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Good morning everyone!

I hope everyone is doing well and staying warm. Up here in Northwest Iowa, one day we had 77 degrees! And the next day was 15 degrees and a blizzard. Not much snow stuck around, but it's still cold. Looking forward to warmer weather coming soon.

At my facility we are doing a building project. I have an Independent and Assisted Living. We are adding five assisted apartments, which should be done the end of March. Also a community room (currently we use our Fireside room for large activities. Unfortunately, there's a beautiful fire place right in the middle of it. We end up setting up chairs on either side for musical events). AND...a brand new kitchen, updated dining rooms and a Bistro! In the kitchen (we will work out of our old kitchen until the new one is completely finished) the walls are sheet-rocked, the hoods are up and a massive (for us) walk-in cooler and freezer is in place. It's very exciting! But it also seems to take forever. My boss wants me to completely change how we do things with the residents. We'll see how that goes. I may be asking for help from some of you...

There is a newsletter coming out soon, but here's a preview!

It's so exciting to be getting ready for our spring meeting March 28 and 29. 11.75 CE's over two days can get you a long ways toward what you need for ANFP. This will be a special two days: we are starting to celebrate our 60<sup>th</sup> year! 60 years: where does the time go? And, as always, we have a STELLAR food show for you to attend on Friday. It's true, we're sadly hitting Good Friday, but these were the best dates for us. Don't worry, fish will be an option on Friday.

Lots of great information during the meeting.

Our ANFP national president Felicia Smith, and the head of ANFP, Joyce Gilbert will be attending to celebrate our 60<sup>th</sup> with us, both as speakers.

Our state dietitian is retiring, so unable to join us this time. Barb will be speaking in her stead. Barb says, "I will be spending time on the newest information from DIAL or the old DIA survey information for both the LTC's and Hospitals so you might encourage members to share with their Admin's the importance of joining in our meeting to get valuable information on how to read and understand the regulations plus all the other good stuff we have to offer...maybe they can bring their RD's or Admin's or students if they have one. Tell them their name will get put in a basket for a prize if they bring a plus one! Aging Rules will donate the gift...think I can find something very nice!"

International speaker Amye Sharlau will be our motivational speaker. She hits the state as "Rosie the Riveter" and the iconic "We can do it!" image of WWII. She will show you how to identify, value and apply your unique skills, while embracing the technological revolution and rapid change.

Elaine Farley-Zoucha RDM LMNT, who has spoken at our national ANFP meetings, will be giving us updates on Food Allergies, followed by Gretchen Robinson, RD, of Martin Brothers on sanitation. Chef Sarah Winchell and her students from the Central Campus Culinary Program will be talking

about how do you eat with your eyes? At the end of day 1 there will be a board meeting, followed by a meet and greet cocktail reception at the bar from 5-6 for all members.

And then there's more...

Here are some numbers provided by our membership queen, Rhonda Postma. I remember years ago we struggled to get over 300. Now we're almost 400!

These membership numbers were as of Feb 21, 2024:

Allied Professional -	12
Pre-Professional -	28
Professional -	339
Retired Professional -	6
Grand total	385

Our meeting will be in the Hilton Garden Inn West Des Moines again. Barb tried to get us a deal on rooms, but they wouldn't play ball, charging us \$139 a night.

Then she got crabby, and has suggested two other hotels...noting that our hotel online is pricing out \$12 cheaper pr. night! Go Barb!

She checked out a couple of other places: see below.

Hyatt Place Jordan Creek West Des Moines

\$118 pr. night

(right across the p-lot from our convention center)

Hilton Garden Inn Jordan Creek

West Des Moines Convention Center \$127

<https://www.booking.com/>

That's all for now. Looking forward to seeing all of you at the Spring Meeting!

Sharon Vermeer

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"Fear nothing but to waste the present moment."

– Mark Sanborn

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