

# Living

MAGAZINE

# RESIDENTS' CHOICE AWARDS



Johnston, Grimes, Dallas Center, Urbandale and Clive residents share their favorites

Egg ravioli with sage and almonds  
RECIPE

Richardson is passionate about animals  
NEIGHBOR

Seniors looking for players to hit the tennis courts  
COMMUNITY

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WELCOME

# RESIDENTS choose again

Welcome to our annual compilation of residents' choices in the northwest metro area. We launched this poll to determine the top people, places and events in the area, and the results make for a fun and informative read each year.

We invite residents in the area to vote for their favorites by answering more than 60 questions with open-ended responses. Some other polls rig the results by "suggesting" choices of businesses or requiring them to pay to be on the ballot. That is unethical, in our eyes, as it doesn't give a true snapshot of what the locals really like. Rest assured, these results are 100% organic responses that we received from our online and mail-in ballots.

We have become quite good at polling our readers and sharing results. I have been gathering this type of information for CITYVIEW magazine for many years, and you are likely familiar with the Best Of Des Moines readers' poll and the certificates you see across central Iowa. That poll was the first of its kind in the metro area, and it continues to be the primary source of central Iowans' favorites. Now we know it not only works for Des Moines, but for the northwest metro area as well.

You will likely agree with many of the results, and you will likely disagree with some, too. Hopefully, you took the time to cast your vote. If not, be sure to do so next year. Look to the pages of this magazine for full details as the time draws nearer.

We published the top three vote-getters in each of the categories inside these pages. Be sure to congratulate all the people, places and events that were selected as winners and let them know how much you appreciate them being in the area.

As always, thank you for reading, and thank you for voting, too. ■



### SHANE GOODMAN

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If you enjoy reading our monthly Johnston Living magazine, you may also enjoy our weekly newsletter, delivered via email.

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# CHOICE AWARDS



**Johnston, Grimes, Dallas Center, Urbandale and Clive residents share their favorites**



**By Tammy Pearson**

August has rolled around again, which means it is time to recognize the Residents' Choice Award winners for the northwest metro area. This year, we asked residents of the area to choose their favorites from the Johnston, Grimes, Dallas Center, Urbandale and Clive area. We recognize that residents of these communities often are patrons of businesses throughout this area and enjoy the amenities and events from their own and neighboring communities.

As we continue to improve our poll and respond to what readers say is important to them, we have added categories. This year, look for favorites you haven't seen before in the categories of Tree Service,

Homebuilding/Remodeling Contractor and Exterior Contractor.

As always, remember that these favorites were chosen by residents. You are likely to agree with some choices and disagree with others, but the results were determined by your area neighbors.

If you voted in this year's poll, thank you for participating. And, if you didn't, be sure to look for notices in this magazine for next year's poll opening and cast your vote. With some categories having only a few votes between the top vote-getter and the runners up, it's important to note that all those listed are winners, and we congratulate them all.

Haleigh Wiebers, owner of Clean & Breezy

# Johnston, Grimes/Dallas Center, Urbandale and Clive Residents' Choice for Favorite Northwest Metro ...

*(Runners up in alphabetical order)*

**Restaurant**

**The Urban Grill**

**Runners up:** Destination Grille; Trostel's Greenbriar Restaurant and Bar

**Restaurant for Breakfast**

**Cozy Cafe**

**Runners up:** 100th St. Corner Café; Perkins Restaurant & Bakery

**Restaurant for Lunch**

**Palmer's Deli**

**Runners up:** El Mariachi; The Urban Grill

**Restaurant for Dinner**

**Trostel's Greenbriar Restaurant and Bar**

**Runners up:** Destination Grille; The Urban Grill

**Restaurant for Dessert**

**Al's Dairy Freeze**

**Runners up:** Van Dee's Ice Cream Shoppe; Trostel's Greenbriar Restaurant and Bar

**Place for Ice Cream**

**Van Dee's Ice Cream Shoppe**

**Runners up:** Al's Dairy Freeze; Heavenly Delights

**Pizza Establishment**

**Pagliai's Pizza**

**Runners up:** Casey's; Pepp's Pizzeria

**Bar**

**Stevie C's**

**Runners up:** Blue Shark Ale House; Pour Choices Neighborhood Bar

**Coffee Shop**

**Starbucks**

**Runners up:** Lightbrite Coffee Roasters; Scooter's Coffee

**Catering Company**

**Hy-Vee**

**Runners up:** Cyd's Catering; Destination Grille

**Server /Bartender**

**Heather Loops, Trostel's Greenbriar Restaurant and Bar**


**Runners up:** Britt Richards, 1st Street Tavern; Eduardo Granillo, Destination Grille

**Auto Service**

**Iowa Auto Repair**

**Runners up:** Finishline Auto Works; Shade Tree Auto

**THANK YOU FOR VOTING US YOUR FAVORITE!**





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Favorite Northwest Metro  
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Favorite Northwest Metro School

Favorite Northwest Metro Church





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# FEATURE

## Auto Body Shop

### Finishline Auto Works

**Runners up:** Graham Collision; Iowa Auto Repair

## Car Dealership

### Toyota of Des Moines

**Runners up:** Bob Brown; Willis Auto Campus

## Auto Parts Store

### O'Reilly Auto Parts

**Runners up:** AutoZone Auto Parts; NAPA Auto Parts

## Preschool/Daycare

### St. Pius X Catholic School

**Runners up:** Generation Next Child Development Center and Preschool; Kids Korner

## Nonprofit

### Urbandale Food Pantry

**Runners up:** Johnston Partnership; LifeServe Blood Center

## School

### St. Pius X Catholic School

**Runners up:** Des Moines Christian School; Urbandale High School

## Park

### Walker Johnston Park

**Runners up:** Lions Park; Terra Park

## Community Festival or Event

### Urbandale 4th of July Celebration

**Runners up:** Grimes Governors Days; Johnston Green Days

## Church

### St. Pius X Catholic Church

**Runners up:** Lutheran Church of Hope; New Hope Assembly of God

## Pastor

### Daniel Adjei, St. Pius X Catholic Church

**Runners up:** Jeremy Carr, NorthPoint Church; Mike Housholder, Lutheran Church of Hope

## Chamber of Commerce

### Urbandale Chamber of Commerce

**Runners up:** Grimes Chamber and Economic Development; Johnston Chamber of Commerce

## Grocery Store

### Fareway

**Runners up:** Aldi; Hy-Vee

## Boutique

### Purple Poppy Boutique

**Runners up:** Simply Stella Rose; Styled. by JJ

## Retail Store

### Target

**Runners up:** Kohls; Purple Poppy Boutique

## Thrift Store

### Many Hands Thrift Market

**Runners up:** Every Step Giving Tree; Goodwill of Central Iowa

## Home Improvement Retail Store

### The Home Depot

**Runners up:** Johnston Ace Hardware; Menards



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AWARD  
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**DEADLINE TO REGISTER: FEB 17**

# FEATURE

## Liquor Store

### Hy-Vee Wine & Spirits

Runners up: Spirits Liquor; Urbandale Liquor

## Nursery or Garden Center

### Earl May Nursery and Garden Center

Runners up: Canoyer Garden Center; Piney Ridge Greenhouse

## Place to Purchase a Gift for a Man

### Menards

Runners up: Johnston Ace Hardware; The Home Depot

## Place to Purchase a Gift for a Woman

### Purple Poppy Boutique

Runners up: Studio IV; Target

## Dad/Child Date Spot

### Backpocket Pin and Pixel

Runners up: Emerge Academy; Jester Park

## Mom/Child Date Spot

### Backpocket Pin and Pixel

Runners up: Emerge Academy; Sky Zone Trampoline Park

## Place to Take Your Mom and Dad

### Trostel's Greenbriar Restaurant and Bar

Runners up: Destination Grille; The Machine Shed



Paul Vogtlin, grocery manager, and Matt Hickey, market manager, of the Johnston Fareway. Fareway was chosen favorite grocery store.

## Place to Take Your Kids or Grandkids

### Sky Zone Trampoline Park

Runners up: Backpocket Pin and Pixel; Emerge Academy

## Place for Children's Birthday Parties

### Sky Zone Trampoline Park

Runners up: Emerge Academy; Get Air Trampoline Park

A vertical advertisement for Kristin Coffelt, a realtor. The background is a blurred image of a modern kitchen. At the top, it says "THANK YOU for Voting Me Favorite REALTOR®". Below that is a circular seal for "IOWA Living MAGAZINE" with the text "think local • 2024" repeated around the edge. A blue banner across the seal reads "RESIDENTS' CHOICE AWARD" and "NORTHWEST METRO". Below the seal is a large yellow banner that says "WINNER". At the bottom left is a portrait of Kristin Coffelt, a woman with long brown hair. To her right is the text "Kristin Coffelt BOUTIQUE REAL ESTATE" and "515-314-4777 5500 MERLE HAY RD, JOHNSTON, IA 50313".

A horizontal advertisement for Ace Hardware. The top half has a red background with the text "PRESEASON SALE" in large white letters and "THE MONTH OF OCTOBER!" in white letters on a black background. Below this is a photograph of a red Toro snowblower. To the left of the snowblower is the Toro logo and the text "Authorized Warranty Dealer". Below the snowblower is the Ace Hardware logo, which includes a circular seal for "IOWA Living MAGAZINE" with the text "think local • 2024" repeated around the edge. A blue banner across the seal reads "RESIDENTS' CHOICE AWARD" and "NORTHWEST METRO". To the right of the seal is a circular badge that says "NOW OPENING AT 8AM MON-FRI". Below the Ace Hardware logo is the text "The helpful place." At the bottom, there are two addresses and phone numbers: "ANKENY 3020 SW Oralabor Road • 515-809-1104" and "JOHNSTON 5800 Merle Hay Road • 515-276-2854", with operating hours "8am-7pm (M-F) • 9am-5pm (Sat) • Noon-5 pm (Sun)" listed below each. At the very bottom is the website "WWW.ACEHARDWARE.COM".

# FEATURE

## Golf Course

### Jester Park Golf Course

Runners up: Beaver Creek Golf Club; Hyperion Field Club

## Hair Salon

### Art of Life Salon & Spa

Runners up: Great Clips; Talking Heads Salon

## Health Clinic

### MercyOne

Runners up: The Iowa Clinic; UnityPoint

## Dental Office

### Grove & Platt Dental Associates

Runners up: Johnston Dental; The Dental Studio of Iowa

## Orthodontist Office

### Mann Orthodontics

Runners up: Iowa Orthodontic Solutions; Stork Orthodontics

## Mental Health Services

### Pink Couch Wellness

Runners up: Compass Clinical Associates; RedCouch Counseling

## Chiropractic Office

### Thrive Chiropractic

Runners up: Active Wellness; Herrmann Family Chiropractic

## Vision Care

### Lifetime Vision

Runners up: Urbandale Eye Care; Vision Park Family Eye Care

## Health Club or Gym

### CrossFit 8035 West

Runners up: Life Time; Planet Fitness

## Pharmacy

### Hy-Vee Pharmacy

Runners up: Medicap Pharmacy; Walgreens Pharmacy

## Cosmetic Services

### Central Iowa Dermatology

Runners up: Studio IV; Ultra Beauty

## Physical Therapy

### Elevate Physical Therapy and Sports Medicine

Runners up: Athletico Physical Therapy; Rock Valley Physical Therapy

## Dance Studio

### Inspiring Dance

Runners up: Dance Vision; Eshanjali Dance Academy

## Gymnastics Studio

### Emerge Academy

Runners up: Mid Iowa Gymnastics; Sapphire Gymnastics Academy

## Tumbling Studio

### Emerge Academy

Runners up: Mid Iowa Gymnastics; Tribe Athletics

## Financial Planner

### Loren Merkle, Merkle Retirement

### Planning

Runners up: Tim Short, Edward Jones; Sharon Vickery, Edward Jones

## ELECT

# JOHN FORBES

## POLK COUNTY SUPERVISOR

### JOHN'S PRIORITIES

#### Keep Property Taxes in Check

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#### Mental Health

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#### Clean Water and Climate

Local governments must lead in reducing reliance on fossil fuels and encouraging use of alternative energy

#### Infrastructure

John will work to provide residents high quality services, including well maintained county roads and facilities

### JOHN'S EXPERIENCE

- State Representative 2013-2024
- Urbandale pharmacy owner for 42 years
- Urbandale City Councilman 2005-2012
- Past President Urbandale Chamber of Commerce
- Urbandale Citizen of the Year
- Central Iowa Honor Flight Coordinator
- National Community Pharmacy Service Award
- Iowa Pharmacy Association President
- Polk County Pharmacists President



John with wife Cindy & Family

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For more information:





# FEATURE

## Law Firm

### Letsch Law Firm

Runners up: Abendroth Russell Barnett Law Firm; Brown, Fagen & Rouse

## Accounting Firm

### Welgaard CPAs & Advisors

Runners up: Ann M Hartz, CPA & Associates; ThornTree CPA services

## Veterinarian

### Prairie View Animal Hospital

Runners up: Grimes Plaza Veterinary Clinic; Value Vet

## Dog Groomer

### Clean & Breezy

Runners up: Bark Shop; Stylin Paws

## Pet Care

### Dogwoods Lodge

Runners up: Dog Days & Cat Naps; Prairie View Animal Hospital



Jessica Reames, Linda Ward, Lexi Diersen and Dr. Erin Wilkens of Lifetime Vision, favorite place for vision care.

## Lawn Care Business

### Ultimate Lawn Services

Runners up: Colby's Lawn & Landscape; Finer Cuts Lawn Care

## Landscaping Company

### Miller Nursery

Runners up: CLK Lawn Care; Ever Greene Sodding and Landscaping

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# FEATURE

## Heating and Cooling Business

### Schaal Plumbing, Heating & Cooling

**Runners up:** Golden Rule Plumbing, Heating, Cooling, Electrical; Greens Appliance, Heating and Cooling

## Electrical Business

### Deaver Electric

**Runners up:** All Things Electric; ARC Electric

## Plumbing Company

### Golden Rule Plumbing, Heating, Cooling, Electrical

**Runners up:** Herr Plumbing; Roto-Rooter

## Senior Living Establishment

### Kennybrook Village

**Runners up:** Bishop Drumm Retirement Center; Deerfield Retirement Community

## Insurance Company

### Andrea Sabus, State Farm

**Runners up:** Buenzow Insurance Group; City State Bank Insurance

## Realtor

### Kristin Coffelt Real Estate

**Runners up:** Joleen Roskamp, RE/MAX Precision; Casee Woodley, RE/MAX Precision

## Bank/Credit Union

### Veridian Credit Union

**Runners up:** Charter Bank; Wells Fargo

## Photographer

### Carlye Bishop Photography

**Runners up:** Jenna McEntee Photography; Laura Wills Photography

## Place for Guests to Stay

### Stoney Creek Hotel and Conference Center

**Runners up:** Hilton Garden Inn; Hotel Renovo

## Home Building/Remodeling Contractor

### FIRSTCALL

**Runners up:** Buresh Home Solutions; Renov8 IA



## Exterior Contractor (siding, roofing, windows, doors)

### Sonntag Roofing

**Runners up:** Haggerty Windows & Siding; Midwest Construction

## Pest Control

### Preferred Pest Control

**Runners up:** Des Moines Pest Control – Urbandale; Miller Pest & Termite

## Tree Service

### MJ's Tree Service

**Runners up:** Trinity Tree Care; West Central Tree Service ■

**BRAD ZAUN**  
*Common Sense Community Leader*

**COMMON SENSE COMMUNITY LEADER**  
Brad Zaun has been a small business owner and leader in our community for over 30 years.

**FOCUSED ON OUR PRIORITIES**  
Our priorities are Brad's priorities. In the Senate, Brad has delivered meaningful property and income tax cuts, all while securing record levels of funding for education and mental health services.

**SAFE COMMUNITIES**  
Brad Zaun is focused on defending innocent life and standing up for victims. In the Senate, he has been a voice for human trafficking victims and those suffering from mental illness.

**STRONG SCHOOLS**  
Brad Zaun knows that our local schools are pillars of the community. In the Senate, he has delivered consistent funding increases and this year voted for the largest increase in teacher pay in Iowa history.

**Z Brad ZAUN STATE SENATE**  
**VOTE NOVEMBER 5TH!**  
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PAID FOR BY BRAD ZAUN FOR IOWA SENATE

# THEY ELIMINATED the stretch and other reasons to revisit your legacy plan

Recent law changes, including changes to IRAs, gift tax laws and trust rules, may have made legacy plans outdated.



You used to be able to leave your IRA to your children or grandchildren to use when they needed

to help their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren pay for college tuition or purchase their first home. Recent legislation eliminated your ability to “stretch” IRA distributions across multiple generations (your children’s or grandchildren’s lifetimes).

Now, your family is forced to liquidate (and pay taxes on) your IRA much sooner, even though sudden extra income could impact their taxes. This massive change, included in the 2019 SECURE Act, killed the stretch and put in place the 10-year rule, meaning, generally, that if you leave your IRA to someone other than your

spouse, they have to withdraw (and pay taxes on) the full value of an inherited IRA or 401(k) within 10 years of inheritance.

Pass-through or conduit trusts were common ways to protect assets while allowing heirs to enjoy the benefits of an inherited IRA. However, recent laws removed many benefits of making trusts beneficiaries of IRAs.

Current laws have nearly doubled the estate and gift tax exemption through the end of 2025 (it’s \$13.61 million per person or \$27.22 million per couple in 2024). Plans may include formulas based on old federal estate-tax exemption amounts, which were as low as \$675,000 in 2001.

Many Tax Cuts and Jobs Act provisions are set to expire at the end of 2025. However, for some, there are actions they may want before then regarding gifts and the type of assets that are best for gifting.

It can be challenging to keep up with the changes and understand how they impact you,

but working with someone who does is essential. After the SECURE Act passed, we contacted several families and individuals we serve to discuss their IRAs, the end of the stretch and other options, including an IRA relocation strategy for helping them achieve their legacy ambitions.

Sometimes, people think legacy planning strategies are only for the super wealthy, but minor changes to retirement savings of all sizes can significantly impact how much you can leave to your loved ones and charities.

There are some strategies that you may want to take advantage of now before the rules change again. You might be surprised to see how much more you can leave to your loved ones and save on taxes just by making a few small changes to your legacy plan. ■

Information provided by Loren Merkle CFP®, RICP®, Certified Financial Fiduciary®, Merkle Retirement Planning, 1860 S.E. Princeton Drive, Grimes, 515-278-1006.

## UNKNOWINGLY DISINHERIT YOUR SPOUSE?

Learn more reasons you should revisit your legacy plan. Scan the QR code to read about it right now.



Investment Advisory Services offered through Elite Retirement Planning, LLC. Insurance Services offered through MRP Insurance, LLC.

# EGG ravioli with sage and almonds

Recipe courtesy of the American Heart Association  
 Servings: 4

- 8 cups water
- 1/2 cup fat-free ricotta cheese
- 1 tablespoon grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 1/2 teaspoons fresh, chopped thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon grated orange zest
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 8 gyoza wrappers, shumai wrappers or wonton wrappers
- 4 large egg yolks, unbroken
- 1 large egg white, lightly beaten
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1/4 cup sliced almonds, chopped
- 1 tablespoon chopped, fresh sage
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped red bell pepper (optional)

**DIRECTIONS**

- Fill large pot with water. Bring water to gentle boil over medium-high heat.
- In medium bowl, stir ricotta cheese, Parmesan cheese, thyme, orange zest and pepper.

- Place four wrappers flour sides down on cutting board. Spoon 1 1/2 tablespoons cheese mixture onto center of each wrapper. Using back of spoon, press down on cheese mixture to create well about 1 1/2 inches across (width of large egg yolk), leaving at least 1/2 inch space around edges of wrapper. Without breaking it, carefully place one egg yolk in center of each well.
- Using pastry brush, brush edges of wrappers with egg white. Place one top wrapper with flour side up on each bottom wrapper. Using thumbs and forefingers, firmly press edges together to tightly seal each ravioli. Set aside.
- Using slotted spoon or spatula, carefully drop each ravioli into boiling water. Cook 2 1/2-3 minutes, or until wrappers are al dente (cooked not too soft but not overdone). Using slotted spoon, gently remove raviolis from pot, draining well. Transfer to plates. Drizzle with oil. Sprinkle with almonds, sage and bell pepper, if desired.
- Tips: Gyoza wrappers (or shumai wrappers) are preferred because they're thinner than wonton wraps. Look for gyoza wrappers in the dairy aisle, deli department or freezer



section.

- Use these guidelines to determine how you want eggs cooked: At 2 1/2 minutes, eggs are yellow and slightly thickened but not set around edges, similar to sunny-side up. At 3 minutes, eggs are deeper orange and slightly set around edges, similar to over-easy. ■

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## HOME fall maintenance checklist

Welcome, October. While fall brings an array of fun activities, it's also a crucial time to ensure your home is ready for the colder months ahead. Tackling these recommended maintenance tasks not only creates a cozy haven for winter, but can also enhance your home's value.

Here's a handy checklist to get your home prepped before the first frost:

- Reverse ceiling fans: Switch your ceiling fans to rotate clockwise.
- Service HVAC systems: Schedule maintenance for your furnace and air conditioner.
- Clean the chimney: Ensure your chimney is free of soot and debris. Ensure pilot lights are lit and ready for use in gas fireplaces.
- Inspect windows and doors: Check for leaks or drafts and seal any gaps.
- Test detectors: Ensure smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are functioning properly. It is recommended to replace them every 10 years.
- Winterize irrigation systems: Prepare your irrigation system for winter.
- Disconnect hoses: Empty and store garden hoses.
- Clean gutters: Remove leaves and debris from gutters.
- Pest control: Inspect for pests and apply necessary treatments.
- Tune-up snow blowers: Prepare your snow blowers with an annual tune-up.
- Mark driveway boundaries: Use reflective markers to outline your driveway.
- Lawn care: Apply fall fertilizer and winterize your lawnmower.
- Store patio furniture: Cover or store outdoor furniture.
- Exterior maintenance: Pressure wash and paint or stain as needed.
- Landscaping: Prune plants and maintain your landscape.
- Check attic insulation: Ensure your attic is properly insulated.
- Insulate pipes: Protect exposed pipes from freezing.
- Roof inspection: Check your roof and shingles for any damage.
- Exterior lighting: Ensure all outdoor lights are working.
- Seasonal décor: Celebrate the season with the beautiful colors of fall with décor and plants.

Know someone who could benefit from this list? Please share it with them.

If you're planning to sell your home soon, now is an excellent time to capture professional photos. With your home sparkling clean and prepped, let your real estate agent know so they can showcase your home at its best. Use those beautiful fall colors to your advantage before the leaves fall and holiday decorations take over.

Happy fall and enjoy the season. ■

Information provided by Katie Fliehler, [katie@katiefliehler.com](mailto:katie@katiefliehler.com), 515-664-0414; and Malinda Garner, [malinda@malindagarner.com](mailto:malinda@malindagarner.com), 515-991-5092, RE/MAX Precision, 8705 Chambery Blvd., Suite 100, Johnston. Licensed to sell Real Estate in the State of Iowa



### Fall potpourri simmer recipe

- 2 small oranges or 1 large orange, sliced
  - 3 cinnamon sticks
  - 1 tbsp whole cloves
  - 1/2 tbsp whole allspice
  - 1 whole star anise
- Combine all ingredients in small saucepan or crock pot and cover with 4 cups of water. Bring to boil and then reduce to simmer. Let simmer, not leaving unattended. Add more water as needed.

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# SHERIDAN shares journey with cochlear implant

## A life-changing experience

Bill Sheridan is an 80-year-old Johnston resident whose journey with hearing loss and a cochlear implant is both inspiring and eye-opening.

When he turned 60, he began wearing hearing aids, but there came a point years later when they no longer served him well.

His audiologist discussed a cochlear implant with him. Sheridan wanted to speak with someone who had gone through the experience themselves but found it challenging to find anyone.

“I would ask my golfing buddies, I would talk to my neighbors, my coffee groups ... but I was never able to talk to anyone in person who had been through it,” he says.

Regardless, Sheridan ultimately decided the implant would be a good thing for him. He underwent an outpatient surgery that took a couple of hours, after which he was sent home to heal. He did have to wait six weeks to have the device turned on and hear for the first time with it.

“Frankly, it was pretty darn exciting,” he says.

The implant bypasses the damaged parts of the ear and directly stimulates the hearing nerve. Sheridan has one implant in his right ear and a hearing aid in his left. While the device is not perfect, he describes it as life changing.



Bill Sheridan found that hearing aids were not helping him hear like they had been, so he opted for a cochlear implant.

“From my standpoint, it’s worth every minute of it,” he says.

However, Sheridan emphasizes the need for realistic expectations.

“It takes real commitment, it takes patience, and it takes support,” he notes.

He finds some of this support through a global community he’s connected with on Facebook called Cochlear Implant Experiences, where thousands of people share their stories and support each other. Sheridan was shocked to learn from his audiologist that only 4% of eligible individuals actually get cochlear implants.

“There’s 96% of people that probably could or should have this that aren’t doing it for various reasons,” he says. “One of the things is that it’s very costly. And for people who are not under Medicare, they have to make sure their insurance company will pay for it.”

Today, Sheridan is committed to helping others make informed decisions about getting cochlear implants. He recounts stories of people he’s met for coffee, like an 88-year-old retired attorney who decided to go through with the surgery after their chat and a woman who ultimately decided it wasn’t the right choice for her.

Sheridan’s own story is a powerful reminder of the impact cochlear implants can have on one’s quality of life if it’s a good fit for them. His willingness to meet with others and share his experience is a testament to the importance of community and support.

“I never feel sorry for myself because, when I go out to the hearing center, I’ll see 1-, 2-, 3-, 4-year-olds with implants,” Sheridan says. “I’m fortunate. It’s just a blessing for me at my age to be able to hear better.”

For those considering the journey, Sheridan’s advice is simple: Take that first step. Get evaluated and talk to people who have walked the path before you.

Sheridan can be reached by email at [william\\_sheridan1@msn.com](mailto:william_sheridan1@msn.com). ■

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# OCTOBER events at JPL



Fall is in full swing, and here at Johnston Public Library, we have a great lineup of events to keep people of all ages informed and entertained during the autumn hours. October programming at JPL features everything from a special story time for the littles with the Johnston Grimes Fire Department; a travel program for adults highlighting weird, wacky and wonderful attractions in Iowa; and multiple gaming events for teens — both the video game and board game varieties. Read on for further details.

**Johnston Public Library**  
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 515-278-5233  
[www.johnstonlibrary.com](http://www.johnstonlibrary.com)  
 Monday - Thursday, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.  
 Friday - Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.  
 Sunday, 1-5 p.m.

- **Oct. 7: Fire Prevention Week** is in October, and the Johnston-Grimes Fire Department is coming to JPL to present a Fire Safety Story Time with JGFD on Monday, Oct. 7. Bring the kids to learn about fire safety and then check out a real JGFD fire engine after the event.
- **Oct. 14:** Do you have little people in your life who are gearing up for Halloween? Help us kick off the holiday season with this Spooky Story Time suitable for kids ages 8 and younger. Kids and accompanying adults are invited to join us in the large meeting room on Oct. 14 as we turn off the lights for some glow-in-the-dark fun.
- **Oct. 12:** Do you know where to find the only remaining hotel designed by Frank Lloyd Wright? How about the weight of the World's Largest Popcorn Ball? On Saturday, Oct. 12, explore the Hawkeye State with local author and travel writer Megan Bannister at Secret Iowa: A Guide to the Weird, Wonderful and Obscure. This illuminating talk on Iowa's wackiest attractions will test your knowledge of our state's timeless landmarks and most peculiar points of interest. Registration is appreciated for this free event.
- **Johnston Public Library's Teen Space** has resumed after-school hours and is open Mondays through Thursdays from 3-6 p.m. and Fridays from 3-5:30 p.m. Have a gamer in the house? In the JPL Teen Space, Wednesdays are dedicated to squaring off against friends in tournament play. At 3:30 p.m., teens can race through the Mushroom Kingdom during the Teen Mario Kart Tournament and then battle buddies at the Smash Bros. Ultimate Tournament at 4 p.m. Is your teen more analog than digital? Teens in grades 6-12 can join our Teen Board Game Club, which meets on Oct. 8 this month. Registration is appreciated for Teen Board Game Club.

More information about events and resources at Johnston Public Library can be found online at [www.johnstonlibrary.com](http://www.johnstonlibrary.com) or by calling the library at 515-278-5233. ■

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**VOTE** for solid investment strategies

With the presidential election just a few weeks away, the public is naturally interested in not just the outcome but what the results will mean for issues of national importance. As a citizen, you likely share these concerns — but how about as an investor? After the votes are counted — or even before — should you make some moves in anticipation of possible changes in policy?



Let's look at the big picture first, through the lens of history. The financial markets have performed well — and at times, not so well — under Democratic and Republican presidents alike. And the same is true about which party controlled Congress.

While it might be an overstatement to say that decisions made in Washington have no effect on the markets, it's not always so easy to draw a direct line between what happens there and how the markets perform. For one thing, political candidates often make promises that are not fulfilled, or, if they are, have different results than intended. Also, other institutions can have a significant impact on the markets. For example, the Federal Reserve, which controls short-term interest rates, can certainly affect many market sectors. And there will always be external events, such as foreign conflicts and even natural disasters, that can make short-term impacts on the investment world.

So, rather than making changes to your portfolio in anticipation of what might happen if certain candidates get elected, or even in response to actual policy changes, look to other factors to drive your investment decisions.

**These factors should include the following:**


- **Your goals** – You probably have short- and long-term goals you'd like to achieve. For your short-term goals, such as a wedding, a down payment on a house or a long vacation, you may want to invest in instruments that provide stability of principal. For your long-term goals, most important of which may be a comfortable retirement, you'll need to own a reasonable number of growth-oriented investments.
  - **Your risk tolerance** – When you build and maintain your investment portfolio, you'll need to accommodate your individual risk tolerance. All investments carry some type of risk, but you need to be comfortable with the overall risk level of your investments.
  - **Your time horizon** – Where you are in life is an important consideration when investing. When you are young and just starting out in your career, you may be able to focus more on growth, as you have time to overcome the inevitable short-term market downturns. But as you near retirement, you may want to consolidate any gains you may have achieved, and lower your risk level, by moving your portfolio toward a somewhat more conservative approach. Even in retirement, though, you will need some growth potential to stay ahead of inflation.
  - **Your needs for liquidity** – As you invest, you'll need to maintain an adequate amount of cash and cash equivalents in your holdings. Without this liquidity, you might be forced to sell long-term investments in case you have unexpected expenses.
- In any case, when it comes to investing, you may want to pay less attention to what names are on the ballot — and instead “vote” for the longer-term strategies that reflect your needs and goals. ■

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## Job Change?

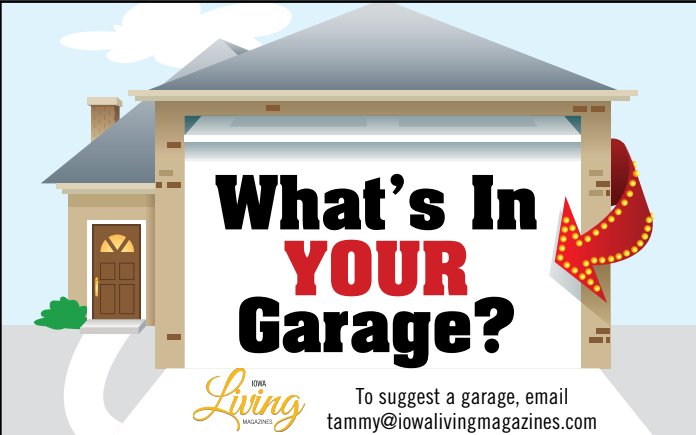
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# INNOVATIVE programs help you plan for health needs as you age

Iris, 76, has lived in her home for 40 years and has no plans to leave. She has developed some concerns, though, as she recently experienced some health issues and is afraid her adult children will try to persuade her to move.



you've never heard of. Some organizations that serve older adults have introduced Continuing Care at Home (CC@H) membership initiatives designed to help people proactively focus on their health at home while enabling them to financially plan for potential services and care down the road.

If you're interested in looking into CC@H programs, the questions below can help you make sure the program is the most sensible and affordable one for you.

• **What does the program include?** A good CC@H program not only will offer services to enhance your well-being so you can remain independent longer; it will also help fund future long-term care needs.

• **Does it include personal support, such as wellness coaching?** Studies show people who embark on any kind of life-enriching program or activity will be more likely to succeed with encouragement from a trusted adviser or advocate.

• **Does it include care costs and options?**

A solid program will help fund your care, if it's needed, whether through home healthcare or services in a senior living community later on. If the program you're considering does offer both, make sure you're comfortable with the services and care provided by the organization's home healthcare team as well as in its communities. A reputable provider will have longevity and solid outcomes behind it.

Whatever the CC@H program, make sure it meets your needs, now and in the future — and provides you with peace of mind. Your well-being and your checkbook will thank you for it! ■

Aaron Wheeler is Vice President of Home and Community-Based Services for WesleyLife, which provides health and well-being services, including WellAhead — A WesleyLife Well-Being Experience, a CC@H offering designed for people who never want to move to a senior living community. To learn more, visit [wesleylife.org/wellahead](http://wesleylife.org/wellahead).

Iris's situation is common, as remaining in our homes as we age is not always within the grasp of every person. If you end up needing assistance to remain in the place you love, chronic health challenges can make living independently ill-advised, and full-time care at home can cost as much as community living.

You may be asking yourself, then: "If I don't want to move into a community but my family and I are concerned about health issues later on, what can I do?"

The answer may lie in a kind of program



Are you one of the **93%** of people who want to remain in your home as you age?

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To learn more about how WellAhead could be the only thing you need to stay right where you want to be, call **(515) 642-1726**.

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## City office building closures for upcoming holidays

The City of Johnston's office buildings, including the Johnston Public Library, will be closed on the following dates:

- Friday, November 11 - in honor of Veterans Day.
- Thursday, November 28 to Friday, November 29 - for the Thanksgiving Day holiday.

These closures will not affect the schedules for trash, recycling, and yard waste collection.

## Beggars' Night planned for October 30

Beggars' Night is scheduled for Wednesday, October 30 this year. To ensure a safe and enjoyable experience while trick-or-treating in Johnston's neighborhoods, please adhere to the following safety guidelines from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.:



- **Supervision:** Always have a trusted adult accompany children.
- **Home Entry:** Teach children to never enter a home without prior permission from their parents.
- **Vehicle Caution:** Instruct children not to approach a vehicle unless accompanied by a parent or guardian.
- **Reflective Attire:** Ensure your child wears reflective clothing for visibility.
- **Well-Lit Homes:** Advise not to approach homes that are not well-lit.

By following these safety measures, you can have a fun and secure Beggars' Night celebration.

## Curbside Yard Waste collection ends November 25 and 26

The Compost It! program's curbside collection of yard waste is scheduled to end on November 25 and 26, aligning with your regular collection day. This program accepts small twigs, branches, leaves, lawn clippings, and various garden vegetation for disposal. Please do not include dirt, mulch, rocks, or food items in your yard waste.

For a comprehensive list of retailers offering Compost It! bags and stickers, or for additional details about yard waste collection, please visit Metro Waste Authority's website at [www.WherelItShouldGo.com/YardWaste](http://www.WherelItShouldGo.com/YardWaste), or contact them at 515.244.0021.



## CITY NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2024

### Election and voting information

The general election will be held on Tuesday, November 5, 2024. Polls will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. For more information, visit [sos.iowa.gov/elections](https://sos.iowa.gov/elections).

### Tree branch and limb drop-off is November 14-16

Every autumn, the City of Johnston provides residents with the opportunity to dispose of branches and limbs at no cost. You can bring these materials to the Public Works Facility at 6400 NW Beaver Drive between November 14th and 16th.

Drop-off Hours:

- **Thursday, November 14:** 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- **Friday, November 15:** 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
- **Saturday, November 16:** 7:00 a.m. to noon

Take advantage of this free service and help maintain the cleanliness and sustainability of our community. Please note the following guidelines:

- Branches should not exceed 18 inches in diameter; larger sizes cannot be accepted due to recycling limitations.
- Stack branches with the cut ends facing the rear of your vehicle for efficient removal.
- Avoid including items like ropes, chains, wire, and fence posts, as they can damage equipment and pose risks to City staff if pulled into the chipper.



### Trick-or-Treat with Police and Fire on October 23

Join your fellow community members for a special Halloween event, Trick-or-Treat with First Responders on Wednesday, October 23, at Fire Station 38, 10225 NW 62nd Avenue. The event will run from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. Police and Fire members will be distributing treats, and attendees will have the opportunity to explore police squad cars and fire trucks.

We encourage all children to come dressed in their Halloween costumes to add to the festive spirit. The Bridge Church will host enjoyable activities for the children and will also be providing candy to make this Halloween celebration even more delightful.



### Art in the Barn on October 18

Join us for the 12th annual Art in the Barn event on Friday, October 18, from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. The event will take place in the Simpson Barn, just west of the Johnston Public Library. Admission includes an exhibition of works by local artists, as well as appetizers, wine, craft beer, and live music. This annual fundraiser supports the Johnston Public Library. It's a great opportunity to enjoy an evening out with neighbors and friends while supporting the library. More information and tickets are available for purchase at [www.johnstonlibrary.com/art-in-the-barn](http://www.johnstonlibrary.com/art-in-the-barn).



For more information about the city, please call 515.278.2344

# THE REVIEW process for disability benefits

Social Security Disability is a program managed by the federal government. It provides income to people who cannot work because of physical or mental conditions. Proving a disability claim can be a



long process, and it is not unusual for someone to be denied benefits at several different hearing levels. Once a client is found disabled and receives benefits, however, that is not the end. The case can still be reviewed by the government.

The Social Security Administration (SSA) periodically reviews disability cases to determine if the individual is still disabled. This is called a Continuing Disability Review (CDR). Most cases are reviewed every three years, but the length of time between a finding

of disability and a CDR depends on such factors as the type of medical condition and whether improvement is expected. Because the standards for disability are different for children and adults, a review will also be done when a disabled child turns 18.

The Social Security Administration sends forms asking the benefit recipient to describe the medical condition and submit a list of medical providers. SSA will request medical records from those physicians, therapists and counselors. If there aren't enough records to make a decision, the individual might be ordered to attend a consultative examination with a doctor chosen by Social Security.

SSA will look at whether there has been medical improvement of the impairments, if the improvement is related to the ability to work, and if the individual can now engage in substantial gainful work activity. Factors that will be considered include work or

school activity and a showing of improvement documented in the medical records. Negative factors include no history of receiving medical treatment, the failure to follow a doctor's recommendations, or substance abuse.

If Social Security determines that a person is no longer disabled, SSA will send a notice that the benefits will end. The individual will also receive notice of the right to appeal within 60 days. For benefits to continue while appealing the decision, the individual must file an appeal within 15 days from the date of the notice terminating benefits.

An attorney experienced in Social Security Disability law can help navigate the issues and problems presented by a Continuing Disability Review. Your benefits don't have to end. ■

Information provided by Gail Barnett, Abendroth Russell Barnett Law Firm, 2560 73rd St., Urbandale, 515-278-0623, [www.ARPCLaw.com](http://www.ARPCLaw.com).

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## FRIENDLY game, anyone?

Seniors looking for players to hit the tennis courts.

Three days per week, a small group of Johnston seniors get together to have some fun on the court — the tennis court, that is.

Diane Fine-Anderson, 72, is one of those who enjoy grabbing a racquet and having quality time with people her own age. It helps keep her young.

But age has taken a toll on some members of the group recently. The group, which plays on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, has seen declining participation.

“At one time, we used to have 15 people, but people got older, had health concerns, and a lot of them can’t play anymore,” she says.

The number of seniors who play at the Crown Point Community Center tennis court is significantly lower now and in need of a little boost. Currently, two men and around four women are active, Fine-Anderson says.

Health issues aside, the sudden and dramatic growth of the sport of pickleball may be a cause for the dwindling numbers as well. Fine-Anderson, however, isn’t one to choose. She enjoys playing both sports. But tennis will always remain her favorite. It was tennis that helped Fine-Anderson not only stay active, but it also introduced her into the community.

“When I moved to Johnston, I didn’t know anyone except my daughters,” she says. “I was out for a walk at Crown Point and saw people playing tennis. I really hadn’t played much tennis up to that point, but I did, and it was a great way to feel welcome in the community.”



From left, Steve Roman, Diane Fine-Anderson, Elizabeth Christensen, Carl Christensen, Chris Waschle and Gary Burger are among the seniors who get together for some friendly tennis play. They encourage others to join them.

“Whether it’s pickleball or tennis, the bottom line is to keep moving. Stay active,” she says.

And the group isn’t just getting together to hit the ball around. The members play games and enjoy a little competition, depending on how many people show up.

With at least a month or so of warmer weather still likely, plenty of time remains to join in the fun. Anyone interested in playing can either come to the court on Monday, Wednesday or Friday or call Fine-Anderson at 641-895-3341. ■

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**Sign up today for your tour! We look forward to seeing you.**

# AEP allows for coverage changes

The Medicare Annual Election Period (AEP), is a critical time for beneficiaries to review and possibly adjust their Medicare coverage. It takes place annually from Oc. 15 to Dec. 7. During this period, Medicare enrollees can make significant changes to their health insurance coverage, ensuring they are aligned with their current medical needs and financial circumstances for the upcoming year.



**Beneficiaries can take several key actions during AEP:**

- Switch from Original Medicare (Part A and Part B) to a Medicare Advantage Plan (Part C) or vice versa. Medicare Advantage Plans often include additional benefits like vision, dental or hearing, which Original Medicare does not cover.
- Change from one Medicare Advantage Plan to another. Each plan offers different coverage networks, benefits and costs, and it's essential for enrollees to assess if their current plan still suits their healthcare needs.
- Enroll in or switch Part D (Prescription Drug Plan). Prescription drug coverage can change annually, so it's important to review how a plan's formulary and out-of-pocket costs may impact an enrollee's medications.
- Drop Part D coverage altogether, although doing so could lead to late-enrollment penalties if an individual decides to re-enroll later.

During AEP, beneficiaries receive an Annual Notice of Change (ANOC), detailing any changes to their existing plan. This document is essential for understanding modifications in premiums, coverage or out-of-pocket costs. Failing to review these changes can lead to unexpected medical bills or gaps in coverage in the coming year.

AEP is also a time when Medicare marketing campaigns are at their peak. Beneficiaries often receive numerous advertisements, mailers and phone calls from insurers. While this marketing can be overwhelming, it's an opportunity to explore various plan options, provided individuals critically assess the information to avoid scams. Be prudent during this time reviewing information and asking questions before making a decision of change.

Lastly, any changes made during the Annual Election Period become effective on Jan. 1 of the following year. This period is vital for ensuring that Medicare enrollees maintain the best possible health coverage, especially as health conditions and financial situations change over time.

If you have questions or want to review the health insurance coverage you have, give a trusted insurance agent a call. They will be happy for the opportunity to help. ■

Information provided by Janis Van Ahn, Health Insurance Advisor LLC, 5870 Merle Hay Road, Suite A, Johnston, 515-225-9994, jvanahn@health-insadvisor.com.

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# MEET Jyll Johnson Miner

Celebrating 35 years in the district

Jyll Johnson Miner is one of Johnston Community School District's longest-serving employees — 35 years of service, to be exact.

When she earned her teaching degree in 1989, there weren't a lot of jobs available, so the Davenport native applied everywhere she could, even for a position in Johnston, which she'd never heard of before.

The principal of Wallace Elementary at the time would later tell her, "Consider yourself lucky. We're only interviewing 12 candidates, and over 400 have applied."

Lucky, indeed.

Johnson Miner was ultimately hired as a third-grade teacher at Wallace Elementary, which was later converted into the district's administrative building. Things have come full circle, because the place where she had her first classroom is now where her leadership office is.

During her first year of teaching, Johnson Miner started her master's degree in education at Iowa State University. With that advanced degree, she was able to take on new roles. Leadership talked her into being a "teacher on special assignment," serving as a pilot teacher for the new science curriculum adopted for the elementary schools.

A few years later, Johnson Miner became the math/science coordinator for all of K-12 in the Johnston Community School District.

Today, she works as the district's first director of postsecondary pathways and related arts learning. While her position encompasses a lot, some of the key aspects are leading the district's partnership with DMACC and other programs in career and technical education, helping students work toward careers in skilled trades, teaching, health care professions and more.

Essentially, Johnson Miner is helping create opportunities for students to think about their futures and what they want their careers to look like. Some ways the district does so is through providing DMACC credits — last year Johnston provided more than a million dollars worth of DMACC credits to students — and by taking students on field trips to places like college campuses, unions, the Build My Future event at the Iowa State Fairgrounds and more.

"Sometimes you don't know you're interested in something if you don't know it exists, so we're trying to give exposure to our students," she says.

The same has held true for her, too. Johnson Miner enjoyed being a third-grade teacher, but when she was exposed to the secondary curriculum and students, she learned she enjoyed that age group just as much.

Over her decades of service, Johnson Miner has kept in touch with many of her students, which helps her see the long-term impact she's made. Two of her former students are now teachers in the Johnston Community School District.

"I tell them, 'You don't have to call me Mrs. Miner anymore,'" she jokes.

Her children have also seen the impact a teacher can make. Two of her three daughters have followed in their mom's footsteps and are teachers, too. All three are Johnston graduates as well.

For Johnson Miner, education is all about building positive relationships and being a lifelong learner.

"As teachers and educators, we have to be learners," she says. "There's always something new or innovative or something that's going to work with a certain group of kids. It's exciting to put new programs into place and watch them grow."

Johnson Miner says she has grown right alongside these things.

"I feel like I grew up in the district," she says. "I owe it everything for my career." ■



Jyll Johnson Miner has served in many roles with the Johnston Community School District. This year she is the district's first director of postsecondary pathways and related arts learning.

rejuvenating

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Charlie Rae's @charlie\_raes

Whether you're looking for something to decorate your home, a birthday gift or a fun card, or picking up fresh flowers. You will find that special touch at Charlie Rae's.

# HELPING creatures of all kinds

Richardson is passionate about animals.



As a volunteer for Iowa Bird Rehab, Rickie Richardson helps rescue and rehabilitate wild birds.

Rickie Richardson loves animals.

So, after getting a boxer in 2016, the former Washington state resident found an organization called MustLuvBoxers Rescue — an organization that aims to rescue, rehabilitate and rehome unwanted and abandoned boxers. Richardson got involved as a volunteer and helped transport the dogs, as well as assisted with community events and outreach.

She's since moved to Johnston but still supports the organization by managing its social media.

"Boxers are an incredible breed, and my dogs are a huge part of my life, so that makes it very easy to be passionate about their cause," she says. "I'm glad I can still help while being so far away."

In recent years, Richardson has used

her passion for animals to give back around the Des Moines metro. Her oldest boxer is a TheraPet through the ARL, and they volunteer at the Polk County Sheriff's Office in the 911 dispatch center.

"I love that Zoey can be a stress reliever for them," Richardson says. "That's such a demanding job."

Last fall, Iowa Bird Rehab came into Richardson's life when she found a goose in the pond behind her home that didn't fly and was alone for several weeks.

"Volunteers came out, and I ended up helping them catch it," she explains. "I immediately wanted to get more involved as a volunteer."

Today, she helps with rescues, transports, onsite bird care and relaying calls from dispatch out to the team.

"I love IBR because everyone involved truly cares about what we do, and I've gotten to experience so many amazing birds that I never knew existed," Richardson says. "I love being challenged and learning new things, and IBR checks all those boxes. I'm very lucky to be a part of it."

One memory that sticks out to Richardson is when she helped catch a Canada goose that was impaled with a stick in her chest. The goose had surgery to remove the stick, and, once healed, Richardson was able to release her back to her family.

"It was incredible to experience the end result of all our hard work," she says. "Volunteering with IBR has helped me get involved more with our community, and it's been really great to see how many care about our cause and want to help the birds." ■



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# EVENTS IN THE AREA

Be sure to check for cancelations

## Upcoming in Johnston Living magazine:

• **Community landmarks:** What do you think are the most notable landmarks in your community? Send a note to [tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com](mailto:tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com). Note what community you live in.



• **Do you have a holiday recipe that has special meaning to you?** Will you share it with our readers? Email [tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com](mailto:tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com) to have it included in our December issue. In your email, mention the community where you live. Thank you!

## Soft Trail Stroll: Sycamore Trails

Saturday, Oct. 12, 10 a.m.

Sycamore Trails, 4640 N.W. 66th Ave., Johnston

Come walk the single track (dirt trails) of Sycamore. This event is part of a free series for people looking for a simple way to become more active. Meet in the gravel parking lot on the south side of 66th Avenue, just east of the soccer fields and west of the Des Moines River. The group will walk slowly (think "stroll"), and no one will be left behind. The walk distance will be about 2 miles. If the dirt is muddy, the group will walk on the paved trails instead. If there is severe weather, the walk will be cancelled. More information and updates are available at [www.roccasecca.fitness/stroll](http://www.roccasecca.fitness/stroll).

## Polk County Conservation events

Visit [www.polkcountyiowa.gov/conservation/events](http://www.polkcountyiowa.gov/conservation/events) for information about upcoming programs offered by Polk County Conservation and for registration links.

• **Toddler Tales**, Jester Park Nature Center, Wednesday, Nov. 6, Turkeys; and Thursday, Dec. 5, 10 a.m., Rocks. Let your imagination run wild with this nature-themed story time. Hear a story followed by the naturalist's choice of an activity such as an animal encounter, puppets or a craft. No registration required for this free event for ages 2 and older.

• **Homeschool Programs**, Jester Park Nature Center, Friday, Oct. 25, 10 a.m. and 1 p.m., Prairies (1.5 hours). This program series will be delivered in a flexible format that is specially designed for homeschool students. These programs will immerse children and parents in the natural world and drive us to learn, discover and appreciate our environment. Registration is due two days before the event. The program is free and recommended for grades K-5.

To submit calendar items for consideration, send to [tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com](mailto:tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com)

## Kiwanis meetings

Tuesdays, noon  
Cozy Cafe

The public is invited to Kiwanis Club meetings. Upcoming speakers are: Oct. 8, Colleen Dougherty, Count the Kicks and Healthy Birthday. Oct. 15, Joy Batton - ChildServe. RSVP to Barb Allen, [bjallen713@gmail.com](mailto:bjallen713@gmail.com).

## Johnston Lions Club Bingo

Oct. 10, Nov. 14, 6-8 p.m.  
Lions Club House, 6501 Merle Hay Road

Enjoy Bingo at the second Thursday monthly event held by Johnston Lions Club.



## Belgian Waffle Fundraiser

Saturday, Nov. 9, 8-11 a.m.  
Johnston High School Commons

Enjoy an all-you-can-eat Belgian waffles breakfast with sausage links, flavored syrups, butter, non-dairy whipped topping, coffee and juice. The event is sponsored by the Johnston Band Parent Association. Cost is \$10 per person in advance and \$12 per person at the door. Kids younger than 5 eat free. Tickets are available at the Johnston Hy-Vee in the morning Oct. 26 or Nov. 2 or online. Scan the QR code for the link.



## Backpocket Beer Mile

Friday, Oct. 18 at 6 p.m.

The Yard in the Johnston Town Center

Whether you're a seasoned runner looking to test your limits or simply seeking an entertaining way to spend an evening, the Second Annual Backpocket Beer Mile promises an unforgettable time. Timing will be via chip. An untimed Fun Wave will be held at 6:20 p.m. Relay teams of two may register for the Fun Wave, but both participants must register. Packets will be available for pickup from 3-6 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 17 at Fleet Feet, 521 E. Locust St., Des Moines, or from 3-5 p.m. on Friday, Oct 18 at Backpocket Pin & Pixel, 6205 Merle Hay Road, Johnston. Participants must complete four laps around The Yard, with the added twist of consuming a beer before each lap. Participants must be of legal drinking age and have designated sober drivers. The Backpocket Beer Mile Race is an inclusive event, featuring both competitive and recreational categories. Costumes are strongly encouraged. Prizes will be awarded to the top overall male and overall female participants as well as best costume. Prizes will also be awarded to the top male and female in each age category: 21-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-plus. ■



# CELEBRATING 80 years of Lions in Johnston

For 80 years, the Johnston Lions Club has served the community in many ways.

On Dec. 18, 1944, the club received its charter from the International Association of Lions Clubs. On Jan. 29, 1945, the group held its first meeting with 39 members. This was 25 years before the city of Johnston was incorporated. The school district and village needed the club's help, and this was a focus in the early years.

To celebrate its 75th anniversary, the club decided to create a legacy project. The city of Johnston's Parks Department was planning for the park shelter at Johnston Commons. The club decided to enhance the shelter to make the building more special. Two bathrooms were added as well as a third family bathroom with accommodations for adult diaper changing for people with special needs. As a result, the building is far superior to shelters found in other city parks. The club's statue (dubbed "Leo McLion") is nearby, watching over the shelter. The Johnston Lions Club pledged \$50,000 to the city to make all the upgrades and increased its fundraising to fulfill its pledge. It took four years, but the club made its final payment last spring.

The Lions Club organizes many events in order to support local projects and organizations that enhance the community.

"If you come to our pancake breakfast each spring that includes gluten-free pancakes and place mats with sponsors' names, you will know that this is for raising funds for our projects," organizers said in a press release. "If you enjoy our book sale and find new and used bestsellers offered, you will understand that we are fundraising.

"If you enjoy being able to find a good place to park at home football games and also to get a printed program for each football and basketball game, you get the idea that we are fundraising.

"If you come to our bingo nights and have a good time with your neighbors and maybe have some good luck, you guessed it, we are fundraising.

"If you rent our building for weddings, parties or business conferences, once again we are fundraising."

Not only does the fundraising benefit local causes, it also supports both State and International Lions Clubs with their



The Lions Club pledged \$50,000 toward enhancing the park shelter at Johnston Commons and recently made the final installment to fulfill the pledge.



One of the Lions Club's big fundraisers is its pancake breakfast. The Club supports numerous causes with money raised.

humanitarian projects.

"We support the Johnston Public Library Foundation with part of the proceeds from the book sale. The Johnston Booster Club gets half of the funds we collect for business ads in the sports program. We also support the Johnston Partnership, which aids our less fortunate

neighbors in our community," organizers said.

The Lions Club is also known for supporting hearing and sight programs. The Club supports the Iowa Lions Eye Bank, Camp Hertko Hollow for summer camp experience for kids with diabetes, and Leader Dogs for the Blind. ■

# MATTIS has been racing since a teen

Finds autocross exciting and, better yet, legal



Scott Mattis is passionate about racing and driving safety. He is both a driver and a teacher.

Scott Mattis likes driving fast — and now does so legally. But that wasn't always the case.

As a teenager, he drag raced with his friends. One time, when he got home, his mom presented him a card from a state trooper's visit. He had received a speeding ticket for driving 112 mph in a 55 mph speed zone.

"It wasn't a good idea," Mattis recalls. "Now I can do it legally."

He took his drag racing to the track and eventually began racing autocross. Autocross is where drivers race against time on a closed, controlled course, outlined by cones.

Mattis returned to drag racing for a time but stepped away from the hobby for 15 years to raise a family. In 2016, the racing bug bit again, and he returned to the sport with his same car, a Mustang GT.

In 2021, a friend invited him to participate in Tire Rack's One Lap America. The event consists of him and a co-driver driving from one racetrack to the next, cross country in one week's time.

"It's like an offset of 'Cannonball Run' (a

movie about a cross-country race), but this is the legal version. I drove 5,000 miles from start to finish from my front door," Mattis says.

He gets little sleep throughout the week of the race, trying to catch as many Zs as he can while his co-driver navigates his 2023 Mustang Mach 1. He enjoys the socialization with like-minded friends.

"It gives you bragging rights. It attracts famous people, pro racecar drivers and celebrities. They do it for the fun of it," he says.

In addition, Mattis teaches the SCCA Street Survival course at DMACC. This course is designed for teens and young drivers and is taught in conjunction with the Iowa State Patrol. During the course, students are taught braking exercises and skid control for better car handling in hazardous conditions. Mattis is "super committed" to teaching others how to drive safely.

"You see them start out timid. The transformation is rewarding to see them change their driving," he says.

Yet, that's not all. He drives along and

teaches at Xtreme Xperience. There, drivers can experience driving on a racetrack with high-end cars, such as a Lamborghini, Ferrari or a Porsche. "It takes only three laps. You start slow and people can't imagine how fast it starts and stops."

Mattis' favorite track he's driven on is one lap at Road Atlanta.

"It was a dream track to get to," he reflects.

Wearing safety gear and making sure his car is maintained is essential anytime he gets into a vehicle.

"I've been fortunate. I was only off track once due to mechanical failure. It's always a risk," he says.

Racing is both a big time and financial commitment. He credits his wife and family for being understanding. They share his passion as well, participating in autocross and ride alongs with him.

"I love it. It's my passion," he says. "I try to drive within my limits and bring home the car in one piece." ■

## SPOTLIGHT: LifeServe Blood Center

Each month, we profile a Johnston Chamber member business, highlighting what they love about our local community. LifeServe Blood Center collects approximately 156,000 units of blood per year and works with 161 hospitals throughout Iowa, Nebraska and South Dakota. Their new headquarters is located at 5625 N.W. Johnston Drive. We recently talked with Shay Willis, director of marketing.

**What is your favorite part of being a chamber member?** The Johnston Chamber offers members so many different types of opportunities, and we have enjoyed some of those events since moving into the community... Green Days, hosting a ribbon cutting, being the non-profit spotlight at luncheons, etc.

**Why did you choose to build in Johnston?** LifeServe did research prior to moving its headquarters to Johnston from Des Moines and determined that nearly 5,000 of our donors live within five minutes of this community, so we thought it only made sense to complete our central Iowa footprint by building in Johnston.

**What do you love about the Johnston community?** The support we have received from chamber members and non-members alike has been nothing short of amazing. We hope we can continue to develop more relationships with the residents who make up this wonderful community.

**Are there any upcoming events you want to highlight?** LifeServe Blood Center always has a lot of fun promotions, media blood drives and special events happening, so we encourage people to check us out online at [lifeservebloodcenter.org](http://lifeservebloodcenter.org) or follow us on any of our social media channels. ■

Information provided by Samantha Winebrenner, Johnston Chamber executive director, [samantha@johnstonchamber.com](mailto:samantha@johnstonchamber.com), 515-276-9064.

## PLAN AHEAD

By **Scott Eriksen**

## VISIT with loved ones about final arrangements

As we anticipate the approaching holidays, I am sure many of us are looking forward to special time with family. This can be a perfect time to visit about your own final arrangements with those closest to you.

Folks whom we meet with often share they would like to discuss their final arrangements with their children before finalizing their plans. However, it can sometimes be a challenge to find the best time to do this. Holidays bring families together and can provide that perfect opportunity to discuss these important matters.

This conversation does not need to be difficult. It can be a time to share your preferences and find out what will be important to those whom you love. Ultimately, it will provide the opportunity to avoid surprises when the day comes that funeral services are needed... and the reassurance that this is what mom or dad wanted.

Don't shy away from having this conversation. Take this opportunity to have this discussion. You will be glad you did. ■



Information provided by Scott Eriksen, Director of Hamilton's Advanced Planning, Hamilton's Funeral Home, 605 Lyon St., Des Moines, 515-697-3670, [www.HamiltonsFuneralHome.com](http://www.HamiltonsFuneralHome.com).

# CHAMBER TODOS

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# OUT & ABOUT



Johnston Charter Bank staff members, front row: Kayla McBride, Leana Klimova, Caitlin Clemons, Olivia Millar and Danielle Witzenburg; and, back row: Mike Straub, Corey Dutchuk, Sharm Sisler, Matt Morris, Tim Heldt, Brian Scandridge, Logan Crannell and Rick Mosher at Charter Bank's annual BBQ and celebration of the Ankeny branch's seventh anniversary.



Brenda Ballard at the Johnston Chamber Annual Golf Outing at Hyperion Field Club on Sept. 19.



Andrea Hodapp at the Johnston Chamber Annual Golf Outing at Hyperion Field Club on Sept. 19.



Phyllis Tinker, Gina Graham, Allan Graham and Jeff Wendel at the Johnston Chamber Annual Golf Outing at Hyperion Field Club on Sept. 19.



Robbin Zaver, Allyson Sander and Scott Wendl at the Johnston Chamber Annual Golf Outing at Hyperion Field Club on Sept. 19.



Kolten Carey (front), Hailee Michel and Erin Carey at the Johnston Chamber Annual Golf Outing at Hyperion Field Club on Sept. 19.



Cory Steiner, Dana Jergenson and Dan Fitzgerald at the Johnston Chamber Annual Golf Outing at Hyperion Field Club on Sept. 19.



Drew Abers, Stephen Carveth, Tyson Handsaker and B Thongsoum at the Johnston Chamber Annual Golf Outing at Hyperion Field Club on Sept. 19.



Christiane Agee and Alex Blankenbrug at the Johnston Chamber Annual Golf Outing at Hyperion Field Club on Sept. 19.



Dan Knoup, John Murphy, Steve Archer and Ben Richter at the Johnston Chamber Annual Golf Outing at Hyperion Field Club on Sept. 19.



Michael Tiffany and Eric Herrmann at the Johnston Chamber Annual Golf Outing at Hyperion Field Club on Sept. 19.



Jenni Buchanan and Abby Allen at the Johnston Chamber Annual Golf Outing at Hyperion Field Club on Sept. 19.



# OUT & ABOUT



Mayor Paula Dierenfeld, Aaron Brown, Nancy Brown, Colin Brown, Matt Brown and Eric Herrmann at the Johnston Chamber ribbon cutting for Charlie Rae's.



The Johnston Chamber held a ribbon cutting for Charlie Rae's, 9401 N.W. 70th Ave., Sept. 13.



Dan Fitzgerald, Eric Herrmann and Megan Herrmann at the Johnston Chamber ribbon cutting for Charlie Rae's.



Jennifer Sayers and Ryan Rohlf at the Johnston Chamber ribbon cutting for Charlie Rae's.



Scott Zietlow, Mayor Paula Dierenfeld, Nikki Lloyd, Jill Zietlow and James Ohrt at the ribbon cutting and ceremony Sept. 17 at Kwik Star, 5608 Merle Hay Road, Johnston.



State Senator Brad Zaun at the ribbon cutting and ceremony Sept. 17 at Kwik Star, 5608 Merle Hay Road, Johnston.



State Representative Eddie Andrews at the ribbon cutting and ceremony Sept. 17 at Kwik Star, 5608 Merle Hay Road, Johnston.



Owner Don Zietlow at the ribbon cutting and ceremony Sept. 17 at Kwik Star, 5608 Merle Hay Road, Johnston.



Mayor Paula Dierenfeld at the ribbon cutting and ceremony Sept. 17 at Kwik Star, 5608 Merle Hay Road, Johnston.



Fire Chief Jim Clark with the Johnston-Grimes Metropolitan Fire Department was presented a \$1,000 check from Bob Gray with Kwik Star at the ribbon cutting and ceremony Sept. 17 at Kwik Star, 5608 Merle Hay Road, Johnston.



Sgt. Zach Grandon with the Johnston Police Department was presented with a \$1,000 check from Deana Anderson with Kwik Star at the ribbon cutting and ceremony Sept. 17 at Kwik Star, 5608 Merle Hay Road, Johnston.

# OUT & ABOUT



Moria Adams and Alexis Herron at the Aug. 15 Johnston Chamber JumpStart held at Hy-Vee.



Brenda Ballard and Nathan Deutmeyer at the Aug. 15 Johnston Chamber JumpStart held at Hy-Vee.



Christy Cline and Annie Mielke at the Aug. 15 Johnston Chamber JumpStart held at Hy-Vee.



Madeline Ward, Jenni Buchanan, Samantha Winebrenner, Jake from State Farm, Sharon Vickery, Brenda Ballard and Annie Mielke at the Johnston Chamber After Hours held Sept. 4 at State Farm - Glenn Waterhouse.



Emily Mullen, Missy Shepherd and Jenni King at the Johnston Chamber After Hours held Sept. 4 at State Farm - Glenn Waterhouse.



Allan Graham and Sharon Vickery at the Aug. 15 Johnston Chamber JumpStart held at Hy-Vee.



Todd Smothers, Noah Davidson, Ryan Condon, Carolyn Miner and Andy Lashier at the Johnston High School Booster Bash Sept. 8 at Dragon Stadium.



Eleanor Aldrich, Sariah McGregor and Sophia Hiltgen at the Johnston High School Booster Bash Sept. 8 at Dragon Stadium.



Head football moms Kelli Nelson and Arla Darling at the Johnston High School Booster Bash Sept. 8 at Dragon Stadium.



Anderson Schiesl, Max Mincks, Colton McClish and Jacob Helgeson at the Johnston High School Booster Bash Sept. 8 at Dragon Stadium.



Hendrix Reno and Dax Schoessler at the Johnston High School Booster Bash Sept. 8.



Ryan Reno and Rollins Schoessler at the Johnston High School Booster Bash Sept. 8.

# YOUR BLOOD DONATION HELPS BREAST CANCER PATIENTS

## Supporting Patients Undergoing Chemotherapy

Chemotherapy, a common treatment for breast cancer, can severely lower a patient's blood cell counts, leading to anemia.

## Maintaining Immune System Function

Cancer treatments like radiation and chemotherapy can weaken the immune system, making patients more vulnerable to infections.

## Restoring Strength During Surgery

Many breast cancer patients undergo surgery, such as mastectomies, which can lead to significant blood loss.

## Preventing Excessive Bleeding

Many breast cancer patients suffer from low platelet counts due to chemotherapy or cancer itself, which increases the risk of excessive bleeding.

## Giving Patients More Time

Breast cancer patients, especially those in advanced stages, who receive blood transfusions, can significantly improve their quality of life by reducing symptoms like fatigue and dizziness.



“ Thank you for your generous donation of blood. I am currently battling breast cancer and needed a transfusion during my chemotherapy treatments. Without your generosity I would have been very very sick. Thank you and I hope you continue to give as it means so much to the recipients like myself!”

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# IS YOUR HOUSE BEGINNING TO **LOOK HAUNTED?**

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