

JOHNSTON

OCTOBER 2025

Living

MAGAZINE

RESIDENTS' CHOICE AWARDS

Northwest Metro residents
share their favorites.



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HALLOWEEN

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WELCOME

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Residents' Choice. Those two simple words have a lot of meaning to those who are recognized and those who seek out the people, businesses, places and events that are honored.

Yes, we have once again compiled the results of our local Residents' Choice poll, the only one of its kind. It is truly unique in two significant ways.

First, our poll is mailed to every residential household in the pages of this magazine with a link to an open website. That makes the poll available to every single resident. No exclusions.

Second, our poll has open-ended questions, which means we don't load the ballots with pre-determined answers to try to sway it in a certain way. The results are what they are. You will likely agree with some of them, and you will disagree with others — kind of like political elections. But, in this poll, all who are recognized are winners, and the end result is a great positive for all involved.

Readers of this publication have proven to seek out the winners and spend their time, energy and money with them. The poll results have become a customized search engine of sorts, providing valuable information on the choices of local residents in a variety of categories that are important to them.

Those who have been chosen tell me how much of an impact this directly has on them, their businesses and their organizations. Being recognized for positive contributions is seemingly always great, but when it helps create commerce, it is even better — and this Residents' Choice poll is a commerce-creating machine.

Other organizations are continuing to try to implement polls like ours, but none have the reach and credibility that ours has. You can't blame others for trying to imitate what we do, but you can question how they implement their polls and how many people actually vote in them.

Meanwhile, I thank all of you who took the time to vote in this year's Residents' Choice poll. Your votes do make an incredible difference. And, if you didn't vote, well, there is always next year.

Thanks for reading. ■

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RESIDENTS' CHOICE AWARDS

Northwest Metro residents share their favorites.



Residents in the Northwest Metro communities of Grimes, Dallas Center, Johnston, Urbandale and Clive have again weighed in on their favorite businesses, people, events and places in the latest Residents' Choice poll. The poll results share residents' top three choices in dozens of categories, many of which are extremely competitive with only a handful of votes separating the winner from the runners up. Consequently, we view them all as winners. They have captured the favor of people who live in the Northwest Metro area and who know the businesses, people, events and places of the area best.

Some winners are repeating at the top of their categories. Their supporters have proven to be a loyal bunch. Others are new to the awards list, showing they have made a good

impression over the last year and are building up a strong following as well.

Johnston residents will find many of the winners in their own community. In fact, Johnston eateries nabbed the top spots across the restaurant categories with winners including Trostel's Greenbriar, Cozy Café, Pagliai's Pizza and Van Dee's Ice Cream Shoppe. These are only a few of the Johnston winners. Read on for the others.

If you aren't familiar with any of the top three, give those businesses, events and places a visit and find out why they are residents' favorites. And, if you didn't vote this year, be sure to do so next time. It may be your vote that makes a difference and lifts one of your favorites into the top tier of the Residents' Choice poll.



Christine Disabato, co-owner,
The Little Gym of Johnston.
Photo by Todd Rullestad

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

(Please note: Runners up are listed in alphabetical order.)

Restaurant: Trostel's Greenbriar Restaurant and Bar

Runners up: Destination Grille; The Urban Grill

Restaurant for Dessert: Trostel's Greenbriar Restaurant and Bar

Runners up: Heavenly Delights; Van Dee's Ice Cream Shoppe

Coffee Shop: Starbucks

Runners up: Friedrichs Coffee; Lightbrite Coffee Roasters

Restaurant for Breakfast: Cozy Cafe

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

Restaurant for Lunch: Trostel's Greenbriar Restaurant and Bar

Runners up: Charlotte's Kitchen; Palmer's Deli

Restaurant for Dinner: Trostel's Greenbriar Restaurant and Bar

Runners up: Destination Grille; The Urban Grill

Place for Ice Cream: Van Dee's Ice Cream Shoppe

Runners up: Al's Dairy Freeze; Heavenly Delights

Pizza Establishment: Pagliai's Pizza

Runners up: Casey's; Pepp's Pizzeria

Bar: Doc's Lounge

Runners up: Pour Choices Neighborhood Bar; Stevie C's

Catering Company: Cyd's Catering

Runners up: Trostel's Greenbriar Restaurant and Bar; Hy-Vee Catering

Server/Bartender: Heather Loops, Trostel's Greenbriar Restaurant and Bar

Runners up: Cycrena Eischeid, The Cork 50131; Mary Ann Lee, Doc's Lounge

Auto Service: FinishLine Auto Works

Runners up: Christian Brothers Automotive; Shade Tree Auto

Auto Body Shop: FinishLine Body & Paint

Runners up: Graham Collision; Minor Wreck Express

Car Dealership: Willis Auto Campus

Runners up: Bob Brown; Toyota of Des Moines

Auto Parts Store: O'Reilly Auto Parts

Runners up: AutoZone Auto Parts; NAPA Auto Parts

Preschool/Daycare: Generation Next Child Development Center and Preschool

Runners up: Johnston KinderCare; Loving Arms Children's Center

Nonprofit: Johnston Partnership

Runners up: Goodwill of Central Iowa; Urbandale Food Pantry



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FEATURE

School: Johnston High School

Runners up: Beaver Creek Elementary; Des Moines Christian School

Park: Terra Park

Runners up: Dewey Park; Walker Johnston Park

Community Festival or Event: Johnston Green Days

Runners up: Grimes Governors Days; Urbandale 4th of July Celebration

Church: Lutheran Church of Hope

Runners up: New Hope Assembly of God; Summitcreek Church

Pastor: Jeremy Carr, NorthPoint Church

Runners up: Andy Hermanson, Lutheran Church of Hope; Mike Housholder, Lutheran Church of Hope

Chamber of Commerce: Johnston Chamber of Commerce

Runners up: Grimes Chamber & Economic Development; Urbandale Chamber of Commerce

Grocery Store: Fareway

Runners up: Aldi; Hy-Vee



Staff and volunteers of Johnston Partnership, voted among the favorite nonprofits in the area.

Boutique: Purple Poppy Boutique

Runners up: Charlie Rae's; Styled. by JJ

Retail Store: Purple Poppy Boutique

Runners up: Styled. by JJ; Target

Thrift Store: Many Hands Thrift Market

Runners up: Goodwill of Central Iowa; Stuff Etc

Home Improvement Retail Store: Menards

Runners up: Johnston Ace Hardware; The Home Depot

Liquor Store: Hy-Vee Wine and Spirits

Runners up: Fareway; Grimes Liquor Shop

Nursery or Garden Center: Canoyer Garden Center

Runners up: Piney Ridge Greenhouse; Earl May Nursery and Garden Center

Place to Purchase a Gift for a Man: The Home Depot

Runners up: Menards; Target

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FEATURE

Place to Purchase a Gift for a Woman:

Purple Poppy Boutique

Runners up: Charlie Rae's; Styled. by JJ

Dad/Child Date Spot: The Little Gym of Johnston

Runners up: Climb Iowa; Terra Park

Mom/Child Date Spot: The Little Gym of Johnston

Runners up: Artfull – An Art and Craft Playground; Glazed Expressions

Place to Take Your Mom and Dad: Trostel's Greenbriar Restaurant and Bar

Runners up: Destination Grille; The Cork 50131

Place to Take Your Kids or Grandkids: The Little Gym of Johnston

Runners up: Sky Zone Trampoline Park; Grimes Waterworks Park Splash Pad

Place for Children's Birthday Parties: The Little Gym of Johnston

Runners up: Emerge Academy; Sky Zone Trampoline Park

Golf Course: Jester Park Golf Course

Runners up: Beaver Creek Golf Club; Hyperion Field Club

Hair Salon: Art of Life Salon & Spa

Runners up: Pure Salon Aveda; Talking Heads Salon

Health Clinic: MercyOne

Runners up: The Iowa Clinic; UnityPoint

Dental Office: Grove and Platt Dental Associates

Runners up: Furrow Family Dentistry; The Dental Studio of Iowa

Orthodontist Office: Mann Orthodontics

Runners up: Iowa Orthodontic Solutions; Stork Orthodontics

Mental Health Services: Pink Couch Wellness

Runners up: Clive Behavioral Health; Family Legacy Counseling

Chiropractic Office: Herrmann Family Chiropractic

Runners up: Impact Health Institute; Kleckner Chiropractic Clinic

Vision Care: Lifetime Vision

Runners up: Precision Family Eyecare; Total Family Eye Care

Health Club or Gym: Life Time

Runners up: Emerge Academy; Planet Fitness

Pharmacy: Hy-Vee Pharmacy

Runners up: Medicap Pharmacy; Walgreens Pharmacy

Cosmetic Services: Central Iowa Dermatology

Runners up: 515 Wellness and Aesthetics; SOMA Cosmetic Surgery & Aesthetics

Physical Therapy: Athletico Physical Therapy

Runners up: DMOS; Elevate Physical Therapy and Sports Medicine

Dance Studio: Inspiring Dance

Runners up: Dance Vision; Eshanjali Dance Academy

Gymnastics Studio: The Little Gym of Johnston

Runners up: Emerge Academy; Mid Iowa Gymnastics

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FEATURE

Tumbling Studio: The Little Gym of Johnston

Runners up: Emerge Academy; Tribe Athletics

Financial Planner: Loren Merkle, Merkle Retirement Planning

Runners up: McGill Junge Wealth Management; Sharon Vickery, Edward Jones

Law Firm: Letsch Law Firm

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

Accounting Firm: ThornTree CPA Services

Runners up: Ann M Hartz, CPA and Associates; Welgaard CPAs and Advisors

Veterinarian: Prairie View Animal Hospital

Runners up: Value Vet; Westfield Veterinary Hospital

Dog Groomer: Clean and Breezy

Runners up: Bark Shop; Woof Pack Resort & Spa

Pet Care: Woof Pack Resort & Spa

Runners up: Dog Days and Cat Naps; Dogwoods Lodge

Lawn Care Business: Finer Cuts Lawn Care

Runners up: Kaldenberg's PBS Landscaping & Lawn Care; Nate's Lawn Care

Landscaping Company: Kaldenberg's PBS Landscaping & Lawn Care

Runners up: Kleener Image; Mhuka Designs

Heating and Cooling Business: Golden Rule Plumbing, Heating, Cooling, Electrical

Runners up: Kohles & Bach Heating & Cooling; Heartland Heating & Cooling

Electrical Business: Deaver Electric

Runners up: ARC Electric; Golden Rule Plumbing, Heating, Cooling, Electrical

Plumbing Company: Golden Rule Plumbing, Heating, Cooling, Electrical

Runners up: Herr Plumbing; Roto-Rooter

Senior Living Establishment: Brio of Johnston Senior Living Community

Runners up: Bishop Drumm Retirement Center; Edencrest at Green Meadows

Insurance Company: Health Insurance Advisor, LLC

Runners up: Andrea Sabus, State Farm Insurance; Glenn Waterhouse III, State Farm Insurance

Realtor: Joleen Roskamp, RE/MAX Precision

Runners up: Casee Woodley, RE/MAX Precision; Nichole Rector, Legacy Realty of Iowa

Bank/Credit Union: Veridian Credit Union

Runners up: Charter Bank; Community Choice Credit Union

Photographer: Carlye Bishop Photography

Runners up: Jordan Sandquist Creative; Lens Art Photography by Larry Trager

Place for Guests to Stay: Hilton Garden Inn

Runners up: Holiday Inn & Suites Des Moines-Northwest; Stoney Creek Hotel and Conference Center

Exterior Contractor (siding, roofing, windows, doors): Sonntag Roofing

Runners up: Buresh Home Solutions, Inc.; Right Roofing and Siding

Pest Control: Preferred Pest Control

Runners up: Diam Pest Control; Janssen Pest Solutions

Tree Service: MJ's Tree Service

Runners up: Beaver Tree Service; The Tree Doctor ■

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INSURANCE By Janis Van Ahn

MEDICARE Annual Enrollment Period overview

The Medicare Annual Enrollment Period (AEP) is a critical time each year when individuals already enrolled in Medicare can review, change, or update their health and drug coverage. This period runs from Oct. 15 to Dec. 7 annually, with any changes made taking effect on Jan. 1 of the following year.



AEP is particularly important because Medicare plans — including Medicare Advantage (Part C) and Medicare Prescription Drug Plans (Part D) — can change their costs, coverage and provider networks each year. Medicare beneficiaries are encouraged to use this time to evaluate whether their current plan still meets their health needs and budget.

During AEP, Medicare enrollees have several options:

- Switch from Original Medicare to a Medicare Advantage plan or vice versa.
- Change from one Medicare Advantage plan to another.
- Enroll in, switch, or drop a Medicare Part D (prescription drug) plan.

Many beneficiaries overlook this period, assuming their existing plan will continue to serve them well. However, failing to review available options can result in unexpected costs or loss of coverage for needed medications or services. For example, a drug that was covered this year may no longer be included in next year's formulary, or a doctor may no longer be in-network.

Medicare provides several tools to assist during AEP, including the Medicare Plan Finder at Medicare.gov, which allows users to compare plans based on premiums, out-of-pocket costs and coverage. Additionally, State Health Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIPs) offer free, personalized counseling to help beneficiaries make informed decisions. Consider locating a local, independent agent, specializing in the Medicare market to review all your options with a professional opinion.

It is important to note that the AEP is different from Medicare Open Enrollment for Employer or Marketplace Plans, which often occurs around the same time but applies to non-Medicare health plans. AEP only applies to Medicare-related coverage.

Missing the AEP may result in being locked into the current plan for another year unless the beneficiary qualifies for a Special Enrollment Period (SEP) due to specific life events such as moving or losing other coverage.

The Medicare Annual Enrollment Period is a valuable opportunity for beneficiaries to ensure their health coverage remains affordable and effective. Proactive review of the Annual Notice of Change and plans during AEP can prevent unwanted surprises and ensure better alignment with changing health needs or financial situations. Beneficiaries are strongly encouraged to take advantage of this period each 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.

NEWS BRIEFS

ICE CREAM social



The Johnston Women's Social Connection hosted an ice cream social for the boys at Ellipsis on Aug. 13. If you would like to join this senior group, contact Sue at 515-494-2228.

PEO welcomes state treasurer



Front: Jennifer Stalder, Tamara Kenworthy, Dianne Chadwick and Mary Richards. Back: Mary Hunter, Nancy Ball, Cindy Carlson, Melanie Hopke, Lisa Northup, Aimee Fisher, Amanda Muller Pfeffer, Denise Harlan, Teresa Shaw and Jeanne Mullenbach. Inset: Megan Ball.

PEO State Treasurer Jennifer Stalder visited PEO Chapter KT at its August meeting at Nancy Ball's Clive home. Jennifer, in her conversational style at her official state officer visit to this chapter organized in 1956, shared information about the responsibilities and duties of each office and fielded questions from members at their meeting.

As a legacy of PEO members is to uplift and support women, Chapter KT contributes to the philanthropic endeavors of Cottey College, International Peace, STAR Scholarships, Educational Loan Program, Sarah Porter Beckwith Friendship Fund, Dorothy's House, College Student Remembrance gift package and Goodwill Food Pantry.

Chapter members participate in a pre-meeting social hour and book club. Chapter KT members outreach their support to area PEO chapter events in Ankeny and Panora. PEO Chapter KT members reside in Clive, West Des Moines, Urbandale, Johnston, Des Moines, Ankeny and Indianola.

Contact membership chair Mary Richards at mrichards@netins.net or co-chair Mary Hunter at mary.hunter@dmgoodwill.org for information about PEO Chapter KT. ■

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Autumn Tips

1. Clean out your house.
2. Check your gutters and downspouts.
3. Check your driveway.
4. Check all windows and doors to see if winter energy bills.
5. Service your furnace and air conditioning and replace filters.
6. Service your cooling duct locations.
7. Trim trees before they are close to your house.
8. Check your roof to make sure there are no damaged shingles or loose gutters.
9. Make sure your oil and water supplies are handy and clean in case.
10. Top off fluids in car and be sure you have a winter emergency kit.

No kindness ever was small of kind can change persons.

JOLEEN ROSKAMP

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8	9	10	11	12	13	14
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29	30	31				

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CREAMY tomato soup is rich with sun-ripened flavor

There is something special about cooking with ingredients grown from your own backyard. Recently, I was watching our grandson at my daughter and son-in-law's house. He and I ventured outside to check on their garden and discovered a bumper crop of tomatoes.



Since the weather was cool, I decided that a batch of tomato soup for dinner would serve the harvest well. Our grandson, just 8 months old, is already a curious observer in the kitchen. He keeps me company from his high chair, happily armed with a dozen measuring cups to toss and a few snacks to keep him content. This creamy tomato soup, made with an abundance of fresh-picked tomatoes and a blend of herbs, is rich with sun-ripened flavor. Paired with a golden, melty grilled cheese on homemade sourdough, it was the perfect fall dinner — simple, cozy and made even sweeter by sharing it together with my grandson. ■

Information provided by Jolene Goodman, vice president of Big Green Umbrella Media.

Creamy tomato soup

Total time: 45 minutes

Servings: 4

Ingredients:

- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 3-4 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tablespoons olive or avocado oil
- 2 pounds fresh tomatoes (about 6 large), blanched, skins off and chopped
- 2 cups chicken broth (low sodium preferred)
- 1/3 cup Parmesan cheese, grated
- 1/2 -3/4 cup heavy (whipping) cream
- 2 tablespoons honey
- Salt and pepper, basil, oregano — more of everything than you think
- Pinch of rosemary
- Fresh basil or parsley (optional, for garnish)

Directions

- Heat oil over medium heat. Add onion and sauté for about 5 minutes until soft.
- Add garlic and cook all for 2 more minutes.
- Add tomatoes and cook for 10 minutes.



- Add chicken broth and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 20 minutes, uncovered. Stir occasionally.
- Blend until smooth by using an immersion blender and scooping the mixture into a traditional blender. Return soup to the pan.
- Add whipping cream and honey and stir. Season with salt, pepper, basil, oregano and other herbs of choice.
- Simmer for 5 more minutes.
- Serve immediately. Garnish with fresh basil or parsley. This pairs well with a grilled cheese sandwich on sourdough bread. Enjoy!

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CARVE out some time for the library

Pumpkins, apple cider, hay rides, trick or treating and ghost stories. October has arrived. JPL has plenty of programs this month to help you get into the spirit of the season. Read on for details.

Treat yourself to a night of stories at Cookies & Conversation: An Evening with CultureALL's Open Books on Wednesday, Oct. 8 from 6:30–7:30 p.m. Iowans Abena Sandkofa Imhotep and Tone the MoveMaker will share their personal narratives and lead conversations designed to spark reflection, connection and a deeper sense of belonging. Registration is required for this program, which is open to all ages but will contain mature content.

Bring your cute little pumpkins to Little Yogis class on Tuesday, Oct. 14 at 10:30 a.m. Kids and their caregivers will flow through a short yoga class where they will listen to a story and learn simple poses, mindfulness techniques and movement games. Little Yogis is designed for toddlers and preschoolers, but all elementary school-aged children are welcome with registration.

When the weather turns chilly, teens can head indoors for books and games at the library. The JPL Teen Book Club will meet from 6:30–7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 14 (and subsequent second Tuesdays of the month). At each meeting, readers in grades 8–12 explore a new theme, genre or reading challenge and vote on what they'll dive into next. Registration is required so books can be provided. On Tuesday, Oct. 21 (third Tuesday of each month), teens in grade 6 and up can join us for JPL Teen Tabletop Game Night, a chance to play the hottest new games with friends.

For those interested in exploring the magic and mystery of Tarot and its ancient occult symbolism, Enchanted Mystical Boutique will present Intro to Tarot on Wednesday, Oct. 15 at 6 p.m. Register for this illuminating event to learn more about the meaning of the cards and symbols used in Tarot readings.

A strange presence is stirring up trouble among the shelves. Can you uncover the clues, solve the puzzles, and Escape the Haunted Library? Kids, teens and grown-up ghouls are welcome — just make sure everyone is registered for one of the five eerie escape-room sessions on Saturday, Oct. 18.

Then, we're turning off the lights for Spooky Story Time. Kids 10 and younger can join us for ghostly glow-in-the-dark tales on Monday, Oct. 27 at 10 a.m.

Use your wicked sense of humor and creativity to stitch your own masterpiece at Subversive Stitches on Thursday, Oct. 30 from 6–8 p.m. You will learn basic stitching techniques while creating a witty, sarcastic or spicy design that expresses your inner witch. Please register as all supplies will be provided.

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 Public Library

6700 Merle Hay Road
515-278-5233
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.

HAVE the conversation

"We want to talk to the kids first..."

As we meet with folks to address their funeral prearrangements, they often mention that a conversation with their children is something they want to have first, before making any final decisions. That is certainly understandable and something that we encourage. Sometimes finding that "right time" or finding that opportunity when everyone is together can be a challenge.



With-that-said, the holidays are a time that bring families together, and that can be the ideal setting to have that important conversation with everyone. That doesn't mean you are going to bring up this topic as you sit down to the holiday meal, but there can be times around the holidays when people are together that can provide the right moment and setting to broach this topic.

You are doing this because you love your family and because you care about what will be important to them. You ultimately want to make things easier for them. As we head into that time of year, make it a priority to have this important conversation. You will be glad you did. ■

Information provided by Sarah Masteller, Advanced Planning Counselor, Hamilton's Southtown Funeral Home, 5400 S.W. Ninth St., Des Moines, 515-697-3679.

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Trick-or-Treat with Police and Fire on October 22

Join us for a special Halloween event: Trick-or-Treat with First Responders on Wednesday, October 22, from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. at Fire Station 38, 10225 NW 62nd Avenue.

Visit the Bridge Church, as they will also have some fun activities for families.



Halloween in Johnston is October 31

Last year, Johnston, along with several other metropolitan communities, reviewed the Beggars Night tradition and decided that Halloween would be celebrated on Friday, October 31, from now on. This year, Halloween falls on a Friday evening. Families can go trick-or-treating for treats from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Have you responded to the Census?

Census representatives are visiting homes to reach residents who haven't participated in the Special Census. If you are not home when they visit, they will leave a door hanger with a phone number to call them back.

If the census confirms an additional 2,400 residents in Johnston since 2020, the city will gain \$320,000 annually for pothole repairs, minor street reconstruction, and other road projects, totaling over \$1.6 million before the next decennial census. Delaying until 2030 could mean missing out on crucial funding for our growing road network.

To learn more information, visit www.cityofjohnston.com/Census.



Electronics Recycling Day, October 4

Mark your calendar for Saturday, October 4, as it is Electronic Recycling Day! From 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., you can drive through the east parking lot and drop off your unwanted electronics. Most electronics can be recycled for free; however, there is a fee for CRTs, TVs, printers, cartridges, and certain batteries. For more information and a complete list of prices, scan the QR code.



For more information about the city, please visit www.cityofjohnston.com



Provide Input on the Trail Master Plan

The City of Johnston is looking for your input as we develop a city-wide Trail Master Plan! There are two primary ways to share your thoughts and ideas: take a survey and share your ideas on a map. Both options are available for responses until Friday, October 17.

Take the 10-minute survey about trails and how you use them in Johnston.



Share your ideas on an interactive map of Johnston. You can also view comments left by others.



Election and Voting Information

The general election will be held on Tuesday, November 4. Polls will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. For more information, visit sos.iowa.gov/elections.

Tree Branch and Limb Drop of, November 13-15

Every fall, the City of Johnston gives residents a chance to get rid of branches and limbs for free. You can drop off these materials at the Public Works Facility located at 6400 NW Beaver Drive from November 13 to November 15.

Here are the drop-off hours:

- Thursday, November 13: 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- Friday, November 14: 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
- Saturday, November 15: 7:00 a.m. to noon



Make sure to take advantage of this free service to help keep our community clean and green.

Register for Recreation Programs

Learn to Play MahJongg on Thursdays: Join the Parks & Recreation beginner-friendly MahJongg class to learn this fun skill game! No experience required. You'll receive the Official MahJongg League of America Playing Rule card. Register at www.cityofjohnston.com/1575.

Register for the Senior Fall Party on November 7: Join us for our Fall Party with The Urban Grill for just \$12! Enjoy cavatelli, creamy Parmesan salad, garlic bread, and bread pudding. Don't miss live music and fun activities with friends and neighbors. Register by Friday, October 24, at www.cityofjohnston.com/1580.

Indoor Cornhole League on Mondays: Join our Indoor Cornhole League for just \$1! Compete weekly in a relaxed setting, perfect for all skill levels. Whether aiming for the championship or just having fun, everyone is welcome. The league includes six weeks of play and a tournament in the seventh week. Learn more and register at www.cityofjohnston.com/1574.

For more information about the city, please call 515.278.2344

COSTUME creations

Residents share how they add their own touches to Halloween garbs.

When it comes to Halloween, some people like to pull out all the stops. They turn their yards into haunted or cartoon landscapes. They carve pumpkins, bob for apples, and offer the best treats to their trick-or-treaters. And, they put their energy and holiday spirit into making sure their costumes — or their kids' — make others "ooh" and "aah" ... and perhaps shudder.

Costumes on the go

Sarah Schuling has two children, Isla, 10, and Louis, 5. Isla is a wheelchair user, so often the kids dress up in a mix of store-bought and homemade pieces to create their costumes each year.

"We can usually find a costume that works, but then we customize something to dress up the wheelchair," Sarah Schuling says. "Usually, incorporating the wheelchair has been pretty easy. We just have to put a little thought and time into it."

One of Schulings' favorites was when they dressed up in a "101 Dalmatians" theme. Isla was Cruella and Louis was a dalmatian.

This year, Louis wants to dress like characters from the movie "Onward," a kids' movie about teenage elf brothers who happen to be blue, so there will be lots of body paint involved. The kids do help in creating the costumes as much as they can.



Isla and Louis Schuling as characters from "101 Dalmatians."

One of a kind

Cassie Mason began making costumes when her daughter, Aurora, was little. She has three kids: Brody, 16, Aurora, 12, and Eira, 6.

"Other than the pure enjoyment of doing it, I like to make the costumes because I want them to look really good. Many times in the past, when I've ordered a costume online for one of the kids, it seems as though the design is printed onto a single piece of cloth. There are no real details or layers."

She also likes to make the costumes because, often, the girls have chosen to be something that is popular,



Cassie Mason and daughter, Eira, as Red and Red's mom, the Queen of Hearts, from "The Descendants."

and she wants to differentiate their costumes from the others. They also are more affordable, she says.

"This year, Eira wants to go as Chloe from "KPop Demon Hunters," so I'm going to be either Mira or Rumi. I don't know if you are familiar with the movie, but Eira would like to go in their golden clothes. They are so amazing and detailed, so I cannot wait to get started on them. Eira is very hands on and loves doing anything related to creating, so I'm sure she will be helping me this year."

Fall fun

Raine Mollenbeck's kids, Kade, 8, and Avery, 10, like the family tradition of making their costumes — and sometimes even a float to match.

"We try to tie their costumes to whatever they're into that year. Now that they're a little older, they get to help with the creating, too. It's turned into a fun family project we all look forward to every fall."

This year, they are each being a sports card. Avery is still debating on her pick, and Kade, the Packers fan, will be going as Jordan Love.

The kids also have a pumpkin stand each year where they sell pumpkins they grew. They have up to 50 different varieties offered.



Kade and Avery Mollenbeck enjoy their homemade themed costumes.

Dress up dude

Adrienne Randall's son, Emmitt, is 8. They don't do exclusively homemade costumes, but often their costumes end up being that way as they just go with whatever vision Emmitt comes up with.

"Sometimes that's a store-bought police officer costume, and sometimes he has a wacky idea like mac and cheese. We just want to make whatever idea he comes up with work, and I personally love when I get to be creative with them."

Last year, when Emmitt went as a cup of mac and cheese, he helped with painting the macaroni noodles and stringing them on yarn. Adrienne thrives on crafty fun DIYs, whether it's Halloween costumes or elaborate birthday set ups, so she's always really excited when Emmitt comes up with unique ideas.

"This year, Emmitt wants to go with something creepier, and he wants it to look like he is carrying his own head around on a platter, so we have just started working on that." ■



Emmitt Randall dressed up like mac and cheese.



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INVESTMENT

By Tim Hanstad

A RETIREE'S guide for National Financial Security Month

If you are retired, it is easy to let your finances go on autopilot. Since October is National Retirement Security Month, it is a good time to revisit some areas that can impact your long-term financial security and help your money last a lifetime.

Consider these suggestions:

- **Manage your withdrawal rate.** You'll likely need to tap into your retirement accounts — your IRA and 401(k) or similar employer-sponsored plan. But think carefully about how much income you withdraw every year. If you take out too much, especially in the early years of your retirement, you risk outliving your resources. You have the option of withdrawing from these accounts at age 59½. Once you turn 72, you'll be required to take out at least a certain amount each year based on your age and account balance.

- **Estimate health care costs.** When you turn 65, you will be eligible for Medicare, but you may still need a Medicare supplement plan, both of which will require premium payments. You'll probably also incur a variety of other unreimbursed expenses for doctor visit copays or deductibles, prescription drugs and vision, hearing and dental care. Additionally, about 70% of adults ages 65 and older will need some form of long-term support, according to the Department of Health and Human Services. This may include a paid home health aide (average cost of \$77,792 per year), an assisted living residence (average cost of \$70,500 per year) or nursing home care (private room average cost of \$127,750 per year). (Cost estimates are from Genworth 2024 Cost of Care Survey.) Over the course of your retirement, these can add up, so be realistic when budgeting for health care expenses in retirement.

- **Consider when to take Social Security.** You can start receiving monthly Social Security checks at age 62, but your payments will generally be larger if you wait until your "full" retirement age of 66 or 67. (The size of your payments will "max out" at age 70.) If you believe you have longevity working in your favor, and you can afford to wait, you may well be better off by delaying Social Security as long as possible.

- **Avoid investing too conservatively.** Once you're retired, you might think you should take as few chances with your investments as possible — after all, you have less time for them to bounce back from a downturn than you did during your working years. Nonetheless, it's important to consider keeping a reasonable percentage of growth-oriented investments in your portfolio to help you stay ahead of inflation. Even at a low rate, inflation can erode your purchasing power over time.

- **Keep your generosity in check.** If you have grown children who need financial help, or grandchildren heading to college someday, you would no doubt like to do what you can to assist them. However, the hard truth is that they have more time than you to find workable financial solutions, whereas if you deplete your funds through your generosity, you could put yourself in a precarious position. So, be as giving as you can afford — but try not to go beyond that. By preserving your financial independence, you'll end up benefiting your family as well.

Retirement is ideally an enjoyable time in your life, especially if you feel financially stable. So, take time to check in periodically to keep that stability on track. ■



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This article was written by Edward Jones for use by Tim Hanstad, your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Edward Jones, Member SIPC

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HIDDEN gem of caregiving: adult day services

Caring for a loved one can certainly be rewarding, but balancing work, household responsibilities, and your own well-being can feel overwhelming. The good news: Resources are readily available in the form of adult day services, which can provide meaningful enrichment during the day while easing the stress of caregiving.



What are adult day services? Adult day services offer daytime support and engagement for adults who may need help with daily activities, face safety risks when left alone, or simply benefit from social interaction. Participants can attend daily or just a few times a week. While many participants live with dementia, a memory-challenge diagnosis is not required.

Safety and peace of mind. Safety is a cornerstone of adult day programs. Participants

thrive in secure environments with professional oversight, while families gain confidence knowing their loved one is supported.

One caregiver shared that she found relief when her husband, who was living with dementia, began attending an adult day program. At home, he had begun leaving the stove on and water running. “I was trying to work from home to make sure he was safe, but I couldn’t get anything done. Adult day was a godsend. I finally felt like I could stop worrying 24/7.”

More than “something to do.”

Programming is designed to nourish body, mind and spirit through:

- Social activities that reduce isolation
- Nutritious meals and snacks
- Physical and cognitive activities that promote engagement
- Safe spaces where participants can thrive, even with chronic conditions

Why families choose adult day services.

Although adult day services can make a

tremendous difference, many families are unaware they exist. Too often, the services remain a best-kept secret until caregiving stress reaches a breaking point.

Benefits extend to both participants and caregivers. Participants enjoy engagement, connection, and better nutrition. Caregivers experience reduced stress, more time for self-care, and confidence that their loved one is thriving.

Take the first step. If you’re balancing caregiving and searching for peace of mind, consider exploring adult day services in your area. These programs provide the support your loved one deserves — and the breathing room you need to be at your best. ■

Aaron Wheeler is Vice President of Home and Community-Based Services for WesleyLife, which provides health and well-being services for older adults — including adult day services in Des Moines and Newton. To learn more, visit wesleylife.org.



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CHANGES in Iowa ABLÉ accounts

There are exciting new changes to the Iowa ABLÉ account program that help individuals with a disability make self-directed investments and purchases.

The Achieving a Better Life Experience Act (ABLE) is a way to save money for expenses related to a disability. It is similar to (and is part of the federal statute for) 529 college-savings plans. An ABLÉ account allows individuals with disabilities to fund accounts with their own resources. Others, such as family members, can also contribute to the account. The minimum contribution limit to an ABLÉ account was recently reduced to \$1, effective immediately, making it easier for eligible individuals to start saving.

The account can be used to supplement, but not supplant, benefits received through



other government programs like Medicaid and SSI. Money from an ABLÉ account can be used to pay for education, transportation, health services, and employment-related expenses. Additionally, unlike some Medicaid trusts, funds from an ABLÉ account can be used for housing and basic living expenses. The beneficiary is allowed to have direct access to the money.

Other Medicaid trusts, such as a Special Needs Trust, do not allow funds to pay for funeral or burial expenses after an individual dies. Money in an ABLÉ account can be used to pay for funeral and burial expenses.

Account owners and members of their support system now have the opportunity to transfer funds from a Medicaid SNT into an ABLÉ account. This allows more flexibility when it comes to how assets are used.

Another advantage of an ABLÉ account is that most Medicaid trusts contain mandatory provisions subjecting any money remaining

in the account after death to Medicaid recapture by the State. In Iowa, the Department of Health and Human Services is not permitted to recover money in an ABLÉ account and remaining funds can pass to a named beneficiary.

Currently, to be eligible for an ABLÉ account, an individual must be disabled, and the disability occurred before the age of 26. However, recent changes to the law will raise the age limit to individuals found disabled up to 46 years old. The new law goes into effect Jan. 1, 2026.

If you have questions about how an ABLÉ account can complement your estate planning, contact an attorney who specializes in estate planning for individuals with disabilities. ■

Information provided by Gail Barnett, Abendroth Russell Barnett Law Firm, 2560 73rd St., Urbandale, 515-278-0623, www.ARPCLaw.com.

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EVENTS IN THE AREA

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Johnston Partnership needs fall and winter clothing

The Johnston Partnership provides food and personal hygiene products to those in need, as well as children's seasonal clothing. The organization is ramping up its collection of fall/winter clothing items, especially winter coats that are new or in great used condition. It can also accept snow pants, boots and warm socks in new packages. Most needed sizes are toddler and youth, but the group will likely need about 2,000 coats to make it through the winter season, so all sizes are welcome.

Donations can be dropped off at 5870 Merle Hay Road, Suite C, Johnston, during open hours. For more information, visit <https://johnstonpartnership.org/donate/>.

Provide input on the Trail Master Plan

The city of Johnston is looking for your input as it develops a city-wide Trail Master Plan. The public can comment on the project website, www.cityofjohnston.com/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=1528, until Friday, Oct. 17.

Craft & Rummage Sale - An Ellipsis Boys Home Fundraiser

The Johnston Womens Social Connection rummage sale has been canceled.

Yoga by the Lake

Saturdays, Oct. 4 and 11, 8 a.m.
Terra Lake, by the amphitheater,
6400 Pioneer Parkway

Enjoy a refreshing hour of yoga led by Ignit Yoga Instructor Natalie Henricksen. Experience the tranquility of the lake and the vibrant colors of fall as you enhance your well-being in a serene outdoor setting. Bring a Yoga mat, water bottle, and any additional items to ensure your comfort during the class. This event is free and open to all levels.



Lions Club BINGO

Oct. 9 and Nov. 13, 6-8 p.m.
Lions Club House, 6501 Merle Hay Road

Join the Lions for fun and bingo prizes on the second Thursday of October and November at the Lions Club in Johnston.

4A State Golf Tourney

Oct. 13-14
Hyperion Field Club, 7390 N.W. Beaver Drive, Johnston
Hyperion Field Club is hosting the Iowa High School Boys 4A State Golf Tournament. This event will bring 12 high school golf teams (72 golfers) and 12 individual qualifiers for 12 teams to the community, not to mention countless spectators associated with them.

HONOR OUR VETERANS

Iowa Living magazines will be saluting veterans in November issues. If you are a veteran who would like to be included, please send a photo (military or current) and the following information:

NAME:
CURRENT TOWN:
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ENLISTMENT DATES::
QUOTE: "What would you like others to know about serving your country?"

Email to tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com or mail to:
Iowa Living magazines, 8101 Birchwood Court Suite D, Johnston, IA 50131

SUBMISSIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY OCT. 16.

Electronics Recycling Day

Saturday, Oct. 4, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Johnston City Hall, 6221 Merle Hay Road

Participate in this free electronics recycling day. All general electronics are accepted, but CRTs, televisions and some batteries may have fees. For details on pricing and accepted items, visit Electronic Asset Security's website, Iowa's only R2v3 certified recycler.

Gold Star Military Museum events

The public is invited to upcoming events at the Gold Star Military Museum at Camp Dodge, 7105 N.W. 70th Ave., Johnston.

- Author Jeff Kluever will discuss his new book, "Marching Home," Saturday, Oct. 4, at 11 a.m. at the museum.
- The "Liberator" Exhibit will be on display at the museum through Oct. 11. Known as the "Liberator" in World War II Europe, the Harley Davidson WLA military motorcycle was often the first vehicle to enter towns liberated from German occupation. Used for convoy escort, reconnaissance, message delivery and military police patrols, 70,000 were produced during the war.
- The American Revolution Experience Traveling Exhibit will be at the museum Oct. 14-25. The Camp Dodge Chapter Daughters of the American Revolution was selected by the National Society DAR to sponsor the exhibit, and the group will hold an open house on Saturday, Oct. 18, to share stories of their American Revolution Patriots, along with other surprises.

The Museum is open Tuesday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. ■

OUT & ABOUT



Johnston and Clive chambers of commerce held a ribbon cutting for the new Johnston office of Jocelyn Severin - Farmers Insurance on Aug. 20.



Jocelyn Severin and Samantha Howell at the Aug. 20 Johnston Chamber ribbon cutting for Jocelyn Severin - Farmers Insurance.



Charter Bank celebrated its 25th anniversary in Grimes on Sept. 4. Pictured are, front row: Leana Klimova, Kayla McBride, Danielle Witzenburg, Olivia Millar and Cindy Buckalew. Back row: Mike Straub, Corey Dutchuk, Sharm Sisler, Brien Scandridge, Logan Crannell, Matt Morris and Rick Mosher.



Purple Poppy Boutique celebrated its 8-year anniversary on Sept. 19 and 20. Pictured is owner Paula Bierle.



Ryan Rohlf, Annie Mielke and Christy Cline at the Johnston Chamber Business After Hours held Sept. 3 at Bennigan's.



Carson Jones and Keegan Simons at the Johnston Chamber Business After Hours held Sept. 3 at Bennigan's.



Ashley Barron and Brenda Ballard at the Johnston Chamber Business After Hours held Sept. 3 at Bennigan's.



Brandon Thompson and Elizabeth VanGundy at the Johnston Chamber Business After Hours held Sept. 3 at Bennigan's.



Anthony Junk and Ravi Menneni at the Johnston Chamber Business After Hours held Sept. 3 at Bennigan's.



Rita Holter, Nancy Brown (owner), Erin Bachman and Jackie Deaver of Charlie Rae's celebrate the boutique's first anniversary on Sept. 13.

RESIDENTS' Choice

2025 NW Metro Residents' Choice certificates were presented.



Cyd's Catering is the WINNER for Favorite Catering Company. Pictured are Alisha Jones, Alex Sullivan, Eric Niday, Cyd Koehn (owner) and Kari Anderson.



Herrmann Family Chiropractic is the WINNER for Favorite Chiropractic Office. Pictured are Michael Tiffany, Megan Herrmann and Eric Herrmann.



The Little Gym of Johnston is WINNER of Favorite Dad/Child Date Spot, Mom/Child Date Spot, Place to Take Your Kids or Grandkids, Place for Children's Birthday Parties, Gymnastics Studio and Tumbling Studio. Pictured is co-owner Laura Arneson.



Woof Pack Resort & Spa is the WINNER for Favorite Pet Care and RUNNER-UP for Dog Groomer. Pictured are owners Rachel Lesley and Heather Lesley.



Charlie Rae's is a RUNNER-UP for Favorite Boutique and Place to Purchase a Gift for a Woman. Pictured is owner Nancy Brown.



Heather Loops, bartender at Trostel's Greenbriar, is the WINNER for Favorite Server/Bartender.



Joleen Roskamp with RE/MAX Precision is a WINNER for Favorite Realtor.



Styled. by JJ is a RUNNER-UP for Favorite Boutique, Retail Store and Place to Purchase a Gift for a Woman. Pictured is owner Julia Bradshaw.



Fareway is the WINNER for Favorite Grocery Store and RUNNER-UP for Favorite Liquor Store. Pictured are Paul Vogtlin and Seth Poulliot.



Trostel's Greenbriar is the WINNER for Favorite Restaurant, Restaurant for Dessert, Restaurant for Lunch, Restaurant for Dinner, Place to Take Your Mom & Dad and RUNNER-UP for Favorite Catering Company. Pictured are Robyn McSheehy and Suzanne Summy.



Purple Poppy Boutique is the WINNER for Favorite Boutique, Retail Store and Place to Purchase a Gift for a Woman. Pictured is owner Paula Bierle and Carrie Summerton.

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