offers a variety of financial advising and investment services.

who have put their money in for a life time and they are looking for a place to put a portion, or all of that money, where they know it has a chance for growth," Pimper said.

Pimper has roots that run deep in Dodge County and Eastern Nebraska as a native of Howells and a longtime Fremont resident and graduate of Fremont High School and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

With more than 30 years of experience in the financial industry, Pimper opened his Calton & Associates office in Fremont in 2004, and started offering his services to area residents. The office is located at 301 E. Sixth St. Suite #110.

"We have been fortunate to be able to work here in Fremont," Pimper said. "A lot of people come home to roost and that is what we did. We wanted to raise our kids in Nebraska and go through the public school system, so it has been a good ride and we are still continuing."

Along with returning to raise their two children, Sam and Liz, Pimper and his wife Amy also work together, with Amy working as an administrator at the firm.

Along with Amy, Pimper also employs Craig Jones as another administrator and the tight knit atmosphere allows Calton &



Tribune Files

Emcee Dave Pimper addresses the nearly 500 guests of the Fremont Area Chamber of Commerce's Annual Banquet in 2013.

Associates to provide detailed attention to all of their clients throughout the Greater Fremont and Omaha areas.

"We have a pretty efficient office," Pimper said. "We are an independent firm with nearly all of our business in Fremont and the surrounding rural areas as well as Omaha."

Along with providing a range of retirement and financial planning services Pimper also holds regular informational sessions and workshops around the area.

The workshops cover topics including Social Security, 401(k) and IRA Rollovers, In-Service Transfer Withdrawals, and general retirement planning.

"It is a great way for me to introduce our firm and meet people that I would never get to meet otherwise," Pimper said. "We always offer consultations and if people take advantage of that we are able to go in and answer their questions and see if we can help them follow through with some of their financial planning and what their needs are."

According to Pimper, he has held over 460 public workshops during his career. His last workshop was on Social Security claiming and was held Sept. 21 at Lazlo's Brewery in Omaha.

"Nine or 10 months out of the year we will have multiple monthly sessions and I have been in front of thousands of folks and have heard almost every financial need, want, desire and drama," Pimper said. "It's been a very fun and a good ride."

For Pimper, one of the things he enjoys most about providing financial advice is assisting people in an area that can be difficult to understand.

"You have to want to help people, that is the first thing, helping people with something that they have not a lot of education or information on," he said. "I get paid for good results from a financial planning standpoint, otherwise they won't stay a client."

Another thing Pimper wants to bring to his financial planning advice is

providing people with a stable strategy for managing their investments and retirement.

"If I went on a rollercoaster right now the first one would be fun, but if I went on a rollercoaster for long enough it would make me sick," he said. "So we try to get that rollercoaster effect out of portfolios with our clients and level them off a little bit."

Along with Pimper's goal of providing financial advice that is sensible and stable, stability is a common theme that runs through a lot of aspects in his own life.

"I always kid that I have been with two broker dealers in 28 years, I have been with the same wife for nearly 37 years, and I have a dog that is 17 years old," Pimper said. "So not a lot of things change in the Pimper family, it's pretty stable."

Calton & Associates is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday and those looking to inquire about services can call the office at 402-721-0809.



Dave Pimper
Investment Advisor Rep.

30 Plus Years of Giving Valuable Financial Advice on...

Investments
401k/IRA Rollovers
Tax-advantaged Investments
1031 Tax-Deferred Like Kind Real Estate Exchanges
Social Security Claiming Options

Call today! We can help you!

Sensible Financial Advice

CALTON
Investment Advisory Services
Member FINRA/SIPC

(402) 721-0809

301 East 6th St., Suite 110
Fremont, NE 68025
www.lazarusinvestments.com



Courtesy Photo Vic's Photography and Video

The Pop-up Park located in the parking lot on the corner of Fifth Street and Park Avenue has already seen an abundance of use including a wedding.

Pop-up Park now open through October

Colin Larson
Fremont Tribune

Jeremy Siffring's hands have been in countless projects during his time spent as landscaping manager for Siffring Landscaping & Garden Center, LLC.

But he's never been part of a project that requires turning a vacant parking lot into a community Pop-up Park and greenspace.

"This is a unique project for us working on top of a parking lot," Siffring said. "This is the first one that we've done and

it's the first one completed in the state that we know of."

The project, which was completed in the lot south of the May Brothers building at the corner of Fifth Street and Park Avenue earlier this month, provides people in the Fremont community a nice area to hangout, have lunch, read a good book or complete numerous other activities.

"We actually had a wedding out there," Shannon Mullen, executive director of MainStreet of Fremont, said. "I got a call from the county building and they said someone was going over to get married

by the justice of the peace. So there are some things that we just didn't expect, it's very exciting."

The project is the brainchild Glen and Nancy Ellis, owners of the May Brothers building, and was funded through numerous grants, which covered approximately \$12,000 of the total \$18,000 expense.

The concept for the park was created by Siffring Landscaping & Garden Center. A large amount of dirt was placed in the majority of the lot to sustain plant life. A variety of trees, shrubs, rocks and flowers have turned the recently-vacant lot into

its own park. A large area for sitting and completion of activities is present in the center area of the greenspace.

According to Mullen, the Pop-up Park was originally scheduled to be open Sept. 1-21, however, after going before Fremont City Council last week it will now remain open for another month.

"We were able to get in front of the city council last week and get approval to allow it to remain up, weather permitting, through the end of October," she said.

Over the course of September several activities were held in the Pop-up Park,

including: Fremont Area Chamber of Commerce Coffee, along the monthly Artisan Market and Husker Tailgate party.

With the Pop-up Park now being open through the end of October, several more events are already being planned.

According to Mullen, First National Bank of Fremont will hold their United Way campaign kick-off in the space in October, and yoga in the Pop-up Park is planned in association with Blue Yoga.

The Artisan Market will again be held in the park, which is set for Oct. 14 from 3-9 p.m.

Along with events in the Pop-up Park, area residents can get out and enjoy the new greenspace on their own any time of day.

As long as weather cooperates over the next month, residents have the opportunity to enjoy the trees, shrubs, and sitting areas until the end of October.

"If the weather starts to really turn we will probably pull it early," Mullen said. "But otherwise we will continue to maintain it and have it up for anyone to come out and enjoy."

In addition to grant funding, area residents played a role in funding the pilot-project by purchasing different trees and shrubs from the park that will be transported to their homes by Siffring when the park is torn down at the end of October.

Mullen is excited to receive continued feedback about the pop-up park, this will play a role in deciding whether to make the Pop-up Park a permanent fixture of the Historic Downtown Fremont area.

"I just want it to be utilized, we really want people to come and take advantage of it," she said. "The more people that come out just to give us feedback – good, bad or indifferent – will be a positive. It will let us know if a permanent downtown project – whether at this downtown location or another – will be warranted."



Above: Jeremy Siffring, manager of landscaping for Siffring Landscaping and Garden Center, uses a rake to smooth out dirt near a water fountain at the Pop-up Park located in a parking lot on the corner of Fifth Street and Park Avenue.

Left: Two employees of Siffring Landscaping and Garden Center string lights on a pair of trees sitting in the Pop-up Park located in a parking lot on the corner of Fifth Street and Park Avenue.

Sam Pimper photos, Fremont Tribune

Quality Machines Products Since 1984!



TRI-V

Tool & Manufacturing
13434 Centech Rd., Omaha, Ne 68138
402-895-9000 | www.tri-vtool.com



WE WILL PROVIDE QUALITY, TIMELY SERVICE AND VALUE THAT EXCEEDS THE EXPECTATIONS OF OUR CUSTOMERS.

ARTESAN BREAD OFFERS MORE THAN JUST DELICIOUS BAKED GOODS

Colin Larson

Fremont Tribune

For Edna Suarez de Moreno and her husband Raul Moreno, baking is in their blood.

"We both worked for bakeries for a long time, and like our logo says, 'from generations of bakers,' all of my husband's family are bakers on his mother and fathers sides," Suarez de Moreno said.

Raul Moreno began his career, following the family tradition, when he was 14 years old and Edna also started baking at the age of 8.

"When I was a little girl my neighbors would buy cakes from me, since I was 9 I have been doing business with cakes" Suarez de Moreno said.

The couple has owned Artesan Bread, at 215 North Main Street, since 2014 making a variety of traditional Mexican baked goods, cookies, cakes, and other baked goods.

The couple took over the bakery from their former employers at International Bakery, after working for the company in Lincoln.

"My husband worked for International Bakery when they first opened their bakery there, and one of their daughters moved to Fremont to open the bakery here and he was still working for them," Suarez de Moreno. "They gave us an opportunity later on down the road, they definitely gave us a push and time to pay and take it over, so they are very important to us."

One of the bakeries big sellers are conchas, a type of sweet roll topped with a cookie crust shaped for its namesake, a seashell.

"All of the Mexican bakers have to have that, and we have do a large variety as well," Suarez de Moreno said.

Another one of the bakery's specialties is butter crescent rolls.

"My husband makes amazing butter crescents, he has a unique style and we make everything from scratch right here," Suarez de Moreno said. "Even if you eat puff pastry somewhere else, his is unique."

Along with owning and operating the bakery, the couple recently took over the



Courtesy Photo

The owners of Artesan Bakery, Raul Moreno and Edna Suarez de Moreno, with their four children.

space that used to house recently relocated Tortilleria Anita Y Taqueria and has expanded into a Latin style café.

"Our cook is El Salvadorian and she does Mexican food as well," Suarez de Moreno said. "She was just cooking for us over there and we loved it. At first we were kind of just day dreaming about having a café but once the previous owners moved out we were like, this is the time."

The new Artesan Café features a variety of El Salvadorian and Hispanic cuisines with a menu that features unique items every day.



Edna Suarez de Moreno and own of her employees prepare food at Artesan Bread's new cafe. The cafe features a variety of Latin foods with daily specials.

**Colin Larson/
Fremont Tribune**

"Today we have fajitas, barbacoa, pollo en crema, El Salvadorian style chicken, beef stew, and of course rice and beans," Suarez de Moreno said.

Customers also have the choice of enjoying the variety of dishes in a sandwich or burrito, and Suarez de Moreno wants the café to be a place to get a quick, homemade, and most importantly delicious meal.

"We wanted a new concept," she said. "Myself as a mother I am always in a hurry, I have four kids so I am always running around I don't have time to make and wait for food."

Along with providing a variety of foods and baked goods on a daily basis, Artesan Bread also makes personalized baked goods for a variety of occasions.

"We make everything from cupcakes to wedding cakes," Suarez de Moreno said.

With addition of the café to the business, the couple now employs a total of 9 people. Six employees in the bakery and three in the café.

"We have a great team, we are truly blessed," Suarez de Moreno said. "The people working for us are amazing people, and I had never worked with people from Guatemala before, with them if you ask you can consider it done."

The owners of Artesan Bread are certainly dedicated to their craft as they are open six days of the week from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. and open 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturdays.

"Half of our day, which starts at five in the morning, we bake and then around noon we start pre-making things that need to rest until the next day," Suarez de Moreno said. "That is why we don't even close on holidays because we are always prepping for the next day."

Since moving to Fremont and opening the bakery and restaurant, the Moreno's have enjoyed becoming part of the



Colin Larson/Fremont Tribune

A variety of sweet, delicious baked goods fill Artesan Bread located at 215 N Main Street.

community and getting to know everyone, even fellow local bakers like Evelyn Stewart who owns Sassafras Bakery.

"Everyone has been really nice," Suarez de Moreno said. "I am very good friends with the woman who owns Sassafras bakery as well I don't feel she is my

competition at all. She actually designed the café for us a far as lights, colors and everything. That is how close our relationship is."

Along with Stewart, the Moreno's contribute much of their success to the help of Ana Beltran, Steve Hulsebus, and the

Gonzalez-Villar and Granillo-Gonzalez families.

"We always dreamed of owning a bakery and all of them have played a huge part in our success, we sincerely thank them for all they have done for us," Suarez de Moreno said.

ARTESAN BREAD, INC. & DELI

TO STAY OR TO GO, ALWAYS FRESH, ALWAYS READY.

215 N. Main St. Fremont, NE • 402-620-4220

Goodwill prepares students for FUTURE

Work experience helps students learn skills to obtain, keep jobs

By **Tammy Real-McKeighan**
News Editor

Donnivan Gaters knows the importance of good customer service.

So when he mans the donation door at the Goodwill Industries site in Fremont, Gaters is sure to project a positive persona to donors dropping off items.

"You greet them when you take their donation and you say 'Thank you for supporting our Goodwill mission,'" said the 20-year-old North Bend resident.

Gaters has learned much through his involvement in Goodwill's Work Experience Program. Now 20 and a 2016 graduate of North Bend Central High School, he will finish the program in May. Gaters said he'll miss the program, but he's thinking about applying at Valmont Industries in Valley.

The Work Experience Program is the oldest program within Goodwill Industries Serving Eastern Nebraska and Southwest Iowa.

Launched in 1965, it provides hands-on training for high school-age students.

"The program is designed to assist students with disabilities learn work skills in a supportive environment," said Holly Schwietz, work experience manager.

Gaters sees the value of the program.

"It helps me learn good job skills for things I might do in the future," he said. "Hopefully, I can apply the job skills to life so I can succeed at a job."

Fremont Public and North Bend Central schools send about a dozen students to participate in the program.

Gaters and the other students are assigned jobs within the Goodwill organization. A trainer monitors their progress throughout the school year.

Program participants rotate to various jobs during the school year. The students can work in retail, production, clerical and custodial areas in the Goodwill store at 3175 Elk Lane in Fremont.

Schwietz said students see the power of work. They learn about the importance of attendance, staying on task, problem solving, following directions and how to accept redirection.

Work Experience trainers develop individualized work goals for each student.

The trainers also have weekly "staff meetings" or class time with students to help them learn about work-related topics such as customer service, time management, social interaction, stress, anger management and conflict resolution.

Work Experience participants have the opportunity to practice filling out job applications. They can work on interviewing skills and practice disclosing their disability to an employer. Participants can learn about self-advocacy and asking for accommodations.

The students earn school credits while gaining a work history.

While in the program, work experience participants are paid minimum wage. Store sales pay the students' wages.

Last year, Work Experience participants earned more than \$35,000 in wages and worked almost 4,000 hours, Schwietz said.

Store staffers work alongside the students demonstrating tasks and striving to serve as good role models.

"They (students) supplement the store staff," Schwietz said, adding, "The store staffers often say that in the summer months — when the students aren't here — they really feel it. They notice the difference and are always very excited when the students return in the fall."

Gaters was a junior in high school when he became a Work Experience Program participant.

"I started outdoing clerical and custodial work," he said.



Tammy Real-McKeighan photos, Fremont Tribune

Donnivan Gaters of North Bend loads items into a cart at the Goodwill Industries store in Fremont. He is part of a Goodwill Work Experience program that provides training and teaches students job skills they can use in the future.



Savanna Hraban of North Bend works on the retail floor of the Goodwill Industries store in Fremont. She is part of the Goodwill Work Experience program which provides training and helps students learn job skills that can help them in the future.

He worked on a computer. He also cleaned bathrooms, swept the store and cleaned glass doors in the entryway. He appreciated the learning experiences.

"We do chores at my house so it came in pretty handy," he said.

The next year, he worked at the

donation door. He pre-sorted clothes. He removed clothes that had been available for a while, but not purchased and placed them in what's called a salvage box.

Last year, he was busy with clerical and donation door work again. He enjoys working at the donation door.



Donnivan Gaters of North Bend pauses for a moment at the Goodwill Industries store in Fremont.

"I like giving good customer service — that's something I'm good at," he said.

Savanna Hraban, 17, of North Bend is in her second year with the program.

In her first year, she did clerical work on computer. She also has put merchandise into the correct places in the store. She's stayed busy sorting and hanging clothes. Like Gaters, she also has done salvage work — putting clothes that haven't sold into a large box that goes to a Goodwill warehouse.

Christin Graff, a Work Experience trainer in Fremont, has high praise for the young Work Experience participants.

"They're a great group of students," she said.

Schwietz also pointed out the benefits of getting to work with the program participants.

"What's awesome about our jobs is we



Jessica Walters of Fremont works on her money math skills on Thursday afternoon in the Goodwill Industries store. Walters is among students who are part of the Goodwill Work Experience program.

get to see students who might be a little hesitant or anxious in the beginning of the school year really blossom through the training that Chris provides — to see them

at the end of the school year full of confidence and self-assuredness," Schwietz said.

Hraban will graduate from North Bend Central High School this year and believes

the program will help her go farther in life.

"It's going to help me find my career," she said. "I don't know what I want to do quite yet, but I'm working on it."



**ELIMINATING
BARRIERS.**



**PROTECTING THE
ENVIRONMENT.**



**EMPOWERING
PEOPLE.**





Fremont Drugstore offers hometown feel

Sam Pimper photos, Fremont Tribune

Matt Kruse, owner of Fremont Drugstore, speaks with Pharmacy Technician Katlin Snyder inside of the business, 1900 E. Military Ave Suite 220. Formerly Miller Pharmacy, Kruse and his wife, Tillara, opened Fremont Drugstore in mid-July.

By Sam Pimper
Fremont Tribune

Many store owners find a way to insert their name or a piece of themselves into their business name, it's an identifying factor that gives them pride while also letting people know who they are dealing with.

But when Matt and Tillara Kruse opened Fremont Drugstore in the Suite formerly occupied by Miller Pharmacy, located at 190 E. Military Ave. Suite 220, the couple wanted their business name to reflect their mission.

"A lot of people asked us why we named

it what we did," Kruse said. "And we did because at the end of all of it, it's here for the community. The community makes this place what they want to make it. Could I have slapped my name on it? Absolutely. But that doesn't do us justice for what we are trying to get across to people and what we are trying to build."

The Kruses own and operate Fremont Drugstore as well as Scribner Drug Store in Scribner, where the couple lives with their two children; 4-year-old Harrison and 2-year-old Nora.

The couple met while attending Logan View High School, Matt Kruse said during an interview inside of the store. Tillara

graduated in 2006 and attended the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Matt graduated from high school a year later and also enrolled at UNO.

During Tillara's sophomore or junior year of college, Matt Kruse said she started working at Walgreen's and came to the realization that she wanted to go to pharmacy school. After being accepted into the University of Nebraska Medical Center, she realized that she wanted to have an independent practice in a smaller-town setting.

"The fourth year of pharmacy school is all rotations, and she knew that she wanted to do independent, small town

pharmacy," Kruse said. "So most of her rotations were driven in that direction."

While Tillara studied at UNMC, Matt managed an Omaha Papa John's pizza location which ultimately helped him bolster the necessary business management skills to handle the business end of both pharmacy locations down the road.

Once Tillara graduated from UNMC in 2013, the couple was approached by Mark Vogt of Vogt Pharmacies, Inc., about purchasing Pender Apothecary. Vogt owned the location and the Kruses were contracted to buy it out after several years.

At the time, Kruse said Pender Community Hospital was in the process of



Fremont Drugstore offers a quality selection of cards for all occasions.

purchasing these types of businesses and the hospital ultimately purchased Pender Apothecary.

Following this experience, the Kruse's future was a little uncertain in 2014 until another opportunity presented itself, this time in Newberg, Oregon, a suburb of Portland.

"We went out there, looked at the pharmacy and were all set to move," Kruse said. "Then we found out some of the pharmacy stuff happening out in Oregon wasn't really pro-independent, so the guy ended up having to sell the store ... The rug was literally ripped out from under our feet.

The Kruses ultimately got back into contact with Vogt, whom Kruse said he and his wife still had a good working relationship with. Vogt had recently purchased Miller Pharmacy from Gary Jurgenson and Ken McElhose.

Tillara started working for Miller Pharmacy and Matt worked as a bartender at Fremont Golf Club. But the Kruses had a dream of owning their own pharmacy, and the process of making that happen wasn't moving along as rapidly as hoped, Matt said.

"So we bought Scribner Pharmacy – now it's called Scribner Drugstore but most people know it as Scribner Pharmacy," Kruse said. "We bought that in July 2016, and then the news broke in October 2016 that Miller Pharmacy sold to HyVee. We then got approached about putting this one (Fremont Drugstore) back in right away."



In addition to prescription medications, Fremont Drugstore offers a wide variety of over-the-counter medications, vitamins and topical creams.

At first it didn't seem like a viable option with Kruse and his wife opening their first location in Scribner, however, after a few meetings with the person attempting to get the Kruses to open the pharmacy it felt like opening a Fremont location was the right call.

After completing a fair amount of renovations to the Suites interior, Fremont Drugstore opened July 17 of this year. The pharmacy is staffed by four employees – two pharmacists, a pharmacy technician and a cashier. Kruse said that Tillara serves as the pharmacist for Scribner Drugstore.

In addition to prescription medication, the store offers a wide assortment

of over-the-counter medication, vitamins and topical creams. There's also an impressive variety of cards for all occasions.

While an independent pharmacy can't do everything the exact same way as a larger operation, people know they will have an interpersonal interaction by utilizing an independent pharmacy.

"At most stores you will get some sort of recording asking you all sorts of questions," he said. "Here you will talk to a person right away, it may not be the pharmacist, it may be one of our technicians, but you will have the ability to talk to a pharmacist and to ask the questions you

need answered. That's what we are here for."

Kruse said the business is off to a good start, and that many of Miller Pharmacy's old customers are new customers at Fremont Drugstore. Kruse's goal isn't to be Miller Pharmacy, because he and his wife have their own way of managing a business, but he wants to be equally as accessible to the community.

"We aren't Miller Pharmacy, and I don't know that we could ever replace some of the things they were to a lot of people, but we are sure going to try," Kruse said. "I really do want this place to be here for the next hundred years."

NOW OPEN!

Mon.-Fri. 8a-6p

Sat. 8a-2p • Sun. Closed



FREMONT

DRUGSTORE



Call us

1900 E. Military Ave, Suite 220

402-816-4554



Find us on
Facebook

@fremontdrugstore