

# PROGRESS 2008

## Alan Adams brings three decades of photography experience

More than three decades of photos and portraits behind him, Alan Adams continues to serve Oskaloosa and Mahaska County. When looking for a well-established photographer in South Central Iowa, one has to look no farther than Alan Adams Photography on the north side of the Oskaloosa square. Just one step into his shop, and you can see the wide variety and diversity of pictures available by Adams.

Adams has been on the square since 1976 when he opened his photography business. He and his wife Linda operate the business.

"It has always been a family business," Adams said.

Adams' highly trained eye gives each photo a unique look, and his warm personality makes the photo session very comfortable. Having your pictures taken professionally may not be your favorite thing to do, but Adams and his staff make the process very easy, even for those who are camera shy.

In addition, Adams

works hard to keep his equipment, as well as his techniques as up-to-the-minute as he can.

Adams said the company has a web site in development.

"We have been working on putting a website together and hope to have it online this year," said Adams. "We want to offer online viewing and ordering."

Adams said that customers will continue to be able to purchase photos taken at past sessions whether on digital or on negative.

And some of those things have become very popular items in Adams' shop. For example, with the new digital technology, it is much easier to enhance photographs in several different ways.

Over the past year, Adams has added digitally designed albums that can take one's pictures and put them in an album in a new and creative way. Adams said that this has been received well, but he knows that there are those customers that still prefer the traditional matte-type photo albums.

"For people that like traditional stuff, we're still capable of doing that, or if people want the high-tech creative look, we can do that too," he said. "Either way."

Adams also provides a wide variety of other photo types, including wedding portraits, children's portraits, art blocks, which consist of a number of photos grouped together into one block, and of course senior portraits.

In addition to taking the photos, Adams is also able to do copy and restoration of old photographs. Adams says that if you have a photo you would like redone, he can make it look like new.

Photography sessions should be scheduled well in advance, especially for weddings.

Adams Photography is located at 105 High Avenue E, and is open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, and anytime by appointment. To make an appointment or for more information, call the studio at (641) 673-3471.

## Building with character is Bloom Builders' business

Excellent workmanship and erecting buildings with character is the reason Bloom Builders of Oskaloosa remain in business for more than half a century.

Established in 1951 by Gus Gilderbloom, Bloom Builders has made a name for themselves with more than 11,000 projects to their credit. Owners Jerry Mitchell and Ben Douglas bought the business in the 1980s and continue to stress the workmanship Gilderbloom envisioned.

"My wife, Cheryl, says we build buildings 'with character'," said Mitchell.

She should know. She keeps the books for the company and has seen the repeat business come back again and again.

Mitchell said the strength of his company is the leadership our foremen and lead men. They have more than 70 years experience in various aspects of construction. Each one brings a unique

skill to the job.

Wayne Vitzthum, Curtis Crill, Bryon Finneman, Ray Welch, and Cory Ransford lead the crews.

"Since the beginning we have been setting the standard," said Mitchell. "Our competitors are beginning to do some of the construction ideas Bloom has originated. We have built strip malls, mini-storage, horse barns, machine sheds, garages, houses, suburban out-buildings and commercial buildings. Many of them have specially designed features.

Uniqueness and the ability to take on challenges also give Bloom Builders an edge.

"We will do what others can't do or are unwilling to do," said Vitzthum. There needs to be a reason for people to buy your product and ours is our workmanship. We also do a lot of custom work."

Mitchell said Bloom

likes to have total control of the erection of a customer's project so they know that the work is done correctly. That autonomy allows the customer's needs and desires to be addressed during the building process.

Bloom Builders employs engineers and designers to help the customer design just the right look for their particular application.

Mitchell said with housing starts down, and lumber prices low, now is the time to consider building. There is good pricing on construction projects.

Most of their work is within a 120-mile radius of Oskaloosa. With the onset of the Internet, inquiries have increased. Mitchell said their site, [www.bloombuilders.com](http://www.bloombuilders.com), is receiving many inquiries per month.

Bloom Builders continues to set the standards for other builders to follow.

## You can't beat a champion

If you need a sign to advertise your business with a sign, decals or T-shirt, or need to store some items, Champion Storage and Signs in Oskaloosa is the place to go.

Owner Jeff Mitrising started his business in 2000 and it has grown every year. Champion Storage and Signs is located at 1203 S. Seventh St. in Oskaloosa.

Champion Storage and Signs features all kinds of signs, from as small as labels to large commercial signs, real estate

contractors fleet lettering, as well as vehicle and trailer wraps. They specialize in lighted sign cabinets and do a lot of truck and trailer lettering. They also do custom aluminum, wood and foam board signs.

Champion Storage and Signs has utility trucks to service its lighted signs. Some of its lighted signs include the Pro-Line Building in New Sharon and the Pilgrim Food Sign in Oskaloosa.

Mitrising also has several mini storage units that range in size from 5 feet by 10 feet to 10 feet

by 30 feet. The mini storage units are located at its South Seventh Street location, and in 2007, it added units at 1510 A Ave. W. (Highway 92).

Champion Storage and Signs also makes promotional items such as T-shirts, sweatshirts, hats, mugs and pins, and sport organization items.

Champion Storage and Signs business hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, and Saturday by appointment. They can be found on the Internet at [www.championss.com](http://www.championss.com).

## Darrell's Auto Service works on vehicles since '71

Darrell's Auto Service & Repair is located at 1603 S. Market in Oskaloosa, Iowa. Darrell Rust is owner of the business.

Darrell has been a mechanic since 1971. Darrell works on domestic and foreign cars, light trucks and vans. Keeping up to date on repair methods are very important. Constant advances in automobiles mean the mechanics have to have modern, up-to-date test equipment. I keep the latest computerized test equipment - both in office

and scanning testers and graphing meters. These tools are a must in diagnosing problems in today's vehicles.

I also perform coolant flushes as well as transmission fluid flushes. Scheduled maintenance on vehicle is very important and is well worth the money when you see vehicle prices today.

A good maintenance plan has saved a lot of my customers a lot of money.

I offer credit card payment by Discover, MasterCard and Visa.

Wrecker service around 30 miles is also offered.

I have had a lot of training, such as DMACC college and Ohio Technical Institute and Indian Hills college; also a lot of night courses offered by parts suppliers and Snap On Tools Corp.

I want to thank all of my customers over the years for all the business they have given me. Many have become close friends.

I look forward in the following years to continue what I started years ago.

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