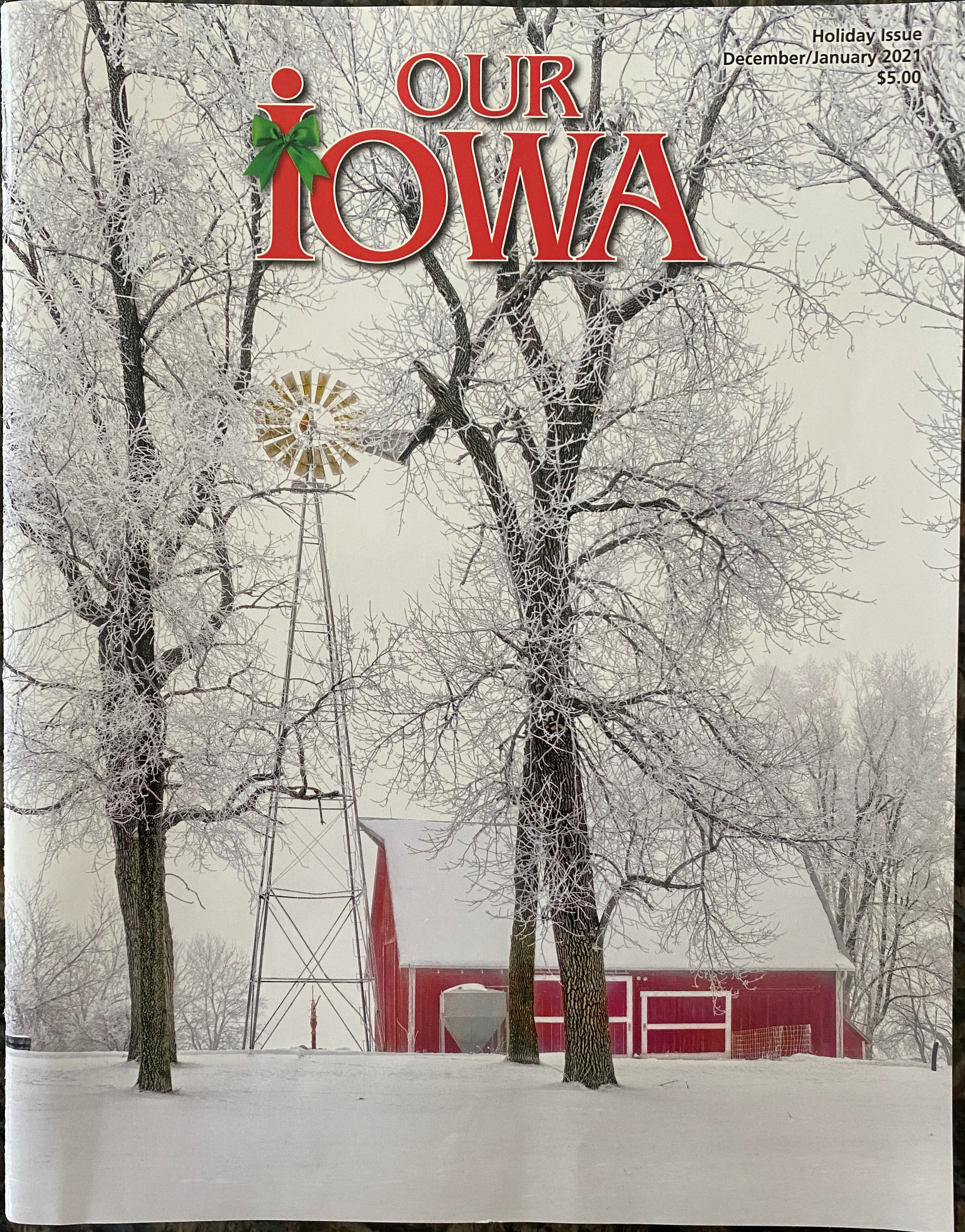


Holiday Issue
December/January 2021
\$5.00

OUR IOWA



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Here's What's Ahead...



8



20



24



34

- 6 **Then and Now.** Siblings headed to Mom's house to find Christmas gifts they received in 1970 and used them to re-create a family photo.
- 9 **They Stitched with Threads of Love.** Ladies used their sewing talents to weave fabric of family into heartwarming Christmas traditions.
- 11 **Sweet Traditions Live On.** Holidays at Grandma's were marked by cherished moments and tasty treats. Have a candy off her gumdrop tree!
- 12 **Prettiest Farm in Iowa.** We head to the beautiful hills of Audubon County to feature a farmstead loaded with pretty pink and purple phlox.
- 20 **Kindness at Christmas.** Readers share stories about priceless gifts from the heart, including a special memory from many years ago.
- 26 **Can You Tell a Good Christmas Tale?** We start the story...and let you give it a surprise ending...in our 14th annual holiday writing contest.
- 27 **The Anniversary Fork.** A newlywed couple's special gift to each other was framed with love when they celebrated 50 years of marriage.
- 33 **Grandma's Oyster Stew.** Grandmother Row was set in her ways, so you always knew what she had cooking in her home on Christmas Eve.
- 49 **Amish Farm Wife's Diary.** She loves when family is home and safely under her wings, sharing stories at supper about their busy day.
- 54 **A Story to Warm Soul and Soles.** A reader recalls a day in January 1944 when his first-grade teacher showed kindness to a classmate.
- 56 **Sharing Gifts, Traditions and Warm Family Gatherings.** All are cherished keepsakes that make readers' memories of past holidays special.

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More Tales of Playful Pups

Whether it's their spirited shenanigans or clever tricks, family dogs are always good for a smile.

IF YOU don't care for winter, I'd like to introduce you to our dog, "Shadow". She will convince anyone that winter is the best season of the year.

Shadow is a German shepherd—their DNA makes them winter-loving dogs. They can tolerate temperatures as low as 50° below zero.

Just watching Shadow play for a few minutes on a cold, gray and even snowy day soon has us grinning from ear to ear.

We got Shadow in the summer, and she didn't seem to mind the heat and humidity. She was a happy and playful girl. Then winter arrived, and Shadow discovered a new level of joy.

When freezing rain falls, most of us immediately head inside. Not Shadow—that's when she likes to sit on the deck and watch over her domain.

But wait until the snow starts flying. I remember one snowfall last winter when the flakes seemed as big as snowballs. It was beautiful to watch, even for those of us who don't like winter. Shadow was beside herself. She ran around the yard, trying to catch each flake before it hit the ground.

Ronnie and I watched her from our cozy sunroom and let our pup entertain us for hours. She likes to lounge in the snow; how comfortable it can be to sit buried in several inches of snow is a mystery to me!

So Doggone Cute!

Suddenly, she'll jump up and start plowing the deck with her nose. She looks up and gives us a grin, and all we can see is a pair of eyes peeking out of a face covered in white.

Shadow can even roll snow into snowballs and toss them into the air with her nose. She always looks confused when they explode as she chomps at them on the way down.

Personally, one of my favorite winter scenes is a smooth expanse of undisturbed fresh snow in our yard. Shadow doesn't agree. To her, fresh snow is meant to run through and make as many tracks as possible!

So I've learned to find pleasure in the sight of a backyard racetrack being enjoyed by our fun-loving shepherd.

This winter, Shadow will be 2 years old. She's such a smart girl—I almost expect to watch her build her own snowman someday.

For sure, she'll keep hopping through winter wonderlands, covering her toys with snow to discover them during the spring melt and making us laugh out loud with her shenanigans. For us, Shadow is the perfect cure for winter blues.

—Karen Hughes, Coralville



OUR MEAL with friends was ending when Roger spoke up, suggesting the four of us take a drive around town. All agreed, although my wife, Florence, hesitated.

"Will these things be okay?" she asked, pointing to the leftovers on the table. "Won't your dog bother them?"

"Oh, 'Mitsy' is a very well-behaved dog," Eleanor, our host, boasted. "She never helps herself to anything she shouldn't, and she always stays in her place under the table. She never ventures into the rest of the house."

To emphasize her point, Eleanor crossed the kitchen floor and stepped into the living room, speaking to Mitsy the entire time. Mitsy stayed in step with Eleanor, giving rapt attention, then stopped at the carpet's edge.

"See?" Eleanor proclaimed. "Mitsy knows the living room is out of bounds. She won't come in here."

We got in the car and headed about town. As we neared the house on our return, Eleanor once again extolled the virtues of her little Boston terrier.

As we turned the corner, Florence looked out the car window into the living room window. Sitting on the back of the couch, bold as brass, was Mitsy!

Not wanting to interrupt Eleanor's praise, Florence decided not to say anything, figuring they would all see what Mitsy was up to when they got inside. Heading into the house, Florence was about to reveal her observation when



THE SNOWFALL was too much thrill for this dog to stay with his walker—he just had to run! Photo by Brian Abeling of West Des Moines.

there, curled up peacefully under the kitchen table, was Mitsy. She even sounded as if she was snoring!

Eleanor looked down proudly at her prodigy and exclaimed, "Oh, our little Mitsy. She's the best dog anyone could ever want!"

—David Lundberg, Pilot Mound

TELL US YOUR TALE. Dogs possess the intelligence and sometimes a sixth sense to perform amazing feats. If that describes your dog or one you know, drop us a note and tell us what makes him/her a "wonder dog".

Send your letter to: "Dog Tales", Our Iowa, 1510 Buckeye Ave., Ames IA 50010. Or email it to: editors@OurIowaMagazine.com and put "Dog Tales" in the subject line.

