

# Living

# 'Cheers TO THE Years'

Green Days, June 11-13, celebrates milestones with family fun.

**Jolene's Rhubarb Crisp**  
RECIPE

**Orchestra club enhances music program**  
EDUCATION

**Roots of Garden Clubs of America planted early in Johnston**  
HISTORY

STEWART THOMAS  
PHOTOGRAPHY

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# WELCOME

## FUNNEL cakes, chaos and community

There is nothing quite like a community festival like Green Days to remind us that humanity is chaotic, charming and deeply committed to eating fried food outdoors.

On paper, festivals sound wholesome — live music, local vendors, smiling families. In reality, they are a delightful mash-up of sunburns, long lines and someone's uncle absolutely destroying a karaoke rendition of a 1980s power ballad. And yet, we keep coming back.

Maybe it is because community festivals turn ordinary places into something slightly magical. Suddenly they are packed with food trucks, handmade jewelry and a suspiciously competitive pie-eating contest.

The real entertainment, though, is the people. Festivals are one of the few places where strangers will strike up a conversation with others for no reason at all.

And then there is the food — arguably the main event. Community festivals operate under a simple rule that, if it can be fried, it will be fried. Oreos? Fried. Pickles? Fried. Possibly things that were never meant to be fried? Absolutely fried.

Music adds another layer. Local bands take the stage and give it everything they have got. And there is something refreshing about a performance where the lead singer might also be your dentist.

Of course, no festival is complete without at least one mildly chaotic moment. Maybe it is a sudden rain shower that sends everyone scrambling under tents. Maybe it is a child covered head to toe in cotton candy. Maybe it is you, realizing you have been walking around for an hour with powdered sugar on your face.

In the end, community festivals are messy, loud and a little ridiculous, but that's exactly why they matter. They pull people out of their routines and into shared space, where the goal isn't productivity or efficiency, but simply being there.

You may leave feeling slightly tired, possibly sticky and definitely overfed. But you also leave with a feeling that, for a few hours, you were part of something fun, spontaneous and genuinely human. ■



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## FEATURE

The carnival is a highlight of Green Days for many people. Photo by Stewart Thomas Photography.



# 'Cheers TO THE Years'

Green Days, June 11-13, celebrates milestones with family fun.

By Ashley Rullestad

The biggest and best community celebration in town, Green Days, returns June 11-13, with the public invited to gather at Terra Park for a weekend of family-friendly fun.

STEWART THOMAS  
PHOTOGRAPHY

Johnston Green Days began 30 years ago to bring residents together for a community event while also highlighting local businesses. The name “Green Days” was chosen to showcase area greenhouses and landscaping businesses, as well as Pioneer (now Corteva) and John Deere Financial.

This year’s event is spearheaded by community members and co-chairs Carolyn Bradley and Dale DeJong, along with JP Pearson and a large group of committee members and volunteers.

“There were a lot of folks who raised their hands to help spread the word and make sure everything came together behind the scenes,” Pearson says. “Carolyn and Dale are serving as co-chairs, and the rest of us, who know the history, are helping support them. They organized event chairs, and we compiled a list of donors willing to contribute funds, which is helping make this year’s event possible.”

Several milestones will be celebrated this year, including the 30th anniversary of Green Days, Pioneer’s 100th anniversary, and the nation’s 250th anniversary. The theme is “Cheers to the Years.”

Green Days officially kicks off Thursday, June 11 with the return of Sam’s Amusements and the popular carnival rides.

“The carnival has always been synonymous with Green Days and is a great way for kids and families to be involved,” Pearson says. “Parents can enjoy beverages and music while kids enjoy the rides. Bringing Sam’s Amusements back was a key priority.”

The carnival opens at 4 p.m., followed by the beverage garden at 5 p.m. Community groups and neighbors may begin setting up tents and tailgate spaces. Political campaigns and clubs are not permitted to tailgate.

The new Tour de Green poker ride also begins at 4 p.m. Participants can download the Aces app to register. Riders will scan codes at each stop to receive cards, visiting up to 10 locations to build the best poker hand. More than \$1,000 in prizes will be awarded, with winners announced at 9 p.m.

Friday morning begins with a pickleball tournament. Matches will continue until winners are determined in each division, followed by medal presentations. Game schedules will be sent by Monday, June 8. Check-in begins at 11 a.m., with play starting at 11:30 a.m.

Friday evening features more music, food, rides and activities. The carnival opens at 4



The grand parade on Saturday morning will travel down Pioneer Parkway.

p.m., with food trucks and the beverage garden opening at 5 p.m. Face painting and glitter tattoos will be available from 4:30-6:30 p.m., and a petting zoo will be open from 5-8 p.m.

The evening also includes Johnston High School Alumni Night, celebrating 52 years of JHS. Attendees are encouraged to wear purple and gold and reconnect with classmates.

Live music begins with R&B singer Austin Ellis, a contestant on Season 6 of “The Voice,” followed by the band Kick at 8 p.m.

A Green Days tradition will continue this year with the crowning of the festival’s King and Queen of Green, sponsored by Big Green Umbrella Media, the publisher of Johnston Living magazine. This year, the crowing will happen on Friday night during the intermission between the two bands at approximately 7:45 p.m.

“Every festival should have a king and queen,” Shane Goodman, president of Big Green Umbrella Media, says. “It is a lot of fun to honor

two people who make such a big difference to Green Days and have them preside over the weekend.”

One tradition that will not continue this year is the tapping of the green keg.

“We started the tapping of the green keg several years ago, and we actually had green beer,” Goodman says. “Then the food inspectors said that was a problem, so we switched to regular beer in green glasses to keep the tradition going. Unfortunately, that free beer negatively impacted beer sales at the beer tent, which is what funds most everything at Green Days.”

As a result, the King and Queen of Green will announce a special proclamation on heavily discounted beer for a limited time on Friday night at the beer tent.

Saturday starts with the 5K and fun run. All races are untimed. Registration closes at 6:30 a.m. Saturday. Events include a 6:45 a.m. check-in, a 7 a.m. kids 100-yard sprint (\$1 per person), a 7:15 a.m. kids 0.62-mile fun run and 5K walk



2025 Green Days King and Queen of Green: King Zach Grandon and Queen Paula Bierle

## PAST GREEN DAYS KINGS AND QUEENS

- 2018:** King Steve Wiederin and Queen Pam Kucera
- 2019:** King Brian Wilson and Queen Deb Heldt
- 2020:** No event held due to COVID-19
- 2021:** King Dan Goodwin and Queen Heather Goodwin
- 2022:** King Jim Sanders and Queen Lisa Cooper
- 2023:** King Dan Hudson and Queen Mary Jane Paez
- 2024:** King Sharm Sisler and Queen Amy O'Brien
- 2025:** King Sergeant Grandon and Queen Paula Bierle

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## FEATURE

(\$3 per person), and a 7:30 a.m. 5K run (\$5 per person). Pioneer Parkway will close around 9:30 a.m. for the parade.

The Johnston Kiwanis pancake breakfast begins at 7:30 a.m., followed by yoga in the park at 8 a.m. The grand parade will then travel along Pioneer Parkway, following the same route used in recent years. Groups can register at [johnstongreendays.com](http://johnstongreendays.com).

After the parade, a car show begins at noon, featuring classic cars, muscle cars, trucks, hot rods and motorcycles.

At 3 p.m., attendees can watch “American Dreamer: The Life and Times of Henry A. Wallace,” a one-act play performed by Tom Milligan. Based on the award-winning book by Sen. John C. Culver and John Hyde, the performance portrays Wallace, founder of Pioneer Hi-Bred and former U.S. secretary of agriculture and vice president under Franklin D. Roosevelt. The program is funded by Corteva Agriscience.

The carnival reopens at 4 p.m., along with the beverage garden. Live music continues with Legal Limit performing at 4 p.m. and Gimikk at 8 p.m. The evening concludes with a fireworks



Johnston Charter Bank in the 2025 Green Days parade.

show after dark.

Green Days not only provides a weekend of entertainment but also supports the community, with proceeds reinvested locally. The organizing committee has established a Green Days 501(c) (3) nonprofit to help sustain the event in future years.

“It’s all about celebrating the city and highlighting the people, businesses, neighborhoods and organizations that make Johnston great,” Pearson says.

Those interested in getting involved can find volunteer opportunities and event information at [johnstongreendays.com](http://johnstongreendays.com). ■

# Rise & shine, it's pancake time.

We're excited to host our annual pancake breakfast, just like we've done in the past. All proceeds will benefit the Alzheimer's Association, and it's open to everyone! We're welcoming free-will donations to support this great cause.

**Friday, June 26, 7:30 - 9 a.m.**  
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**THURSDAY- SATURDAY**  
**JUNE 11-13**  
**TERRA PARK 6300 PIONEER PARKWAY**

**THURSDAY, JUNE 11TH**

- 4:00PM .... CARNIVAL** Wristband required for entry to carnival games and activities.
- 4:00PM .... TOUR DE GREEN POKER RIDE** [REGISTER ONLINE](#)
- 4:00PM ..... Beer Tent Opens
- 4:00PM ..... Community Tailgates and Tents *No political campaigns allowed.*
- 4:00PM ..... LIVE D.J. at the Beer Tent until 8:00 p.m.
- 6:00PM ..... The Night Walk
- 9:00PM ..... Tour De Green Winners Awards at the Terra Park Beer tent  
*Come join us to celebrate and award the winners of the Tour De Green Poker Ride!*

**CARNIVAL**  
**June 11-13**  
 Wristbands Required for Entry  
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**FRIDAY, JUNE 12<sup>TH</sup>**

- 11:00AM..... Pickleball Tournament [REGISTER ONLINE](#) Teams will get game schedules by Monday, June 8. Check-in begins at 11:00 a.m., and games start at 11:30 a.m.
- 4:00PM .... CARNIVAL** Wristband required for entry to carnival games and activities.
- 4:30 – 6:30PM | Face Painting/Glitter Tattoos  
*Get ready for some fun and join us for face painting and glitter tattoos!*
- 5:00PM..... Beer Tent Opens  
*Grab a drink and chat with your Johnston neighbors.*
- 5:00PM..... Petting Zoo Opens  
*Enjoy the animals with your family and friends until 8:00 p.m.*
- 6:00PM ..... Johnston High School Alumni Night  
*Join your fellow Dragons to celebrate 52 years of JHS.  
 Wear your purple and gold and find your former classmates.*
- 6:00PM ..... **LIVE MUSIC** performance by Austin Ellis from "The Voice"  
*Enjoy the smooth sounds of Austin Ellis, featured on season six of "The Voice."*
- 7:45PM..... **CROWNING OF THE KING & QUEEN OF GREEN**
- 8:00PM ..... **LIVE MUSIC** Performance by **KICK**

**FIREWORKS**  
**June 13, After Dark**

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# TOUR DE GREEN POKER RIDE



**REGISTER ONLINE**

**THURSDAY, JUNE 11 • 4 PM**

WINNERS AWARDED AT TERRA PARK BEER TENT AT 9PM

## SATURDAY, JUNE 13TH

**7:30AM..... Kiwanis Pancake Breakfast**

*Grab some pancakes and syrup and enjoy!*

**6:45AM..... 5K Fun Run REGISTER ONLINE** Registration ends Sat., June 13, 2026, at 6:30 a.m.

- **6:45 AM** – Check In • **7:00 AM** – Kids 100 Yard Sprint – \$1/Person
- **7:15 AM** – Kids 0.62 Fun Run & 5K Walkers – \$3/Person • **7:30 AM** – 5K Runners – \$5/Person

**Yoga in the Park REGISTER ONLINE**

*Join Natalie for an hour of harmonizing your mind, body, and breath. The meditative workout will last one hour. Please take note that the Pioneer Parkway will close shortly after class for the parade.*

**10:00AM . GREEN DAYS PARADE REGISTER ONLINE**

*Line the streets of the neighborhood and enjoy performers and community groups marching through the streets. Bring bags for candy!*

**12:00 – 2:30PM | JOHNSTON GREEN DAYS CAR SHOW**

**FREE ADMISSION** Come experience the beauty and power of classic automobiles at Terra Park!

**3:00PM ..... American Dreamer: The Life and Times of Henry A. Wallace**

*A one-act play, based on the award-winning book by John C. Culver and John Hyde*

**4:00PM .... CARNIVAL** Wristband required for entry to carnival games and activities.

**4:00PM ..... LIVE MUSIC** Performance by **LEGAL LIMIT**

**8:00PM ..... LIVE MUSIC** Performance by **GIMIKK**



## FIREWORKS DISPLAY – AFTER DARK



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\*\*This schedule is tentative and subject to change at any time without notice. Events times may be affected by weather\*\*

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Small businesses often operate with limited resources, tight margins and strong local competition. In that environment, advertising is not a luxury — it's a necessity for survival and growth. Without it, even the best products or services can remain invisible to potential customers.



One of the primary reasons small businesses should advertise is to build awareness. Unlike large, established brands, small businesses usually lack name recognition. Advertising helps introduce the business to new audiences and reminds existing customers that it exists. Consistent visibility keeps a business top of mind when customers are ready to buy.

Advertising also plays a critical role in establishing credibility. Consumers tend to trust businesses they see regularly. A well-crafted advertisement signals professionalism and stability, even for a newer company. When potential customers encounter a business multiple times, they are more likely to view it as legitimate and reliable.

Advertising also drives sales by creating urgency and highlighting value. Promotions, limited-time offers and clear messaging can motivate customers to take action. Without advertising, potential buyers may

never learn about special deals or unique selling points that differentiate a business from competitors. In crowded markets, staying silent often means losing customers to more visible competitors.

In addition, advertising supports long-term growth. It's not just about immediate sales; it's about building a brand. Over time, consistent messaging shapes how customers perceive a business — its personality, values and quality. This brand identity can become a powerful asset, helping small businesses compete with larger companies that may have more resources but less personal connection with customers.

Finally, advertising allows small businesses to adapt and learn. By tracking which campaigns perform best, business owners gain insights into customer preferences and behavior. This data can inform not only future marketing efforts but also product development, pricing strategies and customer service improvements.

In short, advertising gives small businesses a voice in a competitive marketplace. It increases visibility, builds trust, drives sales and supports long-term success. Without it, even the most promising small business risks being overlooked. ■

Information provided by Andrea Hodapp, Advertising Account Executive, Big Green Umbrella Media, 8101 Birchwood Court, Suite D, Johnston, Iowa 50131, 515-883-0523, andrea@iowalivingmagazines.com.

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Garage doors have seen an explosion in styles, materials, and colors that are designed to match the architecture of any home, from

urban grittiness. So if you thought your choices were limited to simple sheet metal styles, those days are over. You should also pay close attention to the materials. Today's garage doors can be made from expensive hardwoods, textured vinyl, fiberglass or basic aluminum, all of which will have a big impact on the look and longevity of your doors. Pay close attention to the maintenance needs of whatever material you choose. Some will hold their color longer than others, and real wood doors can require regular staining and sealing every few years to keep them looking spectacular.

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# RECIPE

By Jolene Goodman

## RHUBARB season just got crispy

As a kid, you could find me following my mother around the yard while she planted, weeded and tended to her flowers and plants. Our backyard wasn't overflowing with produce — just a small strawberry patch lined with rhubarb. Back then, I wasn't a fan. Rhubarb was a little too bold for my taste. But, over time, especially when paired with apples and a bit of sugar, it won me over. Now, I look forward to it every year.



Rhubarb is also one of the easiest and most rewarding plants to grow. Give it a sunny spot — ideally on the south side of your house or garage — and it will thrive with very little fuss.

This crisp is inspired by my mother's classic apple crisp. Sort of. Like my mother, I don't really measure ingredients for these kinds of treats, which has made sharing the recipe a bit tricky over the years. Sometimes I add nuts or oatmeal. Sometimes I mix in apples. But one thing never changes: a generous, crispy crumble topping. If it's not crisp, we're not doing it right.

So, for the sake of sharing (and finally having something more useful to say than "just eyeball it"), I actually paid attention while making it this time. What you will find here is my best attempt at a real recipe. That said... I probably added a little extra of something along the way. I encourage you to do the same. That's where the magic happens. ■

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

### Jolene's Rhubarb Crisp

#### INGREDIENTS:

- 5 cups of rhubarb
- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/3 cup oatmeal
- 1/3 cup chopped pecans
- 1/2 cup butter, room temperature (if it gets too dry, add a little more butter)



#### DIRECTIONS:

- Chop rhubarb in half inch pieces and place into an 8x8-inch dish. In a separate bowl, mix dry ingredients, then add butter. Cut butter into the dry ingredients until crumbly. Spread crumble mixture over rhubarb. Bake uncovered at 350 F for 45 minutes. Serve warm with vanilla ice cream. ■

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# LOOKING BACK



The **June 2011 Johnston Living** magazine featured the story, “Green Days 2011: Johnston’s largest community event is better than ever.” Green Days was celebrating its 15th anniversary that year. The festival featured a rib cook-off with five participating restaurants — Smokey D’s BBQ, Mojo’s on 86th, Cactus Bob’s, When Pigs Fly and Texas Roadhouse — serving up their best. ■



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3. Last year
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5. I've never fished

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Driven less ..... 40%  
 Cut back on “extras” ..... 30%  
 Fallen behind on essentials..... 30%  
 Nothing, the prices haven’t affected me..... 0%



# JOHNSTON DRAGONS

## SUMMER SCHEDULE 2026

### Varsity Softball

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
June 3	5:00PM	Valley	Valley High School
June 3	7:00PM	Valley	Valley High School
June 4	5:00PM	Dowling Catholic	Johnston Middle School
June 4	7:00PM	Dowling Catholic	Johnston Middle School
June 6	9:00AM	Cedar Rapids Kennedy	George Davis Softball Park
June 6	1:00PM	Norwalk	George Davis Softball Park
June 8	5:00PM	Urbandale	Johnston Middle School
June 8	7:00PM	Urbandale	Johnston Middle School
June 10	7:00PM	Southeast Polk	Southeast Polk BB/SB Complex
June 11	5:00PM	Waukee Northwest	Northwest High School
June 11	7:00PM	Waukee Northwest	Northwest High School
June 12	1:00PM	TBD	Muscatine High School
June 13	9:00AM	TBD	Muscatine High School
June 17	5:00PM	Ankeny	Ankeny High School
June 17	7:00PM	Ankeny	Ankeny High School
June 18	7:00PM	Ankeny Centennial	Johnston Middle School
June 22	7:00PM	Valley	Johnston Middle School
June 24	5:00PM	Waukee	Johnston Middle School
June 24	7:00PM	Waukee	Johnston Middle School
June 25	7:00PM	Dowling Catholic	Dowling Catholic High School
June 26	10:00AM	Multiple Schools	Oak Ridge Complex
June 27	10:00AM	Multiple Schools	Oak Ridge Complex
June 29	5:00PM	Southeast Polk	Johnston Middle School
June 29	7:00PM	Southeast Polk	Johnston Middle School
July 1	7:00PM	Urbandale	Urbandale High School
July 2	7:00PM	Waukee Northwest	Johnston Middle School
July 3	11:00AM	Multiple Schools	Burnett Complex

### Varsity Baseball

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
June 4	5:00PM	Dowling Catholic	Johnston Middle School
June 4	7:00PM	Dowling Catholic	Johnston Middle School
June 8	5:00PM	Urbandale	Johnston Middle School
June 8	7:00PM	Urbandale	Johnston Middle School
June 10	7:00PM	Southeast Polk	Southeast Polk BB/SB Complex
June 11	5:00PM	Waukee Northwest	Northwest High School
June 11	7:00PM	Waukee Northwest	Northwest High School
June 12	7:00PM	Bishop Heelan	Iowa Central Field
June 15	7:00PM	Iowa City High	Mercer Park
June 17	5:00PM	Ankeny	Ankeny High School
June 17	7:00PM	Ankeny	Ankeny High School
June 18	7:00PM	Ankeny Centennial	Johnston Middle School
June 22	7:00PM	Valley	Johnston Middle School
June 24	5:00PM	Waukee	Johnston Middle School
June 24	7:00PM	Waukee	Johnston Middle School
June 25	7:00PM	Dowling Catholic	Dowling Catholic High School
June 26	10:00AM	Bondurant-Farrar	Johnston Middle School
June 26	4:45PM	Pleasant Valley	Johnston Middle School
June 29	5:00PM	Southeast Polk	Johnston Middle School
June 29	7:00PM	Southeast Polk	Johnston Middle School
June 30	5:00PM	Lewis Central	Iowa Western Community College
June 30	7:00PM	Lewis Central	Iowa Western Community College
July 1	7:00PM	Urbandale	Urbandale High School Barton Field
July 2	7:00PM	Waukee Northwest	Johnston Middle School
July 6	7:00PM	Dallas Center-Grimes	DCG HS BB/SB Field



### FOR ALL DRAGONS SCHEDULES

Schedules are subject to change. Scan for most up-to-date schedules.



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# ROOTS of Garden Clubs of America planted early in Johnston

The Des Moines Garden Club had the first meeting of the Men's Garden Club in February 1930. The original president, J.N. "Ding" Darling, helped the club stage a successful flower show that year, which raised \$4,000 to enhance Greenwood Park.

Over the following 50 years, they raised funds for programs with the Sweet Corn Feed at Pioneer Hi-Bred Farms, the Petunia Day project, and the Southridge Mall vegetable garden shows. Some of the funds raised were also used for the establishment of the Des Moines Botanical Center.

At the 1967 national convention of the Men's Garden Clubs of America, (established in 1932), they chose 5560 Merle Hay Road in Johnston as the site for the group's national headquarters. Groundbreaking and completion of that headquarters took place in 1968.

The early 1990s saw the men's garden association nationally become "The Gardeners of America."

That club headquarters site was recently sold and converted to a Bank Iowa branch and a Starbucks coffee shop. Due to city efforts, many of the trees set out by the Garden Club at that location have been saved. The city has also relocated the gazebo and the portico trellis to Johnston city parks.

The Johnston (Station) Historical Society (JSHS) obtained more than 900 pages of historically significant Garden Club documents and photos from donations and from the headquarters building before it was demolished.

JSHS has scanned or photographed most of its collection, and those images are available online at [johnstoniowahistoricalsociety.com](http://johnstoniowahistoricalsociety.com) from the "Online Collection" page. However, JSHS has not had the funding to scan the Garden Club documents and photos.

Former Garden Club members and others interested in preserving this Johnston history can support that effort by donating by mailing a check, using PayPal, or by credit card and using the JSHS website donate page. ■

The Johnston Station Historical Society is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to discovering, preserving and presenting the history of the Johnston, Iowa area. Founded in 1994, JHS maintains the 1902 Simpson House museum at 6161 Northglenn Drive in Johnston. That museum is open for selected community events and on the second Sunday of each month from 2-4 p.m.

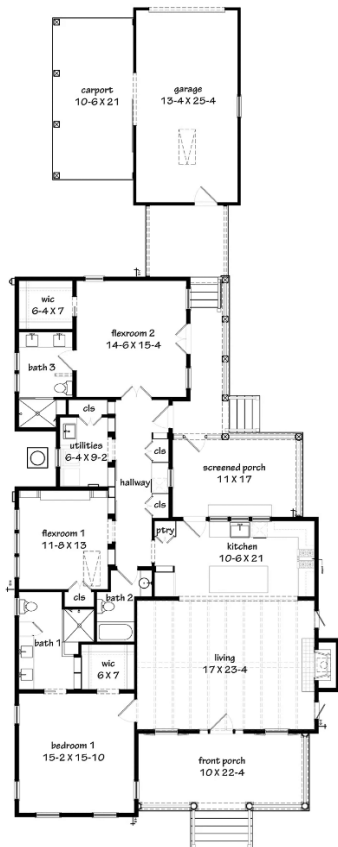


Men's Garden Clubs of America chose 5560 Merle Hay Road in Johnston as the site for the group's national headquarters. Groundbreaking and completion of that headquarters took place in 1968. The cornerstone-laying ceremony took place in 1968. Dr. John B. Miller, President of the Men's Garden Club of Des Moines, speaks, while Herb Plambeck, with the help of his WHO microphone, assists with the ceremony.

## ADAPTIVE cottage house plan

This house was designed as an adaptive home in conjunction with the Parkinson's Foundation. With three bedrooms and three baths across a single-level layout, the Adaptive Cottage offers accessible living features ideal for aging in place. A rear-entry garage connected by breezeway, spacious bedrooms, and open living spaces provides both comfort and flexibility for long-term living. The traditional Southern exterior is thoughtfully crafted to blend into existing neighborhoods while supporting independence and ease of use inside.

The traditional but comfortable nature of the architecture is designed to blend seamlessly into a traditional neighborhood or existing community. ■



### SPECIFICATIONS

Floors: 1  
Bedrooms: 3  
Bathrooms: 3.0  
Foundation(s): Slab  
**SQUARE FEET**  
Main Floor: 1,966  
Total Conditioned: 1,966

Rear Porch: 113  
Garage: 585

### DIMENSIONS

Width: 42'-8"  
Depth: 71'-2"  
Height: 24'-4"

### HOUSE LEVELS

Level Name	Ceiling

### Heights

Main Floor 10'-0"

### CONSTRUCTION

Wall Construction: 2x6  
Exterior Finish: Lap Siding  
Roof Pitch: 10:12

### FEATURES

Kitchen: Island, Pantry

Primary Bedroom: Double Sink, Shower, Walk-in Closet  
Additional: Fireplace, Porch, Screened Porch

### GARAGE

Type	Size
Carport	1 - Stall
Attached	1 - Stall



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## CONTACT US!

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Johnston, IA 50131

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### JOHNSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

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(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

P: (515) 278-0822

F: (515) 727-8092

### JOHNSTON PARKS DEPARTMENT

6300 Pioneer Parkway

P: (515) 727-8091

F: (515) 727-8092

### CROWN POINT COMMUNITY CENTER & SENIOR DINING CENTER

6300 Pioneer Parkway

(515) 251-3707

## Catch the Market, Music & More Every Tuesday

Along with the fresh food and fun at the Johnston Farmers Market, which kicked off Tuesday, June 2, there's also great entertainment to be had! Eliana Grace helped set the stage with the first performance of the season, but there is much more to experience in the coming weeks. Here are the entertainers planned for June!

**FARMERS MARKET THE YARD**

# ENTERTAINMENT

## TUESDAYS 4-7 PM

6/2: Eliana Grace Music	8/11: LaRon Rocks!
6/9: Aria and Jocelyn	8/18: Joe Damerath Music
6/16: Ramblin' Ukes	8/25: Beggari Bargain
6/23: Asphalt & Stained Glass	9/1: Patricia Holly
6/30: Denise Forney	9/8: Chiss Powell
7/7: Dan Jones	9/15: Dennis Kain
7/14: The Juan & Only	9/22: Urbandale Community Band
7/21: Maraya Nicole	9/29: Nate Carter
7/28: The Bumps	
8/4: Jenn Garman Music	

On June 9, young music duo Aria and Jocelyn will blend their original music with well-known covers.

On June 16, the Ramblin' Ukes will perform a fun mix of popular songs arranged for the ukulele.

On June 23, Asphalt & Stained Glass bring their set list of popular covers for a mixed age crowd. On June 30, Denise Forney will play a blend of

her own originals, along with popular covers. Dan Jones will set the mood on July 7 with blues and rock on his acoustic guitar. Don't miss this stellar lineup of local musical talent each Tuesday at the Johnston Farmers Market.



Learn more about the lineup here:

[cityofjohnston.com/865/Farmers-Market](http://cityofjohnston.com/865/Farmers-Market)

## Family Fest Brings the Fun

# FAMILY FEST 2026



Family Fest returns on Saturday, June 6, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. with fun for the whole family. Join us at The Yard, 6221 Merle Hay Road, for entertainment, events and food trucks! Kids can enjoy activities like balloon animals, entertainers and a magic show. They can pet an alpaca, climb into a firetruck or a squad car. The Johnston Public Library will also have their book bike on hand. Enjoy food from Kona Ice, Outside Scoop and Charlotte's Kitchen.

Learn more about the event here:

[cityofjohnston.com/1533/Family-Fest](http://cityofjohnston.com/1533/Family-Fest)





# CITY NEWSLETTER

## JUNE 2026

### Don't miss Johnston Green Days

Don't miss Johnston Green Days, June 11 – 13 at Terra Park. There's something for everyone on this year's schedule. Enjoy the carnival, the beer tent, the parade, a bicycle poker ride, a pickleball tournament, face painting, a petting zoo, the car show and more! Don't forget the live music! Kick brings their classic rock energy Friday night, along with R&B singer Austin Ellis, from The Voice. Legal Limit starts the Saturday night music, ahead of popular local cover band Gimikk. Then we cap off the event with fireworks Saturday night at dusk!



See the full event schedule here:  
[Johnstongreendays.com](http://Johnstongreendays.com)



### Sounds of the Summer Concert Series Kicks Off

Love Bon Jovi and Yacht Rock? Then you won't want to miss AstroYachts and Wanted on Saturday, June 27, in the Yard. The Sounds of Summer Concert Series features these Los Angeles-based tribute acts. The best part? It's FREE to attend, thanks to The Cork 50131.



View the full concert series here:  
[cityofjohnston.com/1438/Sounds-of-Summer](http://cityofjohnston.com/1438/Sounds-of-Summer)



### Ready for Senior Fun Night at Crown Point Community Center?

June's Senior Fun Night is happening Thursday, June 18 from 3 to 6 p.m. in the Great Hall at the Crown Point Community Center. Johnston residents 55 and older can enjoy a delicious dinner from China Café, featuring favorites like Beef & Broccoli, Sesame Chicken, Fried Rice, Egg Rolls, Crab Rangoons, and a fortune cookie for dessert. The cost for the meal is just \$10.



Please register for this fun event by June 11:  
[cityofjohnston.com/1580/55-Events](http://cityofjohnston.com/1580/55-Events)



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## PLANT seeds at JPL this June

Grow and thrive at the library all summer long. This month, you can dance under a giant foam cannon; attend a potato derby; play a round of mini golf; and head outside to paint, walk, fish or study the stars. Read on for more details.

### 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.

### Summer programs for kids and families

- **JPL Foam Party:** Kids can kick off their summer on Friday, June 5, from 11-11:45 a.m. with Absolute Science and its giant foam cannon. Dress to get soaked.
  - **The Great Potato Derby:** Eyes on the fries, potato racers. Register your speedsters for the potato derby on Friday, June 12, at 2 p.m. Participants will design their own potato cars and race their speedy spuds to the finish line. All supplies will be provided.
  - **Family Mini Golf:** Looking for a cool family activity? Drop in Friday, June 19, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. or Saturday, June 20, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., when Pop Up Games will turn the meeting room into an indoor mini golf course.

### Summer Programs for teens

- **Foamageddon:** Never fear, JPL teens. You'll have your own opportunity to dive into wet, fluffy mountains of foam on Friday, June 5, at 1 p.m. Sing, dance and get soaked, courtesy of Absolute Science's giant foam cannon.
  - **Touch Grass Outdoor Art Lab:** Crafty teens looking to connect with nature can head outside for a plein air art session Tuesday, June 23, from 4:30-6:15 p.m. After sketching and painting outdoors, the session will wrap up with a picnic. Registration is required.
  - **Stranger Things Escape Room:** Something strange is happening in Hawkins, and Will is missing. Work together to decode messages, solve puzzles and find Will before it is too late. Register for a one-hour session Tuesday, June 30, between 3 and 7 p.m.

### Summer programs for adults

- **Audiobook Walking Club:** Grab your audiobook and hit the trails Tuesday mornings from 8-8:45 a.m. Walks will alternate between Dewey and Terra parks, beginning with Dewey Park on June 2. Those who register will receive reminders, updates and weather cancellations.
  - **What's in the Night Sky?** If you wonder what you can see from your backyard, find out Thursday, June 4, at 6:30 p.m., when a local amateur astronomer will share what you can observe and how to identify it. Attendees can also get a close-up look at the library's new telescopes.
  - **Fly Fishing in Iowa:** Join anglers from Trout Unlimited North Bear Chapter and Central Iowa Fly Fishers for instruction and practice in fly-tying and casting at the pond behind the library Saturday, June 6, from 1-4 p.m. Registration is required, and all materials will be provided.

More information about events and resources at Johnston Public Library is available at [www.johnstonlibrary.com](http://www.johnstonlibrary.com) or by calling 515-278-5233. ■

# OUR TRAVELING COCKTAIL PARTY IS BACK!



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Be sure to check for cancelations

## Upcoming in Johnston Living magazine

**Play sets, play houses and tree houses:** Share the stories of your memorable play sets, play houses and tree houses. Perhaps your family has play structures that entertain your kids for hours. Or maybe you have memories of the play house you enjoyed as a child. Big or small, if it creates happy times, let us know. Email [tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com](mailto:tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com).

**Hobby photographers:** Do you enjoy the hobby of photography? Perhaps you take wildlife photos or capture scenic scenes. Maybe you enter your photos in the county or state fair. Maybe you have taken a photography class. Tell us why you enjoy the hobby and share some of your favorite shots. Email [tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com](mailto:tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com).

## Simpson House Museum Open

Johnston Historical Society 1902 Simpson House Museum, 6161 Northglenn Drive, Johnston

The Johnston Historical Society 1902 Simpson House Museum will be open on the second Sunday of each month from 2-4 p.m. through December of 2026. Guided tours will be available. The museum is also open during Johnston Commons park events, including Sundae in the Park on Sunday, Aug. 2 from 6-8 p.m. The museum is also open by appointment by contacting [johnstonhistoricalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:johnstonhistoricalsociety@gmail.com) or by calling 515-330-0687 for an appointment.



## Johnston Lions Club Book Sale

June 11-13  
6501 Merle Hay Road

The Johnston Lions Club Book Sale is June 11-13. Thursday, June 11 is the preview sale, 4-8 p.m. with admission charge of \$5, kids free. Friday, June 12, admission is free and hours are 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday, June 13, 8-11 a.m. is a sack sale with free admission.

## Family Fest

Saturday, June 6, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
The Yard, 6221 Merle Hay Road

Family Fest is free for the entire family. Climb on a fire engine, grab a book off the Book Bike, or enjoy a Unique Cirque Style live performance from Sam Rezz.

## Iowa Gold Star Military Museum events

Camp Dodge, 7105 N.W. 70th Ave., Johnston

- **Free Museum Tours:** Saturdays, 11:30 a.m. the museum offers free docent-led tours.

- **American Flag Take Back Event:** Saturday, June 13, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Iowa Veterans' Perspective doing an American flag take back event at the Iowa Gold Star Military Museum on Saturday, June 13. This is a community collection drive where worn, tattered or damaged American flags are gathered for proper, dignified disposal.

## Des Moines Art Center Museum Highlights Tour

Saturdays, 1-2 p.m.  
4700 Grand Ave., Des Moines

Discover the vast variety of the Des Moines Art Center's permanent collections during the Museum Highlights Tour. This tour offers a unique journey through the galleries, featuring a selection of timeless paintings, sculptures and more. Join knowledgeable guides to uncover the stories, techniques and inspirations behind the art on view, and experience the highlights of the Art Center in a fresh and engaging way. This guided tour is perfect for art enthusiasts of all ages. Free to all, no registration required.

## CITYVIEW's Summer Stirs

Friday, June 26, Downtown Des Moines  
Friday, July 31, Des Moines East Village

CITYVIEW's traveling cocktail parties return in 2026. For \$25 advance ticket, sample 10 summer cocktails at downtown bars and restaurants. Cost is \$35 at the door. For information and tickets, visit <https://summerstirs.dmcityview.com>.

## Johnston Green Days

June 11-13  
Terra Park, 6400 Pioneer Parkway, Johnston

Celebrate 30 years of history at Johnston Green Days, June 11-13. Everything kicks off Thursday when the carnival opens and the Tour De Green poker ride begins. Events continue Friday and wrap up with a full Saturday, including the Green Days Parade at 10 a.m., a car show at noon and fireworks at dusk. Visit [johnstongreendays.com](http://johnstongreendays.com) for the full schedule.



## Johnston Farmers Market

Every Tuesday until Sept. 29, 4-7 p.m.  
Johnston Town Center

The 2026 Johnston Farmers Market operates every Tuesday from 4-7 p.m. until Sept. 29. The market is located at the Johnston Town Center, between City Hall and the Grandstay Hotel, 6221 Merle Hay Road. Sales begin promptly at 4 p.m. and live performances from several local musicians truly makes the market the place to be. Learn more at [www.cityofjohnston.com/865/Farmers-Market](http://www.cityofjohnston.com/865/Farmers-Market).

## Iowa Craft Brew Festival

Saturday, June 6, noon to 4 p.m.  
Water Works Park, 2201 George Flagg Parkway, Des Moines

The Iowa Brewers Guild Iowa Craft Brew Festival encourages attendees to log off, raise a glass and enjoy an afternoon together in a relaxed outdoor setting. Each festival ticket includes unlimited samples, a commemorative tasting glass, and access to the festival grounds featuring shade tents, vendors, yard games and a variety of Iowa-based food trucks. The festival highlights the best in Iowa craft beer while also featuring Iowa craft cideries, wineries, distilleries and a growing selection of Iowa-produced non-alcoholic beverages. One hundred percent of festival revenue supports Iowa's craft beverage industry and the Iowa Brewers Guild's Brewed in Iowa campaign. Tickets available at [www.iowacraftbrewfestival.com](http://www.iowacraftbrewfestival.com).

# EVENTS IN THE AREA

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

Be sure to check for cancellations

## Polk County Conservation events

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

• **Senior Fishing Day.** Friday, June 5, 9 a.m. to noon, Easter Lake Event Center, 2830 Easter Lake Drive, Des Moines. Join Polk County Senior Services for a fun day of fishing on Iowa's Free Fishing Weekend. There will be prizes for the biggest, smallest and most fish caught. Bring your own pole if you have one. If not, Polk County Conservation will have a limited number available. Bait will be provided. Sack lunches will be provided to registered participants. Register at your normal senior meal site or call Sam at the Northwest Senior Center, 515-279-2767. Participants can fish from an accessible fishing dock or natural shoreline. Adaptive fishing equipment will be available for individuals who may have difficulties sustaining grasp of a fishing pole. Ages 60 and older. Registration required for luncheon only by May 23.

• **June Summer Skills:** Tuesdays and Thursdays of June beginning June 9, 10 a.m. to noon, Jester Park Outdoor Recreation & Wellness Center, 12130 N.W. 128th St., Granger. Summer is about having fun and playing outside. Join PCC naturalists as they introduce your child to some fun outdoor activities which can be enjoyed the rest of their lives. Come to one or sign-up for an entire series. All equipment will be provided. Ages 10-16. Registration required by two days ahead of class. Classes are as follows: June 9 Paddling, June 11 Fishing, June 16 Air Rifle, June 18 Geocaching, June 23 Archery, and June 25 Outdoor Survival.

## Des Moines Downtown Farmers Market

Saturdays through Oct. 31, 7 a.m. to noon, 8 a.m. to noon in October

Historic Court District, Downtown Des Moines

The 2026 season of the Downtown Des Moines Farmers Market will feature 305 vendors, including 43 new participants, with 75 produce and agriculture vendors highlighting the region's strong farming community. Vendors represent 74 cities across 42 Iowa counties, spanning 12 city blocks from Water Street to Fifth Street. For more information visit [www.dsmpartnership.com/desmoinesfarmersmarket](http://www.dsmpartnership.com/desmoinesfarmersmarket).

## Music In The Garden

Thursdays, June 4 to Aug. 20, doors open at 6 p.m., concerts 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden, 909 Robert D. Ray Drive, Des Moines

Music in the Garden is one of Des Moines' premier outdoor concert series, offering a truly unique atmosphere. Set within the naturally beautiful surroundings of the garden, each evening blends live music, nature and community into an unforgettable experience. Whether you prefer to sit back and relax, get up and dance, or simply soak in the scenery, you'll enjoy great music surrounded by the beauty of the garden. See the lineup and get tickets by scanning the QR code. ■



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# HELP your graduate use credit, debit cards wisely

As your new graduate prepares to step into the next chapter of life — whether that’s more education or starting a career — one of the best things you can do is help them understand how to use credit cards, debit cards and prepaid cards wisely. They can be powerful financial tools, but without some basic knowledge, they can also lead to trouble.



Here are a few things graduates, whether from high school or graduate school, should know.

- **Credit cards have benefits — and risks.** About 69% of Americans ages 18-29 have at least one credit card, according to the Federal Reserve. They can borrow money up to a set limit, pay it back and borrow again — a cycle known as revolving credit. Used responsibly, credit cards can help build their credit history, cover unexpected expenses and even earn rewards like cash back or travel discounts.

On the cautionary side, if your child or grandchild doesn’t pay the full balance each month, interest charges can accumulate quickly. Carrying a high balance relative to the credit limit can hurt their credit score. Perhaps most importantly, it’s easy to fall into a debt cycle in which they charge more than they can pay, interest can add up to more than the original purchases cost, and they might even open new cards to cover old ones. It creates a hole that’s hard to climb out of.

The key message is simple: pay off the balance monthly, pay on time and treat the card as a convenience, not a lifeline.

- **Debit cards can be a good option.** Since debit cards draw directly from a bank account, they naturally limit overspending. But they aren’t risk-free. Overdrawing the account can trigger fees, and debit cards generally offer fewer fraud protections than credit cards. Additionally, since you’re spending your own money rather than borrowing, debit cards don’t help build a credit score. Still, for a young person just starting out, a debit card can be a practical way to manage day-to-day spending.

- **Prepaid cards can help teach the basics.** Money is loaded onto the card before use, and your young adult can only spend what’s already on the card. Because of this, there’s no risk of debt, no credit history needed and no bills to pay.

Prepaid cards come in several forms. General purpose reloadable cards can be used anywhere cards are accepted. Payroll cards are sometimes used by employers to distribute wages. Gift cards are another option.

The downside is that prepaid cards typically don’t help build a credit history, since transactions usually aren’t reported to credit bureaus. Some also come with fees for activation, reloading or transactions. These fees can add up, so it pays to read the fine print.

Teaching your graduate the difference between these tools, and how to develop good habits for each, can help them build financial confidence for decades to come. ■

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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for an Iowa Living education column!

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## BEACH BALLS BOUNCE AROUND. YOUR RETIREMENT PLAN SHOULDN'T.



Planning for retirement starts before you retire. Summer is a good time to step back, review your goals, and make sure your financial strategy doesn’t drift with the tide.

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# SHIELD assets from Medicaid spend-down requirements

Many of our clients are worried that long-term care costs will take all of their savings. Nursing home care can be incredibly expensive. Social Security payments and other retirement savings can help pay these bills, but Medicaid can cover nursing home costs for those who meet eligibility rules.



Medicaid is a federally funded insurance program administered at the state level. In Iowa, a Medicaid applicant must have low income and few resources (less than \$2,000 in countable assets) to qualify. If the applicant has too many countable assets to qualify for Medicaid, there is a requirement to spend that money to pay for care.

It may be tempting to transfer title of your house to a child or give away your savings to a loved one. However, Medicaid imposes a five-year lookback when assessing eligibility. That means any asset transfer made in the five years before applying is scrutinized and often flagged as improper. The asset given away is deemed available to the Medicaid applicant, which results in a period of ineligibility.

Still, with proper planning, there are ways to shelter assets from Medicaid spend-down rules.

One method is to place assets in a special irrevocable trust at least

five years before needing Medicaid coverage. Unlike a revocable trust for estate planning and probate avoidance, irrevocable trusts require forfeiting control of the assets permanently. While that is a significant downside, assets transferred to an irrevocable trust before the five-year lookback period will not count toward Medicaid eligibility.

A Medicaid-compliant single-premium annuity is another option. The lump-sum purchase price is considered an exempt transfer if certain rules are met. The annuity can then generate non-countable income through monthly payouts.

While shelters like trusts and annuities can help protect savings, they come with major limitations. Once you transfer assets, they are permanently inaccessible. And most of these options aren't useful in a crisis situation where somebody needs nursing home care immediately.

Advanced planning with special trusts, annuities, and other options can help shield assets from Medicaid spend-down requirements for nursing home care. But these tools require foresight and deliberate actions. Some tools won't be helpful for some people, and all of them have varying combinations of limitations and risks.

Be sure to get personalized guidance from a knowledgeable attorney when planning for potential long-term care costs. ■

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

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## FAITH

By Deacon Greg Lievens

# PRAY to love God's will

Christian motivational speaker Matthew Kelly challenges us to "be the best version of yourself." Discovering that version can be overwhelming. True transformation begins when we realize life is not all about us; instead, we must pray to love God's will.

When chosen to bear our Savior, Mary faced hardships, even potential stoning, but answered, "May it be done to me according to your word." In the Garden of Gethsemane, contemplating the ultimate sacrifice, Jesus prayed, "Not my will, but yours be done." His believers continue to pray each day as He taught us, "Thy will be done."

For many of us, surrendering our plans feels like a loss of control. As Saint Augustine reminded us though, "Our hearts are restless until they rest in Him." God does not crush our freedom; He liberates it. When we pray to love His will, we ask for grace to trust the Father knows us better than we know ourselves and loves us more deeply than we can ever comprehend.

Loving God's will means living daily with active faith — finding Christ in our ordinary routines, our unexpected interruptions and even during our silent seasons of waiting. Conforming our hearts to His shifts our perspective: Trials become opportunities for spiritual growth, and joys become moments of profound thanksgiving. Let us pray for the courage to release our grip on personal expectations. May the Holy Spirit who has transformed fear into trust since that first Pentecost guide us to embrace God's will with joyful expectation. ■



Information provided by Deacon Greg Lievens, Saint Mary of Nazareth Catholic Church, 4600 Meredith Drive, Des Moines, 515-650-2738.

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## PLAN AHEAD

By Buffy Peters

# GRIEF and judgement

Do any of these sound familiar? "I shouldn't feel..." "I can't be angry..." "This is going to sound strange..." "I feel so weak..."

Do you know what I hear when I hear these statements made by people who are grieving?

Self-judgement. Perhaps reading the title, you thought I was referring to the judgement of others on those grieving. Certainly, that is something most grievers face at some point, but I want to talk about self-judgement. We don't have control of others' judgements, but, with awareness and intention, we do have power over our own.

Self-judgement makes our grief more difficult because we are self-imposing restrictions on the naturally occurring responses for the loss we have endured. Some of these responses may not feel natural and normal, but they are. It is important to remember that feelings aren't necessarily facts but can give us information about what our hearts need tending to. It can take time for our heads and our hearts to come to a place of agreement. And, sometimes, they never do, and that is OK.

Validating our own losses is a powerful tool in our coping-with-grief toolbox. When you have a judgmental thought, take a deep breath and tune into the feeling. Allow the feeling to exist as it is instead of dismissing it with a "I shouldn't feel this way." See what it has to tell you instead. You can learn a lot when you listen to what feelings are trying to teach you. ■



Information provided by Buffy Peters, Director of Hamilton's Academy of Grief & Loss, 3601 Westown Parkway, West Des Moines, IA 50266, 515-697-3666, www.HamiltonsFuneralHome.com/academy-of-grief-and-loss.

# ORCHESTRA club enhances music program

The Johnston Orchestra Club is something special.

It started as an idea between Kara Mather, who has taught violin, viola, cello, bass and piano for 30 years and conducted various youth and community orchestras, and Kristin Sullivan, a substitute teacher for Johnston Community School District and a violinist for 30 years.

Mather, who taught orchestra in Minnesota for more than 20 years before her family moved to Johnston for her spouse's job, realized that orchestra programs are rare in the metro area. Currently, she notes, only Des Moines, West Des Moines, Indianola, Pella and Ames offer them as part of their curriculum.

"While performing at local concerts and churches, I discovered several string players in our community who lacked an outlet for their music," Mather says. "This sparked a desire in me to share my love for the violin, viola, cello and bass with Johnston."

She eventually met Sullivan while performing at a high school choir concert. They spent a few years envisioning how to bring orchestra to Johnston before partnering with Johnston Community Education to launch the Johnston Orchestra Club.

Sullivan's deep community roots, Mather says, along with her idea for the club name and shared passion for orchestra, made her the perfect colleague to start this passion project. The club currently serves students in grades 4-12, but they hope to expand to an adult enrichment class one day.

The duo's goal is for the Johnston Orchestra Club to enhance the strong music programs already in place.

"Adding string instruction opens up a whole new world of musical literature, styles and creative expression," Sullivan says. "Just like a successful football program relies on a strong feeder system, a professional-level symphony needs youth programs to flourish. Beyond technical skill, we believe music is for everyone at every stage of life."

So far, there has been strong enthusiasm



from the community, whether from people excited their child can learn a skill they have always dreamed of pursuing or from those who have no direct connection to the program but are simply happy to see it exist.

"We have worked with music educators at many levels in Johnston schools, and they have all been incredibly supportive, for which we are grateful," Sullivan says. "We know that funding for the arts in public education is limited, and expanding what is offered in Johnston could be seen as dividing resources into smaller pieces. Our goal, and biggest challenge, is to support young string players in our community without diminishing support for the outstanding existing music programs in Johnston."

Mather adds they have been surprised by how many people assumed Johnston already had an orchestra program.

"I believe that assumption exists because Johnston has produced many talented string students over the years who have made it into the Des Moines Symphony Academy and even the Iowa All-State Orchestra," she says. "It's a testament to the dedication of local families, and it makes us even more excited to finally provide an established, local 'home' for that talent through the Johnston Orchestra Club."

Looking ahead, Mather is excited to develop leveled ensemble experiences as the program grows, allowing students to progress through more challenging repertoire at their own pace. She also looks forward to collaborating with Johnston's band and choir programs.

"The sound of a full combined ensemble is truly special," she says. "Beyond the classroom,

## Johnston Orchestra Club Summer Camp

**June 22-26, 8:30-11:30 a.m. with performance June 26 at 11 a.m., Wallace Elementary School Band Room & Auditorium, 6207 N.W. 62nd Ave., Johnston. Grades 4-12, must have own instrument.**

**Registration link:** <https://johnston.ce.eleyo.com/course/4285/summer-2026/johnston-orchestra-club-summer-edition>



I want our students to become a visible part of the community. By performing in various spaces throughout Johnston, our students will gain confidence from playing for new audiences, while our neighbors experience the joy of live string music right in their own backyard."

Additionally, Mather and Sullivan are working to find ways to reduce the cost of participation as much as possible — potentially even making it free.

"We continue to dream and brainstorm ideas for what this string program can be, including ways to broaden musical offerings culturally: Are there students interested in mariachi music? Country fiddle playing? Bluegrass bass?" Sullivan says. "What about electric instruments for show choirs or marching band? It's fun to imagine what might be possible and all the different students we can reach through strings." ■



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## HOME HEALTH

By Stacey Miller

# IN-HOME services

### Living where you want to, with a little help

A few years ago, Jeanne Klock fell.

She had always had trouble with her knees, and she worried that a serious fall could force her to leave the home she loved. Like many older adults, Jeanne wanted to stay where she felt most comfortable, surrounded by her own belongings, routines and memories.



So, when she stumbled, her first thought was frightening: "Now I'll have to leave my home."

Jeanne's family knew how much staying home mattered to her, so they began looking for support that could help her remain independent without requiring a move. That search led them to in-home services, also known as non-medical assistance.

Today, Jeanne is living independently at 89 in her home near Des Moines. In-home services aides help keep her safe, assist with daily activities and provide companionship. "I like that they don't tell me what to do," Jeanne said. "They make suggestions, but they are very kind. They would do anything for me."

That balance matters. In-home support is not about taking over. It is about helping people continue living on their own terms, with the right level of assistance.

An in-home services aide may help someone get ready in the morning, prepare meals, provide light housekeeping or go along to appointments. Some days may include errands, shopping or social outings. Other days may be quieter, with conversation, a good meal and help around the home.

"I help her get ready in the mornings, and some days we are pretty active, going here and there," said Wendy, one of Jeanne's aides. "I go with her to doctors' appointments, we go shopping — really anywhere she needs or wants to go. Some days, we take it slower."

In-home services are different from medical home health care. In most cases, they are not covered by insurance and are paid for by the client or family. Services vary by provider, but they often include help with cooking, light housekeeping, laundry, errands, appointments, personal care, pet care, medication reminders and companionship.

When choosing an in-home services provider, families should ask how support is delivered, not just what tasks are offered. A good provider will take time to understand a person's routines, preferences, safety needs and goals before recommending a plan. Ask how aides are trained, supervised and matched with clients; whether schedules can change as needs change; and how the provider communicates with family members.

For Jeanne, the arrangement has helped her keep what matters most: Her home, her choices and her sense of independence.

"My things are here, and I'm comfortable here," she said. "I just need a little help. I think it should be up to a person where they choose to live." ■

Stacey Miller is executive director of WesleyLife at Home, which offers a broad network of services, including medical and non-medical at-home care. Visit wesleylife.org or call 515- 978-2777.

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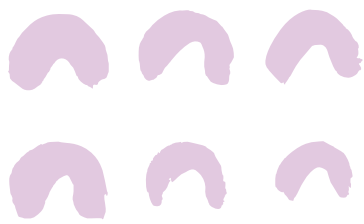
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## A YOUNG musician's journey

Allemande soars as oboist.

Madeline Allemande comes from a musical family. She and her two siblings have played numerous instruments, but what has stuck with her is something outside the box.

“Even though it was unusual for someone my age to make a sound on the oboe, its unique, distinct quality immediately appealed to me,” Allemande says. “I even needed special permission from the band teacher because the oboe is difficult to care for, but thanks to my parents’ musical background, they felt comfortable letting me play it.”

As Allemande grew as an oboist, she also learned the English horn — an auxiliary instrument in the oboe family that is longer, lower, darker and warmer, with a haunting, velvety tone. She said it is often used in orchestral works and movie scores.

“The oboe itself is a distinctive member of the woodwind family, capable of expressing a wide range of emotions and colors, and it can be played in both band and orchestra,” she says. “Its ability to shape mood and emotion, along with its unmistakable voice within the ensemble, is what first drew me to it and what has kept me playing ever since.”

Today, Allemande is part of the Des Moines Youth Symphony, which is affiliated with the Des Moines Symphony Orchestra — one of only four youth symphony programs in the nation connected to a professional orchestra. She earned her spot after auditioning in eighth



Madeline Allemande was drawn to the versatility of the oboe and will continue to study it at Drake University.

## NEWS BRIEF

### INSTALLATION ceremony



Johnston Postmaster Leigh Zantow was installed by regional and district officers April 7.

grade for Maestro Giunta, which is rare for a woodwind player given how competitive those sections are. Typically, woodwind musicians are not accepted until their junior year of high school.

Allemande is currently the only Johnston High School student in the ensemble and is also part of the honors woodwind quintet.

“When I first started, I was extremely nervous since I didn’t have anyone to talk to right away,” she says. “Thankfully, the orchestra is full of great members who love to include everyone in conversations. I’m proud to represent Johnston in the orchestra.”

For her, being in the orchestra has opened the door to musical experiences and opportunities she never knew existed and has inspired her to continue pursuing this path.

“I plan to study oboe performance and music business in college because I know there is so much to learn in both areas of the music world, and my time in the DMYS has shown me what is possible,” Allemande says.

For the past five years, she has studied with Jennifer Wohlleber, principal oboist for the Des Moines Symphony Orchestra and a professor of oboe at Drake University.

“I had considered attending other music schools across the country — Oberlin, DePaul and Eastman — but my experiences working with Jennifer ultimately led me to choose Drake University this fall so I can continue studying with her,” Allemande says. “The Des Moines Symphony Orchestra mentors the Des Moines Youth Symphony and maintains a close working relationship, and I never would have found her as a mentor and resource if I hadn’t been part of the DMYS.” ■

# THE VALUE of an annual eye exam

An annual eye exam is an important part of maintaining overall health and preserving clear vision throughout life. Many people assume that eye examinations are only necessary when vision problems develop, but regular yearly checkups help detect issues early, often before noticeable symptoms appear. Eye exams not only evaluate eyesight but also identify diseases that may affect both the eyes and general health.



The process of an annual eye exam usually begins with a discussion of medical history and current symptoms. The eye doctor, either an optometrist or ophthalmologist, asks questions about vision changes, headaches, medications, family history of eye disease and general health conditions such as diabetes or high blood pressure. This information helps determine risk factors for eye disorders and guides the examination process.

One of the most familiar parts of the exam is the visual acuity test. During this test, the patient reads letters from an eye chart placed at a distance. This measures how clearly a person can see and determines whether corrective lenses are needed or if an existing prescription should be updated. Near vision may also be tested to evaluate reading ability and focusing skills.

The doctor also examines how well the eyes work together. Eye movement, focusing ability, depth perception and pupil reactions are checked to ensure the muscles and nerves controlling the eyes are functioning properly. These tests are especially important for children, older adults and people who spend long hours using digital devices.

Another key part of the annual eye exam is the refraction assessment. Using special lenses and equipment, the doctor determines the exact prescription needed for glasses or contact lenses. Patients compare different lens choices to identify which provides the clearest and most comfortable vision. This process helps correct nearsightedness, farsightedness, astigmatism and age-related focusing problems.

Annual eye exams can reveal signs of conditions beyond vision problems. Diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, autoimmune disorders and high cholesterol may show early symptoms in the blood vessels or tissues of the eye. Detecting these signs can lead to earlier medical treatment and improved health outcomes.

Overall, an annual eye exam is a simple and extremely valuable preventive health measure. It helps maintain clear vision, updates prescriptions, detects eye diseases early and provides insight into overall physical health. Regular eye care supports daily activities, work performance, learning and quality of life. By scheduling yearly eye exams, individuals take an important step toward protecting both their eyesight and long-term well-being.

Contact your insurance advisor to understand how a preventive eye visit differs from one that is medically necessary. ■

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

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# GROWTH and Development Tour

The Johnston Growth and Development Tour, sponsored by the city of Johnston and the Johnston Chamber, was held May 14.



Andy Vis and Dave Wilwerding



Jeremy Dirks and Staci LoVan



Jim Evans and Brian Burkhardt



Ethan Standard and Derek Kohles



Mike Poggee-Weaver and Cathy Schulze



Ryan Anderson and Samantha Howell



Scott Wendl, Tom Gayman and Mark Riley



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Paula Bierle, Dan Fitzgerald and Julia Bradshaw



Rhonda Martin, Bart Turk and Melissa Hills



Mayor Paula Dierenfeld and Bob Haus

# OUT & ABOUT



Kim Hagen, Laurie DeHaai, Jenni Streeter, Leigh Tomich, Lisa Wilson and Monica Augspurger at the Iowa National Guard celebration for the 250th Anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence at Camp Dodge May 21.



Drilon Zogaj, MG Stephen Osborn, Mayor Paula Dierenfeld, Karla McCollum and Jackie Schmillen at the Iowa National Guard celebration for the 250th Anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence at Camp Dodge May 21.



Iowa National Guard 34th Army Band entertained the crowd after the flag lowering ceremony at the Iowa National Guard celebration for the 250th Anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence at Camp Dodge May 21.



Angel Hower, Sherri McLain, Amy Gale, W01 Stacie Baker-Stoen and Michael Scholer at the Iowa National Guard celebration for the 250th Anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence at Camp Dodge May 21.



Retirees for 2026 were acknowledged at the Johnston Chamber Educator Appreciation event held May 6 at the Freedom Center at Camp Dodge.



Julia Bradshaw and Paula Bierle at the Johnston Chamber Educator Appreciation event held May 6 at the Freedom Center at Camp Dodge.



Clara Toot and Stephanie Toot at the Johnston Chamber Educator Appreciation event held May 6 at the Freedom Center at Camp Dodge.



Major Anthony Dvorak and Staff Sgt. Jack Riley at the Johnston Chamber Educator Appreciation event held May 6 at the Freedom Center at Camp Dodge.



Andrea Hodapp, Jenni Buchanan, Sharm Sisler, Michael Tiffany, Julia Bradshaw and Blake Campbell were among the committee members/volunteers at the Johnston Chamber Educator Appreciation event.

# CLASSIFIEDS

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