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JGMFD RECEIVES NEW TOWER LADDER TRUCK

The Johnston Grimes Municipal Fire Department has acquired a new tower ladder truck. The process of acquiring the truck has been a three-year journey. It was ordered in March 2022, but the construction takes time. Due to the rapid increase in costs for fire apparatus, if the district were to order the same ladder truck in 2025, it would likely cost \$2.2 to \$2.3 million and take four years to build and deliver. Fortunately, the team secured a “not to exceed” contract price of \$1,710,000, and the final cost came to just slightly less at \$1,709,174.69. While this is a considerable sum, it is essential for ensuring the effectiveness and safety of fire operations, city officials said.

The tower ladder truck’s design and 100-foot height will enable firefighters to reach new heights during emergency calls for service.



The truck also carries a hose and has a 300-gallon water tank and a pump, so it can attack fire independently of a fire engine if it needs to. The main duties of a truck crew at a

fire are rescue, ventilation and overhaul. To achieve this, the truck is equipped with gasoline-powered

TRUCK, ON BACK

JOHNSTON WEATHER FORECAST

WED. HIGH 50 | LOW 27
Not as cold; snow and flurries

THURS. HIGH 53 | LOW 33
Sunny to partly cloudy and mild

FRI. HIGH 43 | LOW 26
Clouds to start, then sunshine

SAT. HIGH 43 | LOW 34
Mostly cloudy

SUN. HIGH 48 | LOW 27
Times of clouds and sun

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FROM THE PUBLISHER

AUTOGRAPH WITH EXCELLENCE

“Good enough.” Those two words are frequently heard coming out the mouths of the underachievers of the world. You have certainly heard them said, often with a few more words following like these:

“Good enough for now.”

“Good enough for government work.”

“Good enough for who it is for.”

“Good enough for the girls (or guys) I date.”

And the worst — “Good enough for me.”

My friend Mark mows his grass to near perfection. He sometimes takes razzing about it from his neighbors who mock him for this obsession. He once told me, “If you are going to do something — anything, really — why wouldn’t you do it to the best of your ability?” Not surprisingly, Mark is a successful self-made person who has faced many personal and professional challenges in his life but has tackled them all head on. He believes everything he does

— everything — is a reflection of him. We could all learn something from Mark.

Our publishing business is somewhat unique in that what we do is out there for everyone to critique every day. Readers don’t hesitate to point out our errors, and I appreciate that. Some who work for us express their annoyance of that criticism. They typically don’t last long. We are not perfect, but we most certainly should strive to be.

The subject of this column was inspired by a quote I read recently that said, “Every job is a self-portrait of the person who does it. Autograph your work with excellence.” I shared it with our staff, but the message goes beyond our jobs.

Cooking a meal. Ironing a shirt. Making your bed. Washing a car. And, yes, mowing the lawn. Even when no one else can see it, the end result of each of these



tasks is a self-portrait of who we are.

So, what makes one person want to “autograph with excellence” and another to continually say “good enough”?

Inspiration? Self-motivation? An inner drive to continually improve? A fear of failure? Obsessiveness? Compulsiveness? Or just a simple desire to do one’s best?

The answer is likely a bit of each of those and many more. It is also likely to be different for each person and, to some degree, each task. Meanwhile, what’s the harm in working to do one’s best and to autograph with excellence? It certainly seems better than the alternative.

Have a great week, and thanks for reading. ■

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MAYOR DIERENFELD WILL RUN 2,805 MILES

Mayor Paula Dierenfeld challenged the Johnston community to get her to 2,500 miles. The community gave back in a big way and surpassed the goal. This year, she will run 2,805 miles for the Mayor's Run for Food.

"This initiative helps so many families in need throughout the year. I sincerely appreciate the generosity of those who donated. We had a mighty goal, but, once again, we surpassed it. These donations total \$28,050 to help the Johnston Partnership."

Mayor Dierenfeld challenged the community in a big way: for every \$10 donation or each bag of food, Mayor Dierenfeld pledged to run one mile. Over the years, she will have run 10,918 miles for this challenge, with the total raised at \$109,180.

- 2014:** 31 miles
- 2015:** 191 miles
- 2016:** 316 miles
- 2017:** 381 miles
- 2018:** 514 miles
- 2019:** 580 miles
- 2020:** 790 miles
- 2021:** 1,132 miles
- 2022:** 1,850 miles
- 2023:** 2,328 miles
- 2024:** 2,805 miles

Mayor Dierenfeld has already begun checking off the miles, and a few last-minute donations came in this week. ■

UPCOMING PUBLIC MEETINGS

- **Monday, Feb. 3:** City Council Work Session, 6 p.m.
- **Monday, Feb. 3:** City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.
- **Monday, Feb. 10:** Planning and Zoning Meeting, 7 p.m.
- **Monday, Feb. 17:** City Office Buildings and Library closed for Presidents' Day
- **Tuesday, Feb. 18:** City Council Work Session, 6 p.m.
- **Tuesday, Feb. 18:** City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.
- **Wednesday, Feb. 19:** Senior Advisory Board Meeting, 5 p.m.
- **Thursday, Feb. 20:** Library Board Meeting, 5:30 p.m.
- **Thursday, Feb. 20:** Board of Adjustment Meeting, 6:30 p.m. ■

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 mshpherdgreetings@gmail.com. ■

70% of women will outlive men by 10-15 years

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SEEN IN JOHNSTON

JOHNSTON CHAMBER JUMPSTART WAS HELD JAN. 16 AT THE JOHNSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY.



Jenni Buchanan and Brenda Ballard



Dan Fitzgerald and Pete Jones



Julia Bradshaw and Jamie Lewton



Derek Trobaugh and Chris Jones



Holly Sealine and Beth Schaefer



Sharm Sisler and Samantha Winebrenner

VALENTINES FOR PUPS

Celebrate Valentine's Day with your pup, and the adoptable dogs from Hope Animal Rescue of Iowa will receive your love as well. The entire month of February you can purchase a Valentine for your dog from Woof Pack Resort & Spa in Johnston, and the proceeds will go to Hope Animal Rescue of Iowa. The Valentine includes homemade Valentine treat from Em's Homemade Dog Treats, Valentine tennis ball and Valentine bandana. Price is \$10. Support this local rescue by purchasing your pup a special Valentine. Contact 515-416-4255 or info@woofpackresort.com. ■

DSF PLANS SPRING AUCTION

The Dragon Scholarship Fund (DSF) hosts an annual spring auction with the primary objective of raising funds to grant scholarships to Johnston High School graduating seniors. Established in 1987, DSF is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that has disbursed more than \$2.2 million in scholarships to JHS graduating seniors.

The organization's goal is to give every JHS graduating senior a chance to earn a scholarship to help continue their education beyond high school. This program is unique in that the fund awards scholarships based on personal character and responsibility regardless of financial need, class rank, gender, race, creed or ability. The Dragon Scholarship Fund awarded more than \$99,000 in scholarship funds to 228 Class of 2024 graduates.

The group's annual auction is scheduled for March 2-8, and the community's support is requested. Contributions, whether in the form of an item, service or monetary donation, will help fulfill the mission and objectives of the Dragon Scholarship Fund. Donations of any size are requested by Jan. 31.

For information and to donate, visit <https://dragonsf.org>.

So far, more than \$20,000 in community donations have been received. The auction will include items and experiences from dining, entertainment, concerts, theater, sports, memorabilia, activities, health and beauty. Register now to be a bidder. For more information, visit www.dragonsf.org. ■

SPECIAL CENSUS HIRING FIELD REPRESENTATIVES, SUPERVISORS

The U.S. Census Bureau is hiring for the Special Census in Johnston. Field representatives earn \$25.50/hour, and field supervisors earn \$29.50/hour. These temporary roles offer flexible hours, paid training, and the chance to positively impact our community — perfect for college students, retirees, or anyone seeking a side hustle. Applications close Friday, Feb. 14. Applicants must be 18 and older and U.S. citizens. For information and to apply, visit www.cityofjohnston.com/1506/Special-Census-2025. ■

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. ■

EVENTS IN THE AREA

EMAIL YOUR EVENT INFORMATION TO
TAMMY@IOWALIVINGMAGAZINES.COM

Des Moines Home and Garden Show

AXE THROWING EVENTS**Ironside Axe Club****2700 University Ave., Suite 100, West Des Moines****Feb. 13:** A Galentines Ladies Night Out, 6-9 p.m.

Celebrate with your girlfriends with axe throwing, a drink ticket, mead/wine tasting, chocolate and snacks, \$40.

Feb 21: Dark Roast Happy Hour Business Networking event, 5-7 p.m. Enjoy axe throwing, networking and beer. Free event, but donations are encouraged to help fund the events.**March 22:** Pirate Take Over and Sea Shanty Sing
Along featuring the Orkes and Trolls. \$1 off drinks for all pirates. \$10 axe throwing from 6-10 p.m. Sing-a-long from 7-9 p.m.**"RIPCORD"****Jan. 31 - Feb. 16****Tallgrass Theatre Company****2019 Grand Ave., Suite 100, West Des Moines**tallgrasstheatre.org

A sunny room on an upper floor is prime real estate in the Bristol Place Senior Living Facility, so when the cantankerous Abby is forced to share her quarters with new-arrival Marilyn, she has no choice but to get rid of the infuriatingly chipper woman by any means necessary. A seemingly harmless bet between the old women quickly escalates into a dangerous game of one-upmanship that reveals not just the tenacity of these worthy opponents, but also deeper truths that each would rather remain hidden. For information and tickets, visit <https://tallgrasstheatre.org/tickets/>.

DES MOINES PERFORMING ARTS SHOWSDes Moines Civic Center, Cowles Commons, Stoner Theater, Temple Theatre, 221 Walnut St., Des Moines
desmoinesperformingarts.org**Feb. 13:** Capital City Pride Presents: Tee Franklin**Feb. 17-19:** "The Giver"**Feb. 21 to March 2:** "Mary Poppins Jr."**Feb. 25 to March 2:** "Life of Pi"**IOWA BEEF EXPO 2025****Feb. 8-16****Iowa State Fairgrounds****3000 E. Grand Ave., Des Moines**iowabeefexpo.com

There is a long list of highlights happening at the Iowa Beef Expo this year. Look for sales, tradeshow, banquets, contests (including an auctioneering contest), parades for each breed, and so much more. The junior shows highlight on Feb. 15 and 16.

DES MOINES HOME AND GARDEN SHOW**Feb. 13-16****Iowa Events Center, 730 Third St., Des Moines**desmoineshomeandgardenshow.com

All things gardening will be on display at this event. The list of exhibitors is lengthy, from food and beverage to garden and landscaping. Don't miss the Inspiration Stage, Feature Gardens and appearances by the stars of HGTV's "Down Home Fab."

DOME AFTER DARK**Fridays through March, 6-10 p.m.****Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden, 909 Robert D. Ray Drive, Des Moines**dmbotanicalgarden.com

The Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden's lush tropical conservatory and Gardeners Show House are colorfully illuminated for Dome After Dark. Flora, the botanical garden's restaurant, serves food and drinks till 9 p.m. ■

RECIPE

A SAVVY WEEKNIGHT FAMILY MEAL

(Family Features) Because this time of year can be crazy busy, drive-thru meals can easily become the norm. While fast-food burgers may do the trick once in a while, they can get old quick if your family is eating them every other night. This quick and easy baked spaghetti can bring everybody back to the table, and it won't break the bank either. ■

BAKED SPAGHETTI

Recipe courtesy of "Cookin' Savvy"

Servings: 4-6

Ingredients:

- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 pound spaghetti noodles
- 1 jar (16 ounces) alfredo sauce
- 1 jar (24 ounces) marinara sauce
- 2 tablespoons garlic powder
- 2 tablespoons onion powder
- salt, to taste
- pepper, to taste
- 2 cups shredded cheese
- French bread or breadsticks, for serving

Directions:

Heat oven to 350 F.

Brown and drain ground beef.

Cook noodles according to package instructions. Drain noodles; add alfredo sauce and mix well.

Add marinara sauce, garlic powder and onion powder to ground beef. Season with salt and



pepper, to taste.

Place noodles in 9-by-13-inch baking dish. Spoon beef mixture on top but do not mix in. Cover with

shredded cheese then cover with foil and bake 30-40 minutes.

Serve with French bread or breadsticks.

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POLK COUNTY CONSERVATION

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STORY TELLEBRATION

Wednesdays at 10 a.m.

Feb. 19, Owl Moon; March 19, Spring is Sprung; April 23, It's Raining. Join volunteer storyteller Carmen Epstein for a fun, interactive tale tailored toward children ages 2 to 6 that explores the wonders of the outdoors. During each program, participants enjoy interactive stories and an activity. No registration required for this free event. ■

TRUCK, FROM FRONT

saws and ground ladders, along with a platform at the end of the ladder. This platform can be positioned on or near a roof, allowing firefighters to cut holes in the roof for ventilation. This process helps release hot gases and smoke, making it easier to perform rescues and locate and extinguish the fire. There are also ventilation fans and several hooks and hand tools for overhauling a structure to ensure all the fire behind the walls is extinguished.

This truck replaces a 2004 tower ladder, which was originally purchased for \$750,000. That ladder served the district well for years but has reached the end of its useful life. Ladder trucks and engines typically last 15 to 20 years before the cost of repairs becomes too high compared to their value.

The fire district's members know this new ladder truck will enhance

their firefighting capabilities. Pierce Manufacturing, the company that built the truck, also provides training to ensure members are familiar with the new features and can operate it safely and effectively. A push-in ceremony will be scheduled in March.

This ladder truck is the result of careful planning and dedication from a design team led by Deputy Chief Ron Schipper. The team included Battalion Chief Nick Stewart, Lt. Ryan Wheeler, Lt. Chris Ford, and Firefighter/EMT Andrew Hooper. They began their work in 2021, meeting to review plans and drawings, and even made a trip to Pierce Manufacturing in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, to explore other apparatus and collaborate with the engineers. Their commitment to ensuring the district received the best possible tower ladder truck is a testament to their professionalism and dedication to public safety. ■

CLASSIFIED ADS

LOOKING TO BUY VINYL RECORDS:

Paying cash for 60's-90's rock and jazz and blues. Please call Brian at 515-326-5033.

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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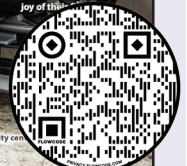
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