

# Living

MAGAZINE

# An Unforgettable RIDE

Residents share the  
joy of their first car

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EDUCATION

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WELCOME

# MY BABY blue Mustang

It was a 1980 Ford Mustang. Baby blue in color. Hatchback. Four-cylinder engine. The car was nothing special, but it was my first car — and it was all mine.

I, of course, pulled the factory stereo out of it and installed a Pioneer cassette deck and Jensen speakers. A guy has to have priorities, after all.

My life savings went into the purchase of that vehicle. Insurance. Gas. Oil changes. All on my dime. I was OK with that, as it was part of my greater independence — and I was the only one with the keys.

The Mustang got me through my college years, despite one unfortunate incident. I am by no means a gearhead, but I had a cracked fuel line, and it seemed easy enough to replace. In the process, some gas leaked out of the old line onto the engine. No big deal, I thought.

I drove the Mustang to a local car wash, and my mother rode along with me. I put some coins in the machine and motioned Mom to drive the car into the wash bay. (I should note that this was the first — and only — time my mother drove any vehicle of mine.) Mom turned the ignition, and I immediately saw flames peeking out of every possible opening in the hood and below the car. I yelled to her to pop the hood. She turned the lights on, applied the parking brake and started the wipers, but the hood remained closed. As I frantically ran to the car, the paint on the hood started bubbling. I opened the driver-side door, popped the hood and put out the fire with the car wash wand I still had in my hand. What was left was a melted mess.

Dad had a friend who was a local mechanic and rewired everything and got my Mustang running again. The mechanic said he did his best on my limited budget, but he wasn't making any promises on how well it would run. And he was right to say that. The best gas mileage I got after the repairs was 4 mpg.

When I graduated from college, I traded the Mustang in on a new vehicle. The dealer put it on the used car lot, and a potential buyer called me and asked about it. "Do not buy that car," I told him. "It caught on fire and only does about 4 mpg." He kept asking questions, so I repeated my comments. I think he still bought the car.

We all learned some lessons after the car fire incident, but my Dad's comments stuck with me the most. "If you ever have a car start on fire again, let it burn."

Thanks for reading. ■



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A young man with short brown hair, wearing a white button-down shirt and dark trousers, is sitting in the driver's seat of a dark-colored car. The driver's side door is open, and he is looking towards the camera with a neutral expression. His hands are resting on the steering wheel. The background shows a blurred outdoor setting, possibly a parking lot or a street.

# *An Unforgettable* **RIDE**

Residents share the  
joy of their first car

By Ashley Rullestad

What kids, strapped into the backseats of their parents' cars, gazing through the gaps between the front seats and watching the road ahead, don't think how great it will be when they are in the driver's seat? And not just any driver's seat, but the seat of their very own car. The power of the machine in their control. The freedom to choose the destination. The total control over the stereo. It's no wonder people's memories of their first auto stay vivid, and the stories remain a thrill to be told.

Gavin Boliver with his  
2018 Ford Mustang.



## A teenager's dream

Though Gavin Boliver's first car was technically a Honda Accord, it was simply a means of transportation for the year that he was saving up for his first dream car — a 2018 Ford Mustang Ecoboost, which he bought in April 2023.

"The summer of my freshman year of high school, I got my first job with the goal of saving up enough money to buy a Mustang," he says. "I proceeded to work full time during the summers and part time during the school year for two years before I finally came up with enough money to afford my dream car."

Once he had the cash, he needed to find the car, so he spent hours checking websites in search of the right Mustang. In the end, it was his mom, Erica, who found the one he would end up buying. The spring of his junior year, he drove to Kansas City to buy the car. He's owned it now for a year and a half and hasn't had a moment of regret.

"There are many things that I like about my car; however, I'd say what I like most about it is that it has a manual transmission. When I first purchased the car, I had never driven a stick-shift car before. Luckily, my grandma had



Gavin Boliver's 2018 Ford Mustang was his dream car.

plenty of experience and helped me learn how."

Boliver thinks the manual transmission enhances the driving experience. It makes him feel more connected to the car, and it is, ultimately, more fun to drive.

Like most teens, he likes having his own car. Having his own transportation gives him a sense of independence.

"I could now go wherever I wanted, whenever I wanted, which was a really freeing feeling. Having my own mode of transportation also made me more explorative. Now that I had

the ability to travel as I pleased, I often found myself just driving for fun with my friends and exploring areas of town/the state we had never been to before."

Of course, if you give a teenage boy a Mustang, it won't be long until he starts driving it like any teenager would drive a sports car.

"One of my favorite memories with my car was drifting it with my friends in the high school parking lot. Another favorite memory with my car is the first day I got it, when I was first learning how to drive stick with the help



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Larry Chapman's best friend, Kevin Krause, behind the wheel of his first car, a 1985 red Camaro.



Larry Chapman with one of his convertibles.

of my grandma. I probably stalled it hundreds of times, but my grandma was supportive the whole time, which I'm very grateful for."

At this point, Boliver has plans to hang on to his car throughout college. After that, he's hoping to upgrade to a newer Mustang with a V8 engine.

**Convertible king**

Larry Chapman's first car was a brand new red 1985 Chevrolet Camaro, complete with T-tops. He purchased it almost 40 years ago from the then newly opened Karl Chevrolet in Ankeny, and that spawned a lifetime love affair with convertibles.

"What a beautiful car," he remembers.

"I was 24 years old, living in Chicago and working in the men's clothing business. My friends affectionately nicknamed the car 'The BRC' (The B\*#hin' Red Camaro). Oh man, did I ever love that vehicle. I was immediately bitten by the car bug, and my lifelong passion

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Paul Stromgren's first car, a 1969 Camaro Rally Sport.



Paul Stromgren and his daughter with the 1950 Oldsmobile featured at both the father's and daughters' weddings.

for cars began.”

The 1985 Camaro was “almost” a convertible anyway. T-Tops were a reasonably new roof concept and gave the consumer a fun-in-the-sun experience. The car also featured power, a wind-in-the-hair experience, and the red was attention-getting.

“What young 24-year-old could ask for more? I was thrilled with my purchase.”

A memory that sticks out even today involved an illegal parking incident outside of Chapman’s Chicago apartment complex. He was entertaining a date at his house and had parked the Camaro on the street directly in front of his building. Without looking or thinking, he had unfortunately parked in a tow-away zone.

When it came time to take his date home for the evening, the car was gone. He wasn’t sure if it was stolen or what had happened.

“I was in a complete panic. An upstairs neighbor had witnessed the towing incident, and, long story short, he gave me a ride to the impound yard to retrieve my car. It cost me a bundle of cash, but it was a relief to get my ‘baby’ back in my hands again. How foolish of me to have parked the car where I did.”

Since then, Chapman has owned a variety of cars, and he enjoys attending car-related events, like annual trips to the Indianapolis Motor Speedway to watch the Indianapolis 500. But when it comes to first cars, he says, for him, nothing will ever top that 1985 Camaro.



A few cars in Paul Stromgren's current collection.

**Car fanatic**

Paul Stromgren acquired his first car — a 1969 Camaro Rally Sport — when he was 18.

“This car was my dream car because, when I was in grade school, my mother’s cousin drove a 1969 Camaro Z/28, and I would just dream about this car, hoping to own one. I spent many hours polishing my car and doing body work, and once I got it to where I wanted it, body and performance-wise, my plan was to keep it forever.”

But, three years later, Stromgren sold it while attending college and missed it ever since. So, in 1993, he bought a 1969 Camaro Z/28 just like his mother’s cousin’s 1969 Camaro Z/28, and he still has it today.

“My passion for cars has always been part of my life. I attend many car shows and races

all over the country and have a small collection of cool hot rods. Even my daily driver today is 700-plus horsepower.”

A love for vehicles has been passed on to his kids. They all have cool vehicles, and cars are a big topic of conversation when they’re all together. When his son was a student at Johnston High School, his son’s friends said he drove the coolest car at school — a 1973 Camaro Z/28.

Cars have also been incorporated into important family events. When Stromgren and his wife married 37 years ago, they left in a 1950 Oldsmobile Rocket 88 with cans dangling off the back bumper.

“Fast forward, and my two daughters also used the Oldsmobile in their weddings. We got lots of comments from the guests of how cool the story is,” he says. ■

# RETHINKING your IRA

## The evolution and tax strategies

IRAs play a key role in retirement planning for many Americans. According to the Investment Company Institute, 42% (or 55.5 million) of U.S. households reported owning an IRA in 2023.



Since its introduction in 1974, the Individual Retirement Account (IRA) has transformed from being solely offered by banks with limited investment choices to being available through various carriers that provide hundreds of investment options.

The contribution limit started at \$1,500 and was only increased once between 1974 and 2001. The 2025 limit is \$7,000 for those under age 50 and \$8,000 for those 50 and older.

One of the initial attractions of traditional IRAs is that they are tax-deferred. This means that contributions may be fully or partially deductible (depending on filing status and income), and earnings and gains are not taxed

until you take distributions.

They are a great way to save for retirement, especially as few employers offer pensions. However, a consequential factor that many overlook is the tax implications of withdrawing IRA funds in retirement. As the IRA grows, so does the tax bill. The tax-deferred nature of these accounts can essentially be viewed as a loan from the IRS. Essentially, your pre-tax IRA represents a debt to the IRS that you might have to repay at a less than convenient time — when you retire and perhaps desire financial simplicity more than ever.

This is where strategies like Roth conversions come into play. Converting a portion of your pre-tax IRA to a Roth IRA involves paying taxes on the converted amount at the time of the conversion. However, once the funds are in the Roth IRA, they grow tax-free, and qualified distributions are also tax-free. For most, this can significantly reduce the overall tax burden throughout retirement.

The Roth conversion is not the only strategy to consider. Qualified Charitable

Distributions (QCDs) offer another powerful tool. A QCD is a tax-free transfer of funds from an IRA to a qualified charity. Once you reach 70 1/2, you can transfer funds directly from your IRA to a qualifying charity annually (the limit is \$108,000 for 2025). This transfer counts toward your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) requirements when those kick in at age 73 or 75, depending on when you were born. For those already inclined to charitable giving, this is a win-win scenario — supporting causes you care about and lowering your RMD and possibly your retirement tax bill. The key is to think ahead now about how the IRA that helped you get to retirement could become tax-efficient income in retirement. ■

Information provided by Loren Merkle CFP®, RICP®, Certified Financial Fiduciary®, Merkle Retirement Planning, 1860 S.E. Princeton Drive, Grimes, 515-278-1006. Source: Investment Company Institute (2024, February 24) IRAs Play a Key Role in US Households' Retirement Planning [Press Release [www.ici.org/files/2024/per30-01.pdf](http://www.ici.org/files/2024/per30-01.pdf)]



Learn what other tax strategies you could implement in this episode of *Retiring Today with Loren Merkle*. Scan the QR code to watch now.



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# COZY, comforting recipes to take on the cold

*(Family Features)* If blustery conditions are giving you the blues, come inside from the cold for a winter warmup in the comfort of your own kitchen. Cold-weather favorites that are baked, roasted or slow cooked are usually equal parts easy, delicious and filling, making them perfect solutions for chilly, snowy days.

Add a bit of comfort to your weeknight menu with this Loaded Chicken Bake that's ready in about half an hour. A short list of ingredients and allowing your oven to do most of the work for you mean it's ideal for saving time (and money at the grocery store) while still satisfying winter appetites.

Serving as the hearty base is READ German Potato Salad, made with thinly sliced potatoes and bacon in a traditional sweet-piquant dressing. While it's delicious when served chilled, heated or at room temperature on its own, it can also be the star of the show in family meals.

Find more favorite wintertime recipes by visiting [READSalads.com](http://READSalads.com) and [AuntNellies.com](http://AuntNellies.com). ■

## Loaded chicken bake

Recipe courtesy of Hungry In LA

**Prep time:** 20 minutes | **Cook time:** 15 minutes

**Servings:** 8

- Nonstick cooking spray
- 2 cans (15 ounces each) READ German Potato Salad
- 4 cups shredded rotisserie chicken or other cooked chicken
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon finely ground black pepper
- 3/4 cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese
- 1/4 cup crumbled, cooked bacon
- French fried onions (optional), plus additional for serving (optional), divided

### DIRECTIONS

- Preheat oven to 375 F.
- Lightly coat 9-by-13-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray.
- Spread German potato salad evenly in dish. Top evenly with chicken.
- In small bowl, stir heavy cream, salt and pepper. Pour mixture over chicken.
- Sprinkle with cheese, bacon and onions, if desired.
- Bake 15 minutes, or until casserole is bubbly. Let stand 10 minutes.
- Top with additional onions, if desired.



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# SEEING the need in the community

Olsens among those who foster children.



Buck and Laura Olsen, with children, Max, Kendall, Charlie, Zoe, Tate, Mia and Finn, added a new member, J., to the family last year.

For a foster child, going to a new home can often be a daunting task, and understandably so.

Laura and Buck Olsen of Johnston know this all too well, having brought a foster toddler into their family of Max, Kendall, Charlie, Zoe, Tate, Mia and Finn recently.

But like any good parent, they stepped up and did what was necessary: make the child feel at home.

“It’s so important to know that the kids may be very scared and uncertain as they move in with a new family,” says Laura Olsen. “Doing everything you can as a foster parent to make the child feel safe, cared for and keeping whatever routines are possible are all so important when a child comes into foster care.”

The transition for the new parents can be equally as imposing, especially in the early stages.

“It’s also normal to feel like you’re ‘babysitting’ at first,” Laura says.

The couple has been providing full-time foster care for more than a year now, but were respite (part-time) care providers for four years prior, a learning process that made them all the more aware of the need.

“We adopted two of our children several years ago through private adoptions. After that, we knew that there was such a need in our community for families to support children needing care,” Laura says. “Our kids were all on board and wanted to be a part of this, too, so we moved forward.”

The family met with Four Oaks Family Connections, an organization that partners with the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to recruit, license, train and provide ongoing support to foster, kinship and adoptive families throughout the state of Iowa.

The first step was to complete a standardized process that included paperwork, background checks and foster parent training classes. The classes meet once a week for 10 weeks so prospective foster parents can learn how to care for kids coming into foster care from many different situations.

“There is also a series of meetings with a social worker to complete a home study, where the social worker visits your home and completes safety inspections and interviews with the prospective foster parents,” Laura adds. “Once all of those steps have been completed, you will be considered licensed foster parents

and begin receiving children in your home for foster care.”

The most important thing during this process is to simply be willing to ask for help, she says. It’s new territory.

“Lots of friends and family members want to help but aren’t sure how to,” Olsen says. “Just ask. Sometimes foster kids are part of a sibling group that aren’t all placed in the same foster family, so initiating communication with the other foster families has been important to maintain biological sibling bonds. Be flexible and have a lot of grace for all of the social workers, attorneys and other foster parents — everyone has a hard job in this system.

“Reach out and ask questions. Talk to other foster parents. Seek out ways to support foster families in your churches or community,” she says.

Anyone wanting to learn more about foster care can attend one of Four Oaks Family Connections’ virtual orientations held each Sunday and Wednesday nights. Instructions to register for orientation and a step-by-step look at the licensing process can be found at <https://iowafosterandadoption.org/how-to-get-started/>. ■



# Protect Your Loved Ones from RSV

**RSV is a common respiratory virus,** which peaks in the winter months.

RSV can be dangerous for infants and older adults. These age groups are more likely to be hospitalized from RSV.

**Talk to your family's healthcare providers about RSV prevention.**



## LIBRARY

# RESOLVE to spend more time at JPL in 2025

The holidays are over, and the new year has arrived. This January, we have many programs at the library to help get your 2025 off to a memorable start. If you're looking for fun and adventure, you can race to complete a puzzle, create your own movie, and dive into the worlds of Dungeons & Dragons and Pokémon. If you're working on more serious New Year's resolutions, you can learn how to protect your assets in retirement or start a grief journal. Read on for further details.

### Johnston Public Library

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[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.

Looking for something to do as a family? Then get your team together and register for our first-ever **JPL Family Puzzle Competition** on Saturday, Jan. 18 from 2:30-4:30 p.m. Your team will have two hours to try to complete a 500-piece puzzle. If you complete the puzzle in time, your team receives a prize. If you're the first team to complete it, you'll win the grand prize. Arrive early because we'll start the clock at exactly 2:30 p.m.

Lights! Camera! Action! Kids in grades 3-5 will learn the basics of filmmaking in our three-part series **Movie Makers**, in which participants will write, film and edit their own video. The setting for this experience is the library on Jan. 16, 23 and 30 (Thursdays) from 4:30-5:30 p.m. The required registration will automatically enroll your child in all three sessions.

Ready to roll? Kids in grades 6-12 can step into a world of magic, monsters and mayhem at the **Teen Dungeons & Dragons Night** on Tuesday, Jan. 21 from 5-6:30 p.m. Brave heroes and cunning villains of all experience levels are welcome. Players can bring their own characters or use one of ours. Registration is required for this daring fantasy adventure, but, once registered, participants will automatically be registered for all subsequent meetings.

Calling all Pokémon trainers. Kids in grades 6 and up can join us for the ultimate **Teen Pokémon Club**, where we'll gather to talk all things Pokémon: the show, video games, trading card battles, and more. We'll have fun Pokémon-themed activities, too. Club members can bring their Pokémon cards or devices for battles and trades or just come to hang out. The first meeting of the year is Tuesday, Jan. 28 from 5-6 p.m. Registration is required.

If you're wondering if it's too early (or late) to write your will or plan your estate, then join attorney Joel Hjelmass, an estate planning and elder law attorney at Pearson Bollman Law, for a free interactive workshop, **Retirement University: Wills and Estate Planning**, on Thursday, Jan. 9 at 6 p.m. Topics include protecting your assets from nursing home costs and other life events, maximizing your children's inheritance, how to avoid probate, and creating a tax-efficient estate. Registration for this event is appreciated but not required.

Everyone walks through grief at some point in life. Develop skills for processing this grief through poetry and journaling during a 90-minute writing workshop: **Weep, Wail, and Write**. Claudine Cheatem designed this class to help people find the words to express their emotions. She offers creative writing prompts and a quick introduction to poetry to help you start a journal you can add to as you walk through your grief journey. Registration is required for this workshop on Saturday, Jan. 25 from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m.

More information about all 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. ■



# RESOLUTION time

As a new year approaches, we often set a plan for resolution. Have you resolved to get prepared for retirement this year? By focusing on key areas, you can create a strong foundation to support your future needs. Here's a concise guide to help you prepare:



**1. Assess your current situation:** Start by evaluating your net worth, which includes all assets (savings, investments, property) and liabilities (debts, mortgages). Understanding where you stand financially helps guide your planning decisions. Evaluate your debt situation. Additionally, does your emergency fund cover what you consider to be unexpected?

**2. Set clear retirement goals:** Determine when you want to retire and the lifestyle you envision. Consider factors like your desired living situation, travel plans and hobbies. Based on this, estimate how much income you'll need to sustain this lifestyle. Start with those income needs today; inflation should also be considered.

**3. Maximize retirement account contributions:** For retirement accounts, like a 401(k) or 403(b), try to contribute as much as possible. In 2025, the 401(k)-contribution limit for individuals under 50 is \$23,500, and \$31,000 for those 50-59 (including catch-up contributions). Note, due to a change with the SECURE ACT 2.0 in 2022, if you are 60-63, your limit is \$11,250 more than the 50-year-olds. If your employer offers a match, be sure to take full advantage of it to maximize your savings. Keep the "long haul" of retirement in mind when considering investment choices.

**4. Social Security planning:** Determine the best time to start taking Social Security benefits. While you can begin as early as age 62, waiting until your full retirement age (typically 66 or 67) or even age 70 can increase your monthly benefits significantly. Social Security benefits could be taxable depending on your income, so plan accordingly.

**5. Create a withdrawal strategy:** Many theories of funding retirement needs have been used: the 4% rule, Annuities, Dollar Cost Drawdown, the 60/40 Rule, etc. Consider many options when making sure that your income needs in retirement are covered with your life savings.

**6. Estate planning:** Create or update essential estate planning documents, including a will or trust, a power of attorney, and a healthcare directive. These ensure that your wishes are honored and that someone can make financial or medical decisions on your behalf if needed. Also, make sure you evaluate your beneficiaries with your investments, bank accounts, and insurance. Don't forget to have at least one contingent beneficiary also. This is one of the most overlooked mistakes in ending up with certain investments placed into probate that simply could have passed easily to loved ones.

**7. Consult a financial advisor:** A financial advisor can help refine your retirement plan, offer personalized investment strategies, and ensure your plan is tax efficient. They can also assist in navigating the complexities of retirement planning as 2025 approaches.

By starting early, staying disciplined, and adjusting your plan as needed, you can create a solid retirement strategy that will provide financial stability and peace of mind when the time comes. Be safe and have a Happy New Year. ■

Information provided by Daniel Rundahl, Financial Advisor, Rundahl Financial Consultants, 8230 Hickman Road, Suite 300, Clive, 515-727-1701, drundahl@rundahlfinancial.com, www.rundahlfinancialconsultants.com.

Edward Jones

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## Cheers to a new year!

As the calendar turns the page, we wish you the very best in the year ahead.



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## CONTACT US! CITY HALL

**6221 Merle Hay Road**  
PO Box 410  
Johnston, IA 50131  
Phone: (515) 278-2344  
Fax: (515) 278-2033

### MAYOR

Paula Dierenfeld  
(515) 490-8023  
PaulaSDierenfeld@gmail.com

### CITY COUNCIL

Bryan Burkhardt  
(515) 554-9095  
bburkhardt@cityofjohnston.com

Tom Cope  
(515) 975-4590  
tomwcope@msn.com

Jim Evans  
jim4johnston@gmail.com

Rhonda Martin  
(515) 326-2675  
rhondamartin@iowanative@gmail.com

Suresh Reddy  
(515) 201-6236  
sreddy@cityofjohnston.com

### JOHNSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

6700 Merle Hay Road  
(515) 278-5233

### JOHNSTON POLICE & FIRE

6373 Merle Hay Road  
(515) 278-2345 (24 hours)  
Emergency: 9-1-1

### JOHNSTON PUBLIC WORKS

6400 NW Beaver Drive  
(515) 278-0822  
FAX: (515) 727-8092

### JOHNSTON PARKS DEPARTMENT

6300 Pioneer Parkway  
(515) 727-8091  
FAX: (515) 727-8092

### CROWN POINT COMMUNITY CENTER AND SENIOR DINING CENTER

6300 Pioneer Parkway  
(515) 251-3707

## City Hall and Library are closed for the MLK Holiday

Johnston City Hall and the Johnston Public Library will be closed on Monday, January 20, in observance of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday. Please note that this holiday does not affect your trash and recycling pickup days. The Johnston City Council work session and meeting, originally scheduled for Monday, will now be held on Tuesday, January 21.



## Take a 5-minute streetscape survey

The City of Johnston is seeking insights into our community's streetscape. Please take 5 minutes before January 19 to complete this brief survey to help Johnston city staff understand your preferences for enhancing the beauty of our streets and corridors. Visit [www.cityofjohnston.com/JohnstonStreetscapeStudy](http://www.cityofjohnston.com/JohnstonStreetscapeStudy) or scan the QR code.



## Stay informed about snow ordinance activations – Sign up to receive alerts!

The Public Works Department wants to ensure you stay informed about parking bans. Sign up for alerts at [www.cityofjohnston.com/JohnstonAlerts](http://www.cityofjohnston.com/JohnstonAlerts). To subscribe to SMS text messages only, text 50131 to 38276. A mobile app is also available if you search for CivicReady. The notices can also be received through this CivicReady app on your mobile device.



## Snow removal on your sidewalks and private property

After it snows, it's really important to clear the snow from your sidewalks within 48 hours. As a property owner, you're responsible for keeping the sidewalks next to your property clear. If you have a double frontage lot, you'll need to clear the sidewalks along both streets that border your property. If you don't do this within the required time, you might face a fine. Keeping the sidewalks clear is essential for everyone's safety, even if you don't use them during the winter.

If you see someone who hasn't cleared their snow in time, please reach out to the Building Department at 515-727-7778, or submit a concern at [www.cityofjohnston.com/ConcernCenter](http://www.cityofjohnston.com/ConcernCenter). Your help makes our community safer and more accessible for everyone. Thank you for looking out for each other!



Just a reminder, private driveways and properties aren't included in our snowplowing operations.

For more information about the city, please visit [www.cityofjohnston.com](http://www.cityofjohnston.com)





## CITY NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2025

### Senior (55+) activities to enjoy

We invite seniors, 55+, to participate in **fun competition nights from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. in the Saylorville Training Room at City Hall.** For more information on fun nights, visit [www.cityofjohnston.com/402](http://www.cityofjohnston.com/402).

- **Thursday, January 16:** Enjoy cards and board games. The menu includes Chinese-Mongolian beef, sesame chicken, fried rice, egg rolls, crab rangoon, and fortune cookies.
- **Thursday, February 13:** Join us for BINGO. The menu features pulled pork, potato salad, baked beans, mixed fruit, and sweet rolls.
- **Thursday, March 13:** Come for more cards and board games. The menu includes fried chicken, white cheddar mac & cheese, green beans almandine, and cookies.



The cost to attend the fun nights is \$5. Registration is required, and payment can be dropped off at Johnston City Hall, Attn: Molly Moore. Registration is required at least one week in advance, and payment can be dropped off at Johnston City Hall.

### Holiday tree and yard waste collection

January 6-7 are the last dates to dispose of your holiday tree and yard waste at the curb. To take advantage of this service, simply attach a Compost It! sticker, and we will handle the rest.

Please remember that your Compost It! sticker is the only decoration your tree should have. Be sure to remove all other decorations, lights, and wires. Note that wreaths and garlands will not be collected.



### Mark your calendar for these upcoming cleanup events and community activities

It is going to be a busy year in the City of Johnston. We look forward to seeing you at events in The Yard and recreational activities at Terra Park. We wanted to ensure you save the date for these upcoming events.

- **Annual Tree Sale on Tuesday, April 8:** Trees can be purchased online at 8:00 a.m. and picked up at a later determined date. We encourage residents interested in purchasing a tree to set up their account in our new software system in advance to familiarize themselves and streamline their experience. The city will send a notification through Notify Me and social media once the new software is in place, so stay tuned!
- **Spring Cleanup on Monday, April 7 through Tuesday, April 8** for residents living west of NW 86th Street, and **Wednesday, April 9 through Thursday, April 10** for residents living east of NW 86th Street. Please ensure items are at the curb by 6 a.m.
- **Tree Branch Cleanup on Thursday, April 10, Friday, April 11 and Saturday, April 12:** Hours of drop off vary by date.
- **Kites on the Green on Saturday, May 3:** Johnston Commons Park, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- **Family Fest on Saturday, June 7:** Johnston Town Center, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.



For more information about the city, please call 515.278.2344



# NEW YEAR, new plan

Staying independent at home as you age

Chris, 72, has lived in her home in West Des Moines for nearly 50 years and plans to remain there forever, but her son and daughter-in-law are concerned. Chris is healthy, but if she needs assistance at some point, her family won't be able to help, as they live abroad.



Chris's family members' concerns are reasonable; staying in our homes independently as we age is not always possible. Chronic health challenges can make living independently ill-advised, and full-time care at home can be expensive.

So, you may be asking yourself, on your own behalf or on behalf of someone you love: "If moving into a community for older adults is not a desired option and there are concerns about potential health issues later on, what can

I do?"

Consider a Continuing Care at Home (CC@H) membership initiative. Usually administered by an organization that serves older adults, a CC@H program is 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 a CC@H program, make sure to ask specifically what the program includes. A reputable 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.

Here are some questions you'll want to consider asking before you join a program:

- **Does the program feature personal support, such as wellness coaching?** Studies show people who embark on a 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.

- **How long has the organization that's backing the program been in business, and what's its reputation in the senior-living industry?** Even if the program itself does offer all the services you're looking for, make sure you're comfortable with the organization itself. A reputable provider will have longevity and solid outcomes behind it.

Not all CC@H programs are created equal. If a program appeals to you, make sure it meets both your current and future needs and provides you with peace of mind. ■

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. To learn more, visit [wesleylife.org/wellahead](http://wesleylife.org/wellahead).

For this next New Year,  
here's your plan.

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- Keep your well-being in focus
- Protect your assets
- Plan for future health needs

Call (515) 642-1726 for more information — and consider the peace of mind you'll give your family when they know you're well at home with WellAhead.

**WellAhead**  
A WesleyLife Well-Being Experience



(515) 642-1726 | [wesleylife.org/wellahead](http://wesleylife.org/wellahead)

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# THE PHASE out of inheritance tax

Are you worried about your family paying taxes when you die? There is some good news that can affect your estate planning.



Every estate is liable for a few different kinds of tax. Whether it is federal estate tax, income tax, inheritance tax, or capital gains tax, your heirs may be writing checks to the government. Iowa was one of six states that had inheritance tax. But Iowa has now phased out its inheritance tax law with a complete exemption effective Jan. 1, 2025.

In general, inheritance isn't taxed as income; you won't pay income tax on a bequest. But when you inherit money or property from someone, you potentially owe tax to the state of Iowa. Some beneficiaries have always been exempt: a spouse, children,

stepchildren, grandchildren, and parents all have a 100% exemption from inheritance tax.

Other beneficiaries previously had no exemption, like siblings, sons- or daughters-in-law, nieces and nephews, and friends. The tax rate could be as much as 15%. For this reason, some clients avoided leaving money to individuals because of the negative tax implications.

Legislation changed this in 2021 by phasing out the inheritance tax. For deaths occurring in 2021, the tax rate was reduced by 20%. The rate continued to be reduced by 20% each subsequent year until Jan. 1, 2025, when the exclusion will be 100%.

Now, no inheritance tax will be owed for individuals dying after Jan. 1, 2025, regardless of the relationship of the beneficiary.

Inheritance tax is still in effect — at the reduced rates — for deaths prior to 2025. The phase-out was not retroactive.

This change to the law presents an estate-planning opportunity for many clients. Clients can include a sibling or beloved son-in-law or daughter-in-law in their will or trust without worrying that the state of Iowa will take some of the inheritance. Nieces and nephews are now viable beneficiaries, without the risk of having tax imposed.

Your legacy to your loved ones can now be more inclusive. Many clients are now looking at their options for revising and updating their estate planning documents. If you have a last will and testament or a revocable trust and would like to include new beneficiaries, make sure that you contact an attorney who specializes in estate planning and who understands the new tax laws. ■

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

## PREPARE FOR THEIR FUTURE

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# Say, **“Yes!”** to Drinking **Less**

**More than 2 drinks a day is considered too much.**

When you say “no thanks” to heavy drinking, you reduce your risk of alcohol-related health problems such as heart disease, liver disease, stroke, high blood pressure, and depression.

**Ready to cut back on drinking?**

Go to  
**[YourLifeIowa.org/alcohol](http://YourLifeIowa.org/alcohol)**  
to get started.



## ENHANCING services to residents

NorthPoint Church announces community center.



An artist's rendering illustrates the look of the community center when it is finished.

NorthPoint Church is undertaking a \$7 million renovation to transform its building into a community hub — a project that reflects the church's commitment to serving its neighbors.

“Most churches sit dark for a lot of their time, and we don't want to do that,” Executive Pastor John Sorrell says.

The renovation is part of the church's Cultivate Initiative and will be carried out in two phases. Phase one includes the construction of a 9,000-square-foot addition on the building's east end, designed to house a childcare center operated by Pathways Learning Academy. Expected to open in fall 2025, the childcare center will provide an important resource for local families.

“It's going to be a full childcare facility that happens Monday through Friday,” Sorrell explains. “Pathways Learning Academy is the second largest childcare provider in the country. It's a pretty cool partnership.”

In phase two, the current church interior will be remodeled into a state-of-the-art community center. Planned amenities include a café, an indoor playscape, pickleball courts, a volleyball court, meeting rooms, and seating for small gatherings. This phase is slated for completion by November 2025.

The church's leaders see the project as an opportunity to expand their reach beyond Sunday services. By creating a space that can be used seven days a week, NorthPoint aims to provide resources such as tutoring programs, a counseling center, and a safe space for students to hang out. They also plan to collaborate with community groups to address food insecurity.

“We're really excited about the potential partnerships that are down the road for us,” Sorrell says.

The Cultivate Initiative builds on the church's history of working with local organizations to serve the community. For example, NorthPoint currently hosts Congolese refugees who attend English study sessions led by volunteers with ICOACH, a program dedicated to helping newly arrived refugees navigate their challenges.

“We want to bless the community as much as possible,” Sorrell says. “We want to be a church for the community. We want to create a space that as many people as possible can benefit from.”

The funding for the Cultivate Initiative is being raised internally over the next two years, and NorthPoint is inviting the community to share ideas for how the space could be used. More information about the project can be found at [www.northpointdsm.com/cultivate](http://www.northpointdsm.com/cultivate).

Ultimately, the renovation project aligns with NorthPoint Church's long-standing mission: cultivating communities of grace and truth by looking to Jesus, embracing community, and engaging culture. ■



# PREVENTIVE services and insurance coverage

In 2025, preventive healthcare services are expected to be a cornerstone of modern medicine, as an increasing emphasis is placed on improving public health and reducing long-term healthcare costs. Preventive services include screenings, vaccinations, counseling and lifestyle interventions designed to detect health issues early, before they become more serious and expensive to treat. The goal is to keep individuals healthier for longer periods and reduce the burden on healthcare systems by catching conditions early when they are more treatable.



Key preventive services that are expected to be prevalent in 2025 include routine screenings for cancer (such as mammograms, colonoscopies and Pap smears), cardiovascular assessments (blood pressure, cholesterol and diabetes screenings), mental health screenings, and vaccinations for infectious diseases like flu, pneumonia and COVID-19. Health counseling on smoking cessation, alcohol use, diet and physical activity will also play an essential role in reducing the incidence of chronic conditions like heart disease, diabetes and obesity.

As for how insurance will cover these preventive services in 2025, there are several factors to consider. Since the implementation of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), most health insurance plans are required to cover a range of preventive services at no additional cost to the policyholder. These services are generally covered as part of the Essential Health Benefits (EHB) package under ACA-compliant plans, and the law mandates that insurance companies cover screenings, immunizations and preventive counseling without applying deductibles, co-pays or coinsurance.

In 2025, it's likely this trend will continue and even expand. Advances in technology and personalized medicine could further enhance preventive care, allowing for more tailored screenings based on an individual's genetic risk factors, lifestyle and medical history. Insurers may also begin to adopt new strategies to incentivize preventive care, such as rewarding policyholders for maintaining healthy habits or for engaging in regular wellness checks.

However, there may be some limitations or gaps in coverage, especially for non-ACA plans or plans that operate outside of the U.S. healthcare system. Some specialized preventive services, like genetic testing for predisposition to certain diseases, may not be covered under all insurance policies. Additionally, while preventive services are largely covered, the specifics can vary depending on the insurance provider, the region, and any changes in legislation or policy in 2025.

Preventive services are expected to become even more integrated into healthcare practices in 2025, focusing on early detection and proactive health management. Health insurance is likely to continue its support for these services, making them widely accessible and affordable, though individuals may need to verify their coverage specifics. As healthcare technology advances, insurance plans may adapt to ensure that preventative services evolve with the latest medical innovations, helping individuals maintain long-term health and wellbeing.

If you have questions about your coverage and preventive care, contact a health insurance advisor to discuss your benefits. Happy new year. ■

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

## PLAN YOUR PREVENTIVE CARE IN 2025



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# EVENTS IN THE AREA

Be sure to check for cancelations



## Upcoming in Johnston Living magazine:

**Grandparents who enjoy living near their grandchildren:** Share why you enjoy living near your grandchildren and how you spend time together. Email [tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com](mailto:tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com) by Jan. 10 to be included in the February issue.



## Johnston Lions Club Bingo

Jan. 9, 6-8 p.m.  
Lions Club House,  
6501 Merle Hay Road

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

## Playhouse classes offered

Various dates  
The Des Moines Playhouse,  
831 42nd St. Des Moines

The Des Moines Playhouse offers classes year-round for ages 4 through adult. New this winter is an audition workshop for teens and adults. Registration is now open for winter, winter break, spring break and spring classes with summer camps posting in mid-January. Scholarships are available through the Jeanne Hopson Angel Fund. For class descriptions, registrations and more information, visit [dmpplayhouse.com/education/classes-and-camps](http://dmpplayhouse.com/education/classes-and-camps).

The Audition Workshop Series for ages 14 through adult will be led by Playhouse artistic director Katy Merriman. Held each Saturday in February, sessions will focus on song selection, cold reads, dance auditions with "Waitress" choreographer Kent Zimmerman, and a master class with area directors. Students can sign up for one, two, three or all four sessions.

Winter break features a play in four days for students in grades 2-7 while younger students will bring folk tales from around the world to life. Teens can work alongside Playhouse professionals to learn basic stage carpentry, painting, sewing, lighting design and sound design. Winter break sessions are Dec. 23, 27, 30 and 31.

Winter classes start Jan. 4 with creative drama, creative characters, and more for pre-K through grade 9. Spring classes, starting March 29 are focused on musical theatre for pre-K through grade 7.

Spring break finds students in grades 5-8 learning "Seussical Kids," a 35-minute version of the popular Broadway musical, with performances at the end of the week. Students in grades 3-4 will rehearse and perform a play while younger students will use favorite books to create scenes to share.

For more information on Playhouse educational offerings, contact Robin Spahr, Playhouse education director, at [rspahr@dmpplayhouse.com](mailto:rspahr@dmpplayhouse.com), 515-974-5365.

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

## Winter curbside yard waste collection

Jan. 6-7

The Compost It! winter collection in Johnston will conclude Jan. 6 and 7, corresponding with your regular trash collection day. This is a great time to dispose of brush, leaves, lawn clippings, garden waste and live holiday trees.

## Square Dance Lessons

Sunday nights starting Jan. 19, 6:30 p.m.

Douglas Avenue Presbyterian Church, 4601 Douglas Ave., Des Moines

Ankeny Square Dance Club is sponsoring Square Dance Lessons. Cost is \$20 per person for the entire session accepted at the third lesson.

Attend with or without a dance partner. You'll learn the calls, one at a time, taught by a caller (instructor) and volunteers. For more information call Sandy Townsend, 515-294-2624, or visit [www.ankenysquares.com](http://www.ankenysquares.com).



## Iowa Wild

Wells Fargo Arena,  
233 Center St., Des Moines  
[iowawild.com](http://iowawild.com)

- Jan. 17 at 7 p.m. vs. Rockford Icehogs
- Jan. 18 at 6 p.m. vs. Rockford Icehogs
- Jan. 22 at 7 p.m. vs. Charlotte Checkers
- Jan. 25 at 6 p.m. vs. Texas Stars
- Jan. 26 at 3 p.m. vs. Texas Stars
- Jan. 28 at 7 p.m. vs. Charlotte Checkers
- Jan. 31 at 7 p.m. vs. Springfield Thunderbirds



## Lions Club facility open house

Sunday, Jan. 19  
Lions Club House,  
6501 Merle Hay Road

The Johnston Lions Club is here to make your next event unforgettable. Whether you're planning a business meeting, family gathering or special celebration, the Lions have the space for you. Visit the open house to learn more about renting the club's venue. Explore the space, get all your questions answered, and see how they can help make your event a success. For more information, email [venueclub@gmail.com](mailto:venueclub@gmail.com).

## Polk County Heritage Gallery exhibit

Until Jan. 24  
Polk County Administration Building, 111 Court Ave., Des Moines  
[polkcountyheritagegallery.org](http://polkcountyheritagegallery.org)

DSM Exhibited 2024 - Annual Juried Show is on display.



## Live music at Woolly's

504 E. Locust St., Des Moines  
[firstfleetconcerts.com/first-fleet-venues/woolys](http://firstfleetconcerts.com/first-fleet-venues/woolys)

- Jan. 17: Tyler Richton & The High Bank Boys at 7 p.m.
- Jan. 18: The Prince Experience at 8:30 p.m.
- Jan. 24: Smells Like Nirvana: A Tribute to Nirvana at 8 p.m.
- Jan. 26: Beach Bunny at 8 p.m.
- Jan. 30: Aaron Watson at 8 p.m.



# EVENTS IN THE AREA

Be sure to check for cancelations

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



## Cinch World's Toughest Rodeo

Jan. 10-11  
Wells Fargo Arena,  
233 Center St., Des Moines  
[www.iowaeventscenter.com](http://www.iowaeventscenter.com)

Action-packed performance featuring some of the nation's most talented rodeo athletes, livestock and specialty entertainers.



## Indoor Garage Sale Extravaganza

Jan. 11  
Iowa Events Center,  
730 Third St., Des Moines  
[www.iowaeventscenter.com](http://www.iowaeventscenter.com)

Need a mid-winter fix for your garage sale habit? This is the place to be.

## Iowa Diecast Toy Show

Jan. 4-5  
Iowa State Fairgrounds,  
3000 E. Grand Ave.,  
Des Moines  
[www.agfarmtoys.com](http://www.agfarmtoys.com)


Explore an extensive selection of toys of all sizes and memorabilia from reputable dealers. Discover rare and limited-edition pieces to add to your collection. Find that missing piece for your display that you have been searching for. Find a great piece that you didn't know you needed.



## CITYVIEW's Fire and Ice

Saturday, Jan. 18, 1-4 p.m.  
Historic Valley Junction  
Foundation, 137 Fifth St.,  
West Des Moines


Join CITYVIEW's Fire and Ice, an interactive winter pub crawl in Historic Valley Junction. Fire and Ice is a hockey-themed liquor sampling event that will be sure to warm up your winter blues. With your event ticket, you will receive 10 individual drink tickets to sample some of the best winter cocktails from establishments in the Valley Junction area. Tickets are \$25 in advance and \$35 at the door. For tickets, visit <https://fire-and-ice.dmcityview.com>. ■




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**REAL ESTATE** By Rachel Wallace

## **BUYING** a home you love

Nearly three-fourths of Americans who purchased homes in 2021 and 2022 have regrets (Anytime Estimate's American Home Buyer Survey; September 2022). With rising prices, few options to choose from and extreme time pressure, buyers faced unprecedented conditions during that time.

After learning of this staggering statistic, I thought it would be good to share some tips on how to buy a home that you love.

Before you begin your home search, make a list of "must haves" — things that are important to you and with which you are not willing to compromise. Also list items that are not as important to you on this list, so that your Realtor knows which items are flexible.

There are things you can change about the home you buy and those you cannot. Changing location isn't an option, and the expense of changing a layout is usually not a feasible goal; however, updating a room or flooring that you don't love — definitely doable. Keep this in mind during your home search.

Be aware of basic repairs that are needed, as well as maintenance costs of the home. A good way to find out about these items is through an inspection. Waiving the inspection should not be a consideration. The inspection is an important opportunity to make sure the upkeep of the home will be within your budget. Finding that costly repairs are needed later is not worth the negotiation tool of forgoing the inspection.

Interview your prospective Realtor and address these possible issues ahead of time. Make sure they are prepared to help you tackle these necessary steps to help you avoid buyer's remorse.

If you do have regrets about your home purchase, here are some things to consider:

- Just because you buy a home, doesn't mean it's your forever home. A good Realtor can help you prepare when you are ready to list your current home and find your next one.
- Renovations are a great way to not only provide you with a home that you love, but also to increase the equity in your home. Look for tax credits and/or rebates to financially support you in these efforts. Discussing these possible projects ahead of time with your Realtor is a good idea because they can help you make sure that the projects will aid in creating equity and be worth the investment.

Buyers today are in a better position than in 2021 or 2022. Take advantage of this timing opportunity to find a home that suits you better. If rates drop significantly, the market will heat up again and could create a similar situation, so don't wait. ■



Information provided by Rachel Wallace, Realtor/Designer, RE/MAX Precision, 515-229-1621, [www.rachelwallacehome.com](http://www.rachelwallacehome.com), 8705 Chambery Blvd., Suite 100, Johnston.



# MEET Olga Kline

## A 43-year legacy of dedication

After a 43-year career in teaching, including 39 years in Johnston, Olga Kline will retire at the end of this school year. Over her decades of service, Kline has left a mark on countless students and colleagues alike.

Although teaching was always her dream, Kline initially pursued other paths.

“I loved school and was fortunate to have great, supportive teachers,” Kline says. “However, when I graduated from high school, there was an overload of teachers, so I decided to go into journalism.”

After a semester in college, concerns about job prospects in journalism led Kline to the business world. However, she soon realized it wasn’t the right fit.

“I decided to follow my heart and went back to school to become a teacher,” she says.

Kline earned her bachelor’s degree in elementary and special education from Drake University and began her career at Southeast Polk, teaching kindergarten and resource students. After four rewarding years there, Kline eagerly accepted an offer to teach in Johnston. Since then, she has worked in the Lawson Elementary building, with one year teaching at Beaver Creek while Lawson was renovated.

Kline’s journey with Lawson Elementary began during her student teaching experience under Adrienne Ulbrich, whom she describes as “the best teacher.” She knew from that moment that the building was where she wanted to teach.

“Lawson was, and is still, very much a family,” she shares.

Education has changed a lot since Kline began her career, but even with all the hurdles she’s faced, it’s a job she says she has always loved.

“I never would have imagined going through the experience of teaching during a pandemic and the effect that it had on students, families and my teaching role and responsibilities,” she says. “But through everything, my constant joy has been helping students achieve and grow not only as learners but as people as well.”

Kline notes one of the biggest challenges of teaching is the difficulty of balancing professional and personal life, especially with the ever-evolving demands of education.

“It’s not an 8-to-5 job, five days a week, nine months a year,” she explains. “Most days it is from the time you arrive at school until you go to bed at night plus many hours on the weekend. It’s classes in the summer and planning for the next year. It’s planning for a substitute when you are gone for a district committee or when you are sick. The responsibilities of teaching never end.”

Yet for Kline, the time she puts into her job has been worth it. Throughout her career, she’s built a treasure trove of favorite memories. She enjoys the conversations with students, laughter in the classroom, the excitement over a project that went well, the “ah ha” moments when a student who has struggled finally gets it, visits from former students who just want to stop by and chat for a minute, and friendships made with colleagues.

Kline lives in West Des Moines with her son, Christopher, who returned from Colorado two years ago. She shares her home with Belle, a talkative cat, and Frog, her classroom’s African Dwarf frog. In her free time, Kline enjoys scrapbooking, crafting, gardening, trying new recipes and studying nature. ■



Olga Kline has taught for 43 years.

# MEET the new chamber president

Johnston community, let me introduce myself as your 2025 Johnston chamber president. I’m Daniel Fitzgerald, and I work as a construction banker for West Bank. I love my job, as I always wanted to be a banker because of the connections and relationships I get to build, which is why I’m looking forward to my new role with the chamber.

I’m no stranger to Johnston; I lived here from 2002 – 2006 and now since 2013. I live near the new high school with my wife, Brianne; three kids (Declan, 19; Killian, 16; and Caitrin, 12); and two dogs (Cash Money and Ruby). I enjoy spending time with family and friends traveling and creating memories, working on the family farm, hunting and, on occasion, sitting next to the fire with a cigar and an adult beverage.

I first got involved in the chamber in 2018 based on the desire to better know my community. I took my first step by attending several events, volunteering, becoming an ambassador, then joining the board and leading the golf committee in 2023, joining the executive board in 2024 and now for 2025, I look forward to all that we have planned for our members and the community. I’m excited to guide the organization under the expert leadership of our executive director and alongside other great people in our community. I hope you’ll consider joining us as a member, even if you aren’t a business owner, and be sure to reach out and introduce yourself. ■



Information provided by Johnston Chamber President Daniel A. R. Fitzgerald, MBA, Construction & Land Development Banker, Vice President, West Bank 955 E. Hickman Road, Waukee, 515-222-2339.



## NOMINATE A BUSINESS

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# OUT & ABOUT



Kira and Arlo Strong-Gonzalez playing toss, sponsored by First Baptist Church, at the holiday festivities Dec. 7 at the Town Center.



Karle Kruse, Graham Coaldrake, Dian Kruse and Addy Coaldrake at the holiday festivities Dec. 7 at the Town Center.



Ethan and Brody Snyder showing off their cookie decorating skills at the holiday festivities Dec. 7 at the Town Center.



Santa with Anderson and Zayda Scott at the holiday festivities Dec. 7 at the Town Center.



Santa and Mayor Paul Dierenfeld at the holiday festivities Dec. 7 at the Town Center.



Bill Gordish, chainsaw artist, at the holiday festivities Dec. 7 at the Town Center.



Kenzie Leach (front), Amelia Clausen and Sarah Clausen at the holiday festivities Dec. 7 at the Town Center.



Zaria and Autumn Kawooya at the holiday festivities Dec. 7 at the Town Center.



Brenda Ballard and Dan Fitzgerald at the Johnston Chamber JumpStart Dec. 19 at the Johnston Historical Society, Simpson House Museum.



Sharm Sisler, Mary Jane Paez and Dale De Jong at the Johnston Chamber JumpStart Dec. 19 at the Johnston Historical Society, Simpson House Museum.



Mary Brown, Al Tokheim, John Brown, Mary Jane Paez and Tom Leffler at the Johnston Chamber JumpStart Dec. 19 at the Johnston Historical Society, Simpson House Museum.



# OUT & ABOUT



Tanner Sink and Admir Kustura, Bank Iowa, with their 2024 Johnston Chamber Tree Jingle Contest tree.



Heather Lesley at Woof Pack Resort & Spa with their 2024 Johnston Chamber Tree Jingle Contest tree.



Julia Bradshaw at Styled by JJ with their 2024 Johnston Chamber Tree Jingle Contest tree.



Michael Tiffany and Eric Herrmann at Herrmann Family Chiropractic with their 2024 Johnston Chamber Tree Jingle Contest tree.



Paula Bierle at Purple Poppy Boutique with their 2024 Johnston Chamber Tree Jingle Contest tree.



Front: Julia Bradshaw and Santa; and, back: Haley Bradshaw, Cammie Callen, Anna McClellan and Jenna Murrey at the Styled by JJ Holiday Open House Dec. 16.



Shannon McDonald and Shelbie Hill visit with Santa at the Styled by JJ Holiday Open House Dec. 16.



Gabie Bishop, Anthony Bishop and Lenorah Bishop, back, tell Santa what they would like for Christmas at the Styled by JJ Holiday Open House Dec. 16.



Jenni Buchanan and Cristy Cline at the Johnston Chamber JumpStart Dec. 19 at the Johnston Historical Society, Simpson House Museum.



Melisa Wardlow, Holly Moon, Paula Bierle and Casee Woodley visit with Santa at the Purple Poppy Boutique on Dec. 15.



Taytum Heintz visiting with Santa at the Purple Poppy Boutique on Dec. 15.



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## MISCELLANEOUS

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