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SEEN IN JOHNSTON

JOHNSTON CHAMBER JUMPSTART WAS DEC. 19 AT THE JOHNSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY SIMPSON HOUSE MUSEUM.



Mary Brown, Al Tokheim, John Brown, Mary Jane Paez and Tom Leffler



Brenda Ballard and Dan Fitzgerald



Jenni Buchanan and Cristy Cline



Sharm Sisler, Mary Jane Paez and Dale De Jong

JOHNSTON WEATHER FORECAST

WED. HIGH 29 | LOW 21
Partly sunny



THURS. HIGH 29 | LOW 10
Morning snow; mostly cloudy



FRI. HIGH 21 | LOW 5
Turning cloudy and colder



SAT. HIGH 20 | LOW 12
Cloudy and cold



SUN. HIGH 18 | LOW 8
Cold with a little snow at times



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FROM THE PUBLISHER

THE TOY TRAIN AROUND THE TREE

As a child, my buddies and I would sit by the railroad tracks in our hometown and watch in awe as the trains passed by. By the 1970s, train usage had changed drastically, but that steam engine and those rusty railcars still made for an amazing sight.

That fascination with trains continued when my brother let me play with his toy train set that was set up on a sheet of plywood and a couple of sawhorses in our basement. To my knowledge, it was never displayed around the Christmas tree like so many others were. I am guessing Mom wouldn't allow it, as she didn't want us kids playing in the living room. That was OK with us, as we were just fine having our own space in the basement.

As an adult, I continued to have a passion for toy train sets, although I didn't have one of my own. My friend Bill still had his from his youth, and he set it up around their family Christmas tree each year. He was in his 50s when he told me about it and invited me over to play. He loved that train set. I did, too.

Bill moved away, and I wanted

a train set of my own. My kids caught wind of this and eventually bought me a plastic Christmas set that we have put around the tree each year since. It plays music, lets out steam and makes me smile. I still hope to someday replace it with an iconic Lionel train set like the one my brother had.

Ever wonder how and when this fascination with toy trains and Christmas began? It can be traced back more than a century ago to the early 1900s when the railroad was the No. 1 method of transportation, especially when it came to holiday travel. Some say the Christmas connection is due to families gathering around their Christmas trees, opening presents and playing with them immediately. With outlets nearby for the Christmas tree, it only seemed natural to plug in the toy train set right there.

Joshua Lionel Cowen founded the Lionel Corporation in 1900 and began producing toy trains. He created his first electric trains



for toy store displays, but families soon wanted to take one home. Lionel never lost its title as the king of model trains. Although the company reached its peak in the 1950s as the largest toymaker in the world, it is still the king of model trains today, at least to me.

The toy train set is not just an iconic American toy; it is a tradition that is nostalgic for many of us. That time-honored tradition continues today, thanks in large part to Thomas the Tank Engine, "The Polar Express" movie and the Harry Potter franchise.

At the end of the day, and especially at Christmas time, toy train sets may just be a reminder of a less complicated world when we could find enjoyment sitting with our buddies simply watching a steam engine and rail cars pass by. Choo-choo!

Have a great week, and thanks for reading. ■

Shane Goodman
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LIONS HOLD OPEN HOUSE FOR VENUE

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. Join them on Sunday, Jan. 19 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. ■

JOHNSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY RECEIVES BRAVO OPERATING GRANT

Bravo Greater Des Moines, the regional arts council that provides funding and support to nonprofit cultural organizations and programs, has awarded a 2025 operating grant to the Johnston (Station) Historical Society.

Bravo gave operating grants to 89 nonprofit arts, culture and heritage organizations to support general operations. Funding for this grant programs comes from Bravo's partnerships with 17 local governments that contribute a percentage of their hotel/motel tax revenue each year. The partnering governments include the city of Johnston.

"This was a dynamic grant cycle, and it is exciting to support the breadth of arts, culture and heritage that's available across Greater Des Moines. Bravo is grateful to our local government partners who trust us to make these critical investments in our community," Sally Dix, president of Bravo Greater Des Moines, said in a prepared statement.

The Johnston (Station) Historical Society has no paid staff and relies on volunteer support. This allows all of the operating grant to go toward operating expenses like insurance, maintenance of its historic house museum and the operation of its website at www.johnstoniowahistorical.org.

The Johnston (Station) Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to discovering, preserving and presenting the history of the Johnston area. Founded in 1994, JHS maintains the 1902 Simpson House Museum at 6161 Northglenn Drive in Johnston. The museum is open for Johnston Commons community events and by appointment. Please consider supporting the society by becoming a member, a volunteer, a benefactor or donating Johnston-related historical items. ■

WINTER COATS NEEDED

The Johnston Partnership provides food and personal hygiene products to those in need, as well as children's seasonal clothing. The Partnership has been extremely busy and has already distributed more than 850 winter coats. Many more are needed to make it through the cold months and keep all of our neighbors warm. With the drastic weather change, the largest current need is winter coats of any size (baby through adult) in good or new condition. The Partnership has worked through its storage and are putting out whatever comes in, and they are going quickly. The goal is to provide one coat per client per year.

Donations can be dropped off at 5870 Merle Hay Road, Suite C, Tuesdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 4-6 p.m., and on Thursdays and Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Every third week of the month, they collect for the Friday food bag program that serves food insecure students at all nine Johnston schools. Currently they pack 220 food bags each week to go home with students. They can use fruit cups, macaroni and cheese, Ramen noodles, granola bars, individual shelf-stable milk and individual peanut butter. ■

FUNERAL NOTICES

Funeral notices can be emailed to tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com

RAYMOND 'RAY' GOLD

Raymond "Ray" Gold, 78, of Johnston, died Dec. 22, 2024. He was born in Des Moines on July 4, 1946, to Clifford and Gladys (Berg) Gold. Visitation was held on Sunday, Dec. 29, at Iles Brandt Dallas Center Chapel. A funeral service was held Monday, Dec. 30, at the same location. Burial followed at Sunny Hill Cemetery in Grimes.

Ray graduated from Des Moines Public Schools in 1964 before earning his bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from Iowa State University. After completing his education, Ray served in the U.S. Army from 1969 to 1971, a time that shaped his character and instilled a deep sense of responsibility and commitment. Ray married the love of his life, Irene, on March 11, 1978. The couple had two sons, Wade and Ryan.

Ray worked as a senior engineer at John Deere Des Moines Works, where he worked for nearly 30 years. After his retirement in 2006, Ray and Irene built their vacation dream home on Leech Lake, near Walker, Minnesota. They spent many happy hours together hosting family and friends, fishing, and taking grandchildren tubing.

Ray was an avid fisherman, enjoyed hunting, and had a passion for construction and woodworking. Ray was also a lover of travel. Above all, Ray cherished spending time with those he loved, and his presence at family gatherings will be deeply missed.

Ray is survived by his wife, Irene; his sons, Wade and Ryan; his grandchildren, Carter, Henry, Sam, Ethan, Olivia, Harper, Maxwell and Nashton; his brother, Ronald (Kathryn) Gold; sisters-in-law, Diane (Ken) Van Wyk, Kathy (Dave) Wickett, Pam (Russ Howe) Jenkins, Joyce (Wayne) Beebout; brothers-in-law Mel (Shirley) Odegaard and Jeff (Dawn) Odegaard; numerous nieces and nephews; as well as many other relatives and friends. He was preceded in death by his parents, Clifford and Gladys Gold; and his sister-in-law, Rose Gold.

Memorials are suggested to the donor's favorite nonprofit organization. Arrangements were by Iles Brandt Chapel. ■



LELAND 'LEE' PAUL SCHWEER

Leland "Lee" Paul Schweer, 92, of Johnston, died Dec. 19, 2024. A memorial service was held on Friday, Dec. 27, at the Iles Westover Chapel in Des Moines. Burial was at the Evangelical Cemetery in Donnellson.

Lee was born on Dec. 12, 1932, to Paul Jonathon and Elda Elnora (Lang) Schweer in Fort Madison. He served in the U.S. Air Force from 1953-1956. After his service, Lee finished his college education and moved to Des Moines to start his first job. He had a successful career in pharmaceutical sales, a profession he dedicated many years to before his retirement in 1990.

He married Sharon Doris Brummer on Jan. 26, 1963, and built a life filled with love and commitment until her passing in 1979. He was the proud father of Jamie and Kari, and a loving grandfather to Bennett and Avalon. In 2000, he built a home in Johnston and lived there until moving to Edencrest Assisted Living in Johnston in 2021.

Lee attended various churches in the Des Moines area throughout his adult life. His interests were varied, with a particular passion for collecting primitive antiques and exploring the New England states, in particular making many trips to the Boston area. Lee was also a true car enthusiast, always appreciating the craftsmanship and design of fine automobiles.

He is survived by his daughters, Jamie (Heike Werder) Schweer and Kari (John) Lang; and grandchildren Bennett and Avalon; as well as many beloved family members. He was preceded in death by his parents and his wife.

Memorial contributions may be directed to Care Initiatives Hospice at 7055 Vista Drive, West Des Moines, IA 50266, or Parkinson's Foundation, 1359 Broadway, Suite 1509, New York, NY 10018. Arrangements were by Iles Westover Chapel. ■



JOHNSTON LIBRARY NEWS

For information about all events and resources, visit www.johnstonlibrary.com or at 515-278-5233.

Do you have a teen in grades 8-12 looking to make a difference in the community? If so, the new VolunTEEN program at JPL may be the perfect opportunity to do so. On the second and third Saturdays of each month, from 2-5 p.m., teens can help prepare materials for youth activities and complete other needed tasks in the library. Interested teens can register to receive email reminders about upcoming volunteer times and opportunities at the library, or they can just drop in on a **VolunTEEN Saturday** and volunteer.

To get your New Year's celebration started, bring your family to the library for a techy scavenger hunt on Tuesday, Dec. 31 anytime during open hours (9 a.m. to 5 p.m.). **The QR Code Quest: New Year's Eve Edition** will lead explorers to clues throughout the library. Those who complete the quest will receive a prize. No registration is required, and participants can use their own devices or one of ours.

The library is also happy to be able to provide the gift of language this holiday season. **Everyday English**, held on Thursday evenings from 6:30-7:45 p.m., is an ongoing program designed for English language learning adults. Led by a professional ESOL teacher and trained volunteers, lessons focus on functional English as well as life in the United States. **Let's Talk: ESL Conversation Group** is a casual program designed for non-native English speakers to practice their English conversation skills with a native English speaker. Discussions focus on current news, events and American culture. This program is on Mondays from 6:30-7:45 p.m. Both Everyday English and Let's Talk are held in-person and online via Zoom. Email library staff at esol@johnstonlibrary.org for sign-in information. Both programs are free, and registration isn't required but is appreciated.

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.

More information about all events and resources at Johnston Public Library can be found online at www.johnstonlibrary.com or by calling the library at 515-278-5233. ■

JOHNSTON PARTNERSHIP ENCOURAGES DONATIONS

The Johnston Partnership provides food and personal hygiene products to those in need, as well as children's seasonal clothing. Almost 600 families are being served per month, so the need is high. Donations can be dropped off at 5870 Merle Hay Road, Suite C, Tuesdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 4-6 p.m., and on Thursdays and Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Every third week of the month, they collect for the Friday food bag program that serves food insecure students at all nine Johnston schools. Currently they pack 220 food bags each week to go home with students. They can use fruit cups, macaroni and cheese, Ramen noodles, granola bars, individual shelf-stable milk and individual peanut butter. ■

WINTER CURBSIDE YARD WASTE COLLECTION

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. ■

WE WILL RUN YOUR JOHNSTON NEWS ITEMS FOR FREE.

Email your news by Friday at 5 p.m. to:
tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com or call 515-953-4822, ext. 302

EVENTS IN THE AREAEMAIL YOUR EVENT INFORMATION TO
TAMMY@IOWALIVINGMAGAZINES.COM**SPORTS****IOWA WOLVES HOME GAMES**Wells Fargo Arena, 233 Center St., Des Moines
iowa.league.nba.com

- **Jan. 4** at 6:30 p.m. vs. Santa Cruz Warriors (Golden State Warriors)
- **Jan. 7** at 6:30 p.m. vs. Santa Cruz Warriors
- **Jan. 13** at 6:30 p.m. vs. Rip City Remix (Portland Trailblazers)
- **Jan. 15** at 6:30 p.m. vs. Greensboro Swarm (Charlotte Hornets)
- **Jan. 23** at 6:30 p.m. vs. Valley Suns (Phoenix Suns)
- **Jan. 24** at 6:30 p.m. vs. Valley Suns

IOWA WILD HOME GAMESWells Fargo Arena, 233 Center St., Des Moines
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

DRAKE BASKETBALL HOME GAMES

Knapp Center, 2601 Forest Ave., Des Moines

Men's home games

- **Jan. 5** vs. Murray State
- **Jan. 11** at 5 p.m. vs. Evansville
- **Jan. 15** at 8 p.m. vs. Illinois State
- **Jan. 22** at 6:30 p.m. vs. Valparaiso
- **Jan. 29** at 6 p.m. vs. UNI

Women's home games

- **Jan. 4** at 2 p.m. vs. Valparaiso
- **Jan. 16** at 6 p.m. vs. Belmont

DES MOINES BUCCANEERS HOME GAMESThe MidAmerican Energy Company RecPlex
6500 Grand Ave., West Des Moines
bucshockey.com**Home games**

- **Jan. 3** at 7 p.m. vs. Cedar Rapids RoughRiders
- **Jan. 4** at 6 p.m. vs. Lincoln Stars
- **Jan. 24** at 7 p.m. vs. Lincoln Stars

THEATRE**ACTORS, INC. - AMES COMMUNITY THEATER**120 Abraham Drive, Ames
actorsinc.org

- **Jan. 23-25, 31, Feb. 1-2:** "Angel Street"

DES MOINES PERFORMING ARTSDes Moines Civic Center, Cowles Commons,
Stoner Theater, Temple Theatre, 221 Walnut St., Des Moinesdesmoinesperformingarts.org

- **Jan. 9:** Capital City Pride Presents: "V Spehar"
- **Jan. 25:** "A Night of Magic and Comedy"
- **Jan. 28 to Feb. 2:** "Shucked"

TALLGRASS THEATRE COMPANY2019 Grand Ave., Suite 100, West Des Moines
tallgrasstheatre.org

- **Jan. 31 to Feb. 16:** "Ripcord"

STEPHENS AUDITORIUM1900 Center Drive, Ames
center.iastate.edu/events

- **Jan. 8:** "MANIA: The ABBA Tribute"
- **Jan. 24:** "Matt Mathews: Boujee On A Budget" ■

RECIPE

SAVE PRECIOUS TIME WITH SLOW-COOKED PULLED PORK

(Culinary.net) Whether you're hosting a holiday celebration or enjoying a weeknight meal during this busy season, easy recipes can help make the most of your time. Enjoy more of those precious moments with loved ones and less time in the kitchen with cranberry pulled pork, a slow-cooked solution with sweet cranberries perfectly complementing pork shoulder. ■

CRANBERRY PULLED PORK

Recipe courtesy of "Cookin' Savvy"
Servings: 6-8

Ingredients:

- 2 cans whole berry cranberry sauce
- 1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
- 1/2 cup brown sugar, divided
- 1 pork shoulder (7-8 pounds)

Directions:

In bowl, mix cranberry sauce, balsamic vinegar and 1/4 cup brown sugar.

Place pork shoulder in slow cooker and rub remaining brown sugar into meat.

Cover meat with cranberry mixture. Cook on low 6-8 hours or high 4-6 hours.



IOWA GOLD STAR MILITARY MUSEUM

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HOURS:

SUNDAY: CLOSED
MONDAY: CLOSED
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COMMUNITY GREETINGS

Johnston Community Greetings would like to welcome anyone new to Johnston with a welcome bag including discounts at local businesses and city information. Contact Missy Shepherd by phone, text or email at 515-991-5014 or mshepherdgreetings@gmail.com. ■

CITYVIEW'S WINTER EVENT IS BACK!

FIRE & ICE

WINTER PUB CRAWL IN VALLEY JUNCTION

SATURDAY, JAN. 18 1-4 P.M.

PARTICIPATING ESTABLISHMENTS:
THE HALL • G MIG'S 5TH STREET PUB
THE TAVERN • THE WINCHESTER PUBLIC HOUSE
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LOOKING TO BUY VINYL RECORDS:

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WANTED: Stereo & electronic radio stuff receivers speakers guitar amp etc. Any age or condition is OK. Call 515-238-3343.

BICYCLES WANTED: Any condition is ok. For parts or repair. Will pick them up. Phone 515-238-3343.

WANTED: Electronics, stereo receivers, guitar or amps, speakers, radios, etc. Any age or condition for parts or repair. Call 515-445-6023.

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