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OCTOBER 2023

Living

MAGAZINE

RESIDENTS' CHOICE AWARDS

Grimes, Johnston and Dallas Center residents share their favorites



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WELCOME

RESIDENTS choose again

Welcome to our annual compilation of residents' choices in Johnston, Grimes and Dallas Center. We launched this poll to determine the top people, places and events in the area, and the results make for a fun read each year.

We invite residents in the area to vote for their favorites by answering more than 60 questions with open-ended responses. Some other polls rig the results by "suggesting" choices of businesses or requiring them to pay to be on the ballot. That is unethical, in our eyes, as it doesn't give a true snapshot of what the locals really like. Rest assured, these results are 100% organic responses that we received from our online ballots.

We have become quite good at polling our readers and sharing results. I have been gathering this type of information for CITYVIEW magazine for many years, and you are likely familiar with the Best Of Des Moines readers' poll and the certificates you see across central Iowa. That poll was the first of its kind in the metro area, and it continues to be the primary source of central Iowans' favorites. Now we know it not only works for Des Moines, but for Johnston, Grimes and Dallas Center as well.

You will likely agree with many of the results, and you will likely disagree with some, too. Hopefully, you took the time to cast your vote. If not, be sure to do so next year. Look to the pages of this magazine for full details as the time draws nearer.

We published the top three vote-getters in each of the categories inside these pages. Be sure to congratulate all the people, places and events that were selected as winners and let them know how much you appreciate their being in these communities.

As always, thank you for reading, and thank you for voting, too. ■



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RESIDENTS' CHOICE AWARDS

Grimes, Johnston and Dallas Center residents share their favorites

Another year has rolled around, and it is once again time to check in with local residents about their favorite professionals, businesses, local attractions and more.

The results of the Grimes, Johnston and Dallas Center Residents' Choice Poll have been tallied, and congratulations are in order. Many of last year's favorites return to the top three, but some new ones have also emerged. Regardless, all can truly be proud, for they have earned the respect and loyalty of those who matter most — customers. From favorite restaurant to hair salon, bank, veterinarian, health club, park and more, the people who know — because they live here — have shared their opinions.

When it comes to dining options, Johnston establishments rank among favorites in a variety of categories, including overall restaurant, with Trostel's Greenbriar Restaurant and Bar returning as residents' favorite. Residents also gave the nod to Cozy Café for breakfast and Pagliai's Pizza as their favorite pizza establishment.

Want to visit residents' favorite park? Stop at Terra Park in Johnston. Favorite nonprofit? Johnston Partnership was the choice. Boutique? The Purple Poppy got the nod. Have we whet your appetite? Read on for the full results.

Whether you agree or not, these are the views of your friends and neighbors. If you didn't cast your votes, be sure to do so next year. To the top three, great job dazzling your customers. To those striving to be in next year's winner's circle, get in gear now. The competition is fierce.

Jackie Schuessler of Johnston Partnership Food Pantry. Johnston Partnership was voted as residents' favorite nonprofit in the annual Residents' Choice Awards. Photo by Todd Rullestad

Grimes, Johnston and Dallas Center Residents' Choice for Favorite ...

(Runners up in alphabetical order)

Restaurant

Trostel's Greenbriar Restaurant and Bar, Johnston

Runners up: Destination Grille, Grimes; Hacienda Vieja, Grimes

Restaurant for breakfast

Cozy Cafe, Johnston

Runners up: Hy-Vee; Sugar Grove Goods, Dallas Center

Restaurant for lunch

Korner Kone Eats N' Treats, Dallas Center

Runners up: Charlotte's Kitchen, Johnston; Pour Choices Neighborhood Bar, Grimes

Restaurant for dinner

Trostel's Greenbriar Restaurant and Bar, Johnston

Runners up: Destination Grille, Grimes; Hacienda Vieja, Grimes

Restaurant for dessert

Korner Kone Eats N' Treats, Dallas Center

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

Place for ice cream

Heavenly Delights, Grimes

Runners up: Korner Kone Eats N' Treats, Dallas Center; Van Dee's Ice Cream Shoppe, Johnston



Pizza establishment

Pagliai's Pizza, Johnston

Runners up: Bredeaux Pizza, Grimes; Casey's General Store

Bar

Stevie C's, Grimes

Runners up: Pour Choices Neighborhood Bar, Grimes; Uptown Bar & Grill, Grimes

Coffee shop

Starbucks

Runners up: Scooter's Coffee; Sugar Grove Goods, Dallas Center

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FEATURE

Caterer

Hy-Vee

Runners up: Cyd's Catering, Johnston; Jethro's BBQ n' Pork Chop Grill, Johnston

Server/bartender

Brittany Richards, 1st Street Tavern, Grimes

Runners up: Heather Loops, Trostel's Greenbriar Restaurant and Bar, Johnston; Bailey Osterhout, Board & Batten, Dallas Center

Auto service

Finishline Auto Works, Grimes

Runners up: Christian Brothers Automotive, Grimes; Shade Tree Auto, Grimes

Auto body shop

Finishline Auto Works, Grimes

Runners up: Christian Brothers Automotive, Grimes; Minor Wreck Express, Johnston

Car dealership

Toyota of Des Moines, Grimes

Runners up: Audi Des Moines, Johnston; Bam Motors, Dallas Center

Preschool / day care

Kids Korner, Dallas Center

Runners up: Generation Next Child Development Center and Preschool, Johnston; Johnston KinderCare, Johnston

Nonprofit

Johnston Partnership

Runners up: Children's Cancer Connection; Grimes Storehouse

School

Dallas Center Elementary

Runners up: Dallas Center Grimes High School; Wallace Elementary, Johnston

Park

Terra Park, Johnston

Runners up: Dewey Park, Johnston; Mound Park, Dallas Center

Community festival/event

Dallas Center Fall Festival

Runners up: Grimes Governors Days; Johnston Green Days

Church

Lutheran Church of Hope Grimes

Runners up: NorthPoint Church, Johnston; St. Peter Lutheran Church, Grimes

Pastor

Jeremy Carr, NorthPoint Church, Johnston

Runners up: Mark Schlenker, St. Peter Lutheran Church, Grimes; Ben Wedeking, Grimes United Methodist Church

Chamber of commerce

Grimes Chamber and Economic Development

Runners up: Dallas Center Betterment Foundation; Johnston Chamber of Commerce

Grocery store

Fareway

Runners up: Aldi, Hy-Vee

Boutique

Purple Poppy Boutique, Johnston

Runners up: 2 Harts Boutique, Grimes; Brown Eyed Girl, Dallas Center

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FEATURE

Retail store

Christopher's Rare Coins, Johnston

Runners up: Board and Batten, Dallas Center; Johnston Ace Hardware

Thrift store

Many Hands Thrift Market, Grimes

Runner up: Goodwill of Central Iowa, Johnston

Home improvement retail store

Menards, Grimes

Runners up: Johnston Ace Hardware; Kempker's True Value and Rental, Grimes

Liquor store

Hy-Vee Wine & Spirits

Runners up: Spirits Liquor, Grimes; WineStyles, Johnston

Nursery / garden center

Canoyer Garden Center, Grimes

Runners up: Bentley Ridge Tree Farm, Grimes; Earl May Nursery and Garden Center, Grimes

Place to purchase a gift for a man

Menards, Grimes

Runners up: Board and Batten, Dallas Center; Johnston Ace Hardware

Place to purchase a gift for a woman

Purple Poppy Boutique, Johnston

Runners up: Brown Eyed Girl, Dallas Center; Canoyer Garden Center, Grimes

Dad/child date spot

Sky Zone Trampoline Park, Grimes

Runners up: Backpocket Pin and Pixel, Johnston; Korner Kone Eats N' Treats, Dallas Center

Mom/child date spot

Korner Kone Eats N' Treats, Dallas Center

Runners up: AMC Theatres, Johnston; Sky Zone Trampoline Park, Grimes

Place to take your mom and dad

Trostel's Greenbriar Restaurant and Bar, Johnston

Runners up: Central States Mobility, Johnston; Korner Kone Eats N' Treats, Dallas Center



Dr. Derek Furrow and Dr. Emily Furrow, of Furrow Family Dentistry, are residents' choice for favorite dental clinic.

Place to take your kids or grandkids

Emerge Academy, Grimes

Runners up: Korner Kone Eats N' Treats, Dallas Center; Sky Zone Trampoline Park, Grimes



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FEATURE

Children's birthday party spot

Emerge Academy, Grimes

Runners up: Mid Iowa Gymnastics, Grimes;
Sky Zone Trampoline Park, Grimes

Golf course

Beaver Creek Golf Club, Grimes

Runner up: Hyperion Field Club, Johnston

Hair salon

Talking Heads Salon, Grimes

Runners up: PURE Salon Aveda Johnston;
Studio S, Dallas Center

Health clinic

**MercyOne Johnston Pediatrics Care,
Johnston**

Runners up: The Iowa Clinic Johnston;
UnityPoint Clinic Family Medicine - Grimes

Dental office

Furrow Family Dentistry, Johnston

Runners up: Grove & Platt Dental Associates,
Grimes; Johnston Dental, Johnston



Bill, Tatum, Brian and Liz Dresback, Christopher's Rare Coins, were chosen as residents' choice for favorite retail store. Photo courtesy of Everlasting Photo

Orthodontist

Mann Orthodontics, Grimes

Runners up: Grove & Platt Dental Associates,
Grimes; Iowa Orthodontic Solutions, Johnston

Mental health service

Family Legacy Counseling, Johnston

Runners up: Providence Place, Grimes;
RedCouch Counseling, Johnston

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Chiropractic office

Kleckner Chiropractic Clinic, Grimes

Runners up: Herrmann Family Chiropractic, Johnston; Nerem Family Chiropractic, Grimes

Vision care

Total Family Eye Care, Grimes

Runners up: Lifetime Vision, Johnston; Precision Family Eyecare, Grimes

Health club or gym

CrossFit 8035 West, Grimes

Runners up: Anytime Fitness; Emerge Academy, Grimes

Pharmacy

Hy-Vee Pharmacy

Runners up: Medicap Pharmacy, Walgreens Pharmacy

Cosmetic services

Central Iowa Dermatology, Johnston

Runners up: The Aesthetic Bank, Grimes; Studio IV, Grimes

Physical therapy

Athletico Physical Therapy - Johnston

Runners up: Elevate Physical Therapy and Sports Medicine, Johnston; Rock Valley Physical Therapy, Grimes

Dance studio

Inspiring Dance, Grimes

Runners up: Black Pearl Dance Academy, Grimes; Dance Vision, Johnston

Gymnastics studio

Emerge Academy, Grimes

Runners up: Inspiring Dance, Grimes; Mid Iowa Gymnastics, Grimes

Tumbling studio

Emerge Academy, Grimes

Runners up: Inspiring Dance, Grimes; Mid Iowa Gymnastics, Grimes

Financial planner

Danny Beyer, Iron Horse Wealth Management, Johnston

Runners up: Bryce Block, City State Bank Trust & Investments, Grimes; Loren Merkle, Merkle Retirement Planning, Grimes

Law firm

Brown, Fagen & Rouse, Dallas Center and Grimes

Runners up: Letsch Law Firm, Grimes; Danilson Law, Johnston

Accounting firm

ThornTree CPA Services, Johnston

Runners up: Accounting & Tax Professionals, Grimes; Loren Merkle, Merkle Retirement Planning, Grimes

Veterinarian

Prairie View Animal Hospital, Grimes

Runners up: Grimes Plaza Veterinary Clinic, Grimes; Westfield Veterinary Hospital, Johnston


Dog groomer

Clean & Breezy, Johnston

Runners up: Dog Grooming by Dani; Klise Dog, Johnston


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FEATURE

Pet care

Dogwoods Lodge, Grimes

Runners up: Grimes Plaza Veterinary Clinic, Grimes; Prairie View Animal Hospital, Grimes

Lawn care business

CLK Lawn Care, Dallas Center

Runners up: Colby's Lawn & Landscape, Johnston; Yardworks Lawn care & Landscaping, Grimes

Landscaping company

CLK Lawn Care, Dallas Center

Runners up: Bentley Ridge Tree Farm & Nursery, Grimes; Yardworks Lawn care & Landscaping, Grimes

Heating and cooling business

Chas W. Goering Plumbing, Heating, and Cooling

Runners up: Golden Rule Plumbing, Heating, Cooling, Electrical, Grimes; Kohles & Bach Heating and Cooling, Johnston

Electrical business

Deaver Electric, Grimes

Runners up: Elite Electric & Utility Contractors, Dallas Center; Luellen Enterprises, Dallas Center

Plumbing company

Golden Rule Plumbing, Heating, Cooling, Electrical, Grimes

Runners up: Elite Electric & Utility Contractors, Dallas Center; Roto-Rooter Des Moines, Grimes

Senior living establishment

Edencrest at Green Meadows, Johnston

Runners up: Kennybrook Village, Grimes; Spurgeon Manor, Dallas Center

Insurance Company

Glenn Waterhouse, State Farm Insurance, Johnston

Runners up: Andrea Sabus, State Farm Insurance, Grimes; City State Bank Insurance, Grimes

Realtor

Steve R. Nissly, RE/MAX Concepts, Dallas Center

Runners up: Joleen Roskamp, RE/MAX Precision, Johnston; Casee Woodley, RE/MAX Precision, Johnston

Bank / credit union

City State Bank

Runners up: Charter Bank; Raccoon Valley Bank

Photographer

Simply You Photography by Katie Ramsey, Grimes

Runners up: Becky Peterson Photography; Kari Bruck Photography, Johnston

Place for guests to stay

The Church in Town, Dallas Center

Runners up: Hilton Garden Inn Des Moines/Urbandale, Johnston; Stoney Creek Hotel and Conference Center, Johnston

Homebuilding / remodeling contractor

Renov8 IA, Johnston

Runners up: Brenner Built, Grimes; Cover's Construction, Dallas Center ■



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"Fiduciary" is a funny but important word to consider when finding the right person to help you plan for retirement. It comes from the Latin "fidere," meaning "to trust." The term may not roll right off your tongue, but we all understand and value the concept of trust.

In the financial industry, a fiduciary must, by law, act impartially and provide advice that is in their clients' best interest. Choosing a fiduciary can help put you at ease when looking for the right retirement planner. This person should be transparent and thoroughly explain investment options and fees. If you are working with someone who doesn't have a fiduciary duty to you, you have fewer legal options should you discover that your best interests were not served. When interviewing a potential retirement planner, a few questions are, "What's your legal obligation to my investments?" and "What investment services or advice will you be providing me?" It's also a good idea to ask for regulatory documentation on how they handle conflicts of interest and what procedures they have to ensure your best interests are placed before theirs.

Check that your retirement planners are all investment advisors registered with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. They will uphold the regulatory requirements needed to be financial fiduciaries.



Aside from regulatory requirements, being a fiduciary is necessary to protect the families and individuals they work with.

Some retirement planners have also passed a rigorous certification and training process established by the National Association of Certified Financial Fiduciaries to obtain the Certified Financial Fiduciary designation. While the other financial designations you might see cover the legalities of a fiduciary, there is no other designation that focuses solely on understanding and being the best fiduciary one can be. This training not only puts retirement planners in a better position to help families and individuals plan for retirement, it keeps the critical word "trust" at the forefront of the entire retirement planning process. Obtaining the Certified Financial Fiduciary designation allows retirement planners to apply a wide array of knowledge to your retirement and ensure that all facets of your plan are intentional, customized and transparent.

When planning for retirement, the Latin you may want to live by is "carpe diem." This phrase means to seize the day, enjoy the moment, and worry less about tomorrow. Finding a retirement planner you trust can help you do just that. ■

Information provided by Loren Merkle CFP®, RICP®, Certified Financial Fiduciary®, Merkle Retirement Planning, 1860 S.E. Princeton Drive, Grimes, 515-278-1006.

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LIBRARY

SUPPORT your library at Art in the Barn

Mark your calendars — the 11th annual Art in the Barn fundraising event is happening on Friday, Oct. 20, from 5:30-8:30 p.m. at the Simpson Barn, just west of Johnston Public Library. Peruse and purchase work from more than 20 local artists and enjoy appetizers, wine, boutique beer, and live music included with the \$20 ticket price. Tickets for Art in the Barn are on sale now at the library or online at johnstonlibrary.com/art-in-the-barn and will be available for purchase at the door on the night of the event. Come for the art, come for the entertainment or come to catch up with your neighbors.

If you can't make it to Art in the Barn but are still interested in supporting the library, please consider donating to the Johnston Public Library Foundation. The mission of the Johnston Public Library Foundation is "to enhance and improve the Johnston Public Library." Board members — our neighbors, business and community leaders — work to generate community support for collection development, programs and technology and building initiatives that are beyond the means of the library's operating budget.

In 2023, the Library Foundation invested funds to support children's Summer Reading programming, new outdoor patio furniture at JPL, an outdoor musical garden, and branded book bag prizes for the year-long Ultimate Reading Challenge for Adults. Your generous gifts have made these projects possible.

More information about Art in the Barn is available online at johnstonlibrary.com/art-in-the-barn or by calling Johnston Public Library at 515-278-5233. We hope to see you on Friday, Oct. 20, from 5:30-8:30 p.m. Support your library, enjoy local art, and have some local fun. ■

NEWS BRIEF

SOCIAL Connection



The Johnston Women's Social Connection hosted an ice cream and dessert social at the Ellipsis boys home on Merle Hay Road and Beaver Avenue on Aug. 15. All the boys and staff had a great time. Senior women interested in joining this fun group can contact Sue at 515-494-2228. ■

SENIORS targeted for cyber crimes

According to data collected in 2022, in the United States, adults aged 60 years and older made up the second highest category of targeted individuals of cyber crimes at more than 88,262. Clearly, our older population is a vulnerable target of cyber criminals. In today's ever-changing technological world, we need to be more vigilant for our older population as well as educate them on the dangers that exist.

One cyber threat to educate our aging population about is the increase in password phishing. This is when a cybercriminal will send out a link to a user's email address asking for their username and password. The recipient may believe this email to be from a credible source such as an IT department or customer



support agent. Never give out personal password information to anyone via phone or email. If you are unsure if the source you are speaking to is credible, always reach out to a trusted loved one or the authorities.

Cyber threats are also prevalent on social media. Social media is a common form of communication these days. Websites such as Facebook allow our aging loved ones to stay connected and updated with friends and family. However, cyber criminals can use such platforms to scam our elderly population. Many scams exist on social media and accounts can be easily hacked. Cyber criminals can appear as profiles of someone you may know and request money. If you are unsure if you are speaking to a real person, ask them a question only someone close to you would know.

Another issue that may become a prevalent cyber threat to our elderly population is the evolution of deep fake technology. This is a

type of technology that can be used to emulate a loved one's voice or even image via video or voice chat AI technologies. Ensure your loved ones are truly speaking with who they think they are, especially if someone is claiming to be their family and requesting money be sent in some form.

Keeping our older loved ones safe online is becoming a more difficult challenge every day. We must be aware of new threats as they evolve and the methods in which criminals are targeting our loved ones. Educating our loved ones should be something we prioritize to ensure they remain financially secure. Cyber criminals are looking for the easiest targets, and, often, these targets are individuals older than 60. Let's make it our goal to prevent scams and educate our loved ones. ■

Information provided by Alex McGregor, director, Edencrest at Green Meadows, 6750 Corporate Drive, Johnston, 515-207-1984.

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Oct. 10 - Annie Mielke & Joe Parrish
Adventures in Social Development

Oct. 17 - Shreyas Shrestha
2023 RYLA Recap

Oct. 24 - Tamara Harrison
Salvation Army of Central Iowa

Oct. 31 - Mike Pogge-Weaver
City of Johnston

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ROTARY By Lu Ann White

ROTARY holds Cy-Hawk benefit challenge

Johnston club gathers needed personal care items for



What does Johnston Rotary do? One of the main themes of Johnston Rotary is "Service Above Self." To carry out this motto, Johnston Rotary involves itself in service projects and fundraising for local charities and organizations as well as Rotary International projects. One of the charities Johnston Rotary supports is the Johnston Partnership. This past month, Johnston Rotary lived this motto by putting some friendly competition toward a worthy and needy cause. Johnston Rotary members, divided in their loyalties to Iowa, Iowa State, Drake and UNI and Other, and "I Don't Care," fought it out on the donation tables, bringing much needed personal care supplies for the Johnston Partnership at their meeting before the big Cy-Hawk showdown. It was a hard-fought challenge, but Iowa State Rotary fans won out, bringing the most items, or at least the biggest that would take up more room. The showdown netted 345 pounds of personal care products for the Partnership. It was a great way to start off the Cy-Hawk rivalry week. Rotarians brought personal care items including toilet paper, body soap, laundry soap, dish soap, deodorant, paper towels, Kleenexes, shampoo, conditioner, shower gel, diapers and baby wipes, and cash. Rotary members delivered the needed donations to the Johnston Partnership, which continues to see record numbers of families coming to the food pantry and clothes closet for basic needs.

This past winter, Johnston Rotary collected winter coats, outerwear and boots for the Partnership. Doing a drive for personal care items and cash, for clothing and shoes, or for winter coats and boots is a way for an organization to have a team-building project while helping those in need in the community. Also, this spring, Johnston Rotary visited the Johnston Partnership for one of its meetings and learned about the food pantry, clothes closet, and JUMP mentoring program from Program Director Andrea Cook. The Johnston Partnership was designated as one of the beneficiaries of the Johnston Rotary's June J-Town Golf Tournament.

The Johnston Partnership provides the community with a food pantry, clothes closet, and JUMP school mentoring program. It is located at 5870 Merle Hay Road, Suite C, Johnston. Its website is www.johnstonpartnership.org. Donors and volunteers keep the Johnston Partnership working for the community. Donations are accepted during business hours, which are Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., and Tuesdays from 4-6 p.m. ■

More information about the Johnston Rotary Club can be found at <https://portal.clubrunner.ca/1649> or contact Neil Hyde, 515-210-2649, hyde_neil@yahoo.com.

LEGAL issues after losing a spouse

Losing a spouse can be one of life's most stressful events. In addition to coping with the loss of a loved one, the survivor must make important decisions. The surviving spouse may have to take on new responsibilities, such as managing household finances or returning to work. The loss of a spouse has a major impact on the survivor, both emotionally and legally. A handful of legal issues should be addressed when a spouse passes away.



First, the surviving spouse must locate the will. The will names an executor to handle the administrative responsibilities of settling the estate, such as paying final bills, disbursing assets, and filing final income and estate tax returns. The executor may be the surviving spouse or someone else. If there is no will, the probate court can appoint someone to administer the estate. It is essential to hire an experienced attorney to assist with the probate process.

Even if the decedent and a surviving spouse owned most or all property jointly, legal actions are required to finalize the estate. Iowa law requires that an original last will and testament be filed with the clerk of court, even if there will be no probate of the estate. Title to jointly-owned real estate must be transferred to the survivor. This must be done through a document filed with the local county recorder. Assets such

as investment accounts and life insurance should be transferred to the named beneficiary.

The will isn't the only document required to settle an estate. Financial documents and information to file claims for insurance and other benefits are also needed, including:

- Death certificate
- Trust information
- Abstract of title to real estate
- Original stock certificates
- Information on bonds
- Financial account statements (bank accounts, investments, retirement accounts)
- Insurance policies
- Vehicle registration and insurance information
- Appraisals of any tangible personal property that has significant value, such as antiques, artwork or collections

A surviving spouse should then review their own estate plan. The passing of a spouse is a good time to update a last will and testament and to ensure that advance directives (powers of attorney and a living will) are in place. A widow or widower can also assess the remaining assets to plan for strategic gifting or the possibility of needing long-term care. ■

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

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RECIPE

FILL your family's plates with cozy fall meals

(Family Features) Putting away the homework, turning off electronics and spending a little quality time together can help ease everyday stresses. Add a cozy meal packed with tastes you love and you'll have the perfect recipe for an autumn evening with your family.

Cooler days call for comforting flavors the entire family can enjoy at the dinner table like roasted veggies — from sweet potatoes to pumpkin and more — paired with hearty favorites like cheesy pierogies that provide a sense of warmth and coziness. Make this autumn one to remember by creating new meals and memories along the way.

For an extra special celebration with the ones you love in honor of the 15th anniversary of National Pierogy Day, consider a cozy, warming dish like Roasted Sweet Potatoes Brown Butter Pierogies, which is loaded with the flavors of the season. This comforting meal starts with cubed sweet potatoes — a hallmark of fall — along with pierogies tossed in a homemade brown butter sauce. Top with pecans for a nutty crunch and fresh thyme leaves for the final touch on a newfound favorite that'll bring loved ones running to the dinner table.

Find more ways to incorporate fall flavors into your family's everyday menu by visiting MrsTsPierogies.com. ■

Roasted sweet potatoes brown butter pierogies

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 30 minutes

Servings: 4-5

- 1 bag (1.6 pounds) Mrs. T's Mini Classic Cheddar Pierogies
- 2 cups sweet potato cubes (approximately 1 large or 2 medium sweet potatoes, cut into 1/2-inch cubes)
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- salt, to taste
- pepper, to taste
- 4 tablespoons salted butter
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- water
- 1/2 cup pecans
- fresh thyme leaves, for serving

DIRECTIONS

- Preheat oven to 400 F.
- Toss sweet potato cubes in olive oil, salt and pepper, to taste, and spread in even layer on baking sheet. Roast 25-30 minutes, tossing about halfway through, until potatoes are fork tender.



- In medium skillet over medium heat, brown butter 5-10 minutes. Avoid smoking or burning. Remove from heat. Allow to cool about 5 minutes then whisk in balsamic vinegar and lemon juice.
- In large saucepan, bring water to boil. Cook pierogies according to package directions, about 3 minutes. Drain and toss in brown butter sauce.
- Add roasted sweet potatoes and pecans to brown butter pierogies and toss gently to coat.
- Top with fresh thyme leaves.

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ARE your kids up to date on medical, dental and vision for the new school year?

As the new school year has just begun, it is important to schedule an annual physical exam for all school-age children. These exams will fall within the “preventive category” of your health insurance policy and should not require any cost share. School physicals are wellness checkups that are required by most schools before a student can participate in sports and other activities. This annual appointment gives doctors a chance to monitor development and address any physical, emotional or social concerns. Physicals are also an excellent opportunity to make sure that your child’s vaccinations are up to date and that they have no urgent health concerns.

Whether your child will be in the classroom or learning from home, a healthy smile is still a back-to-school essential. You can expect the dentist to be looking at the big picture of your child’s mouth, including their teeth and gums, teeth alignment and their bite. A professional cleaning is essential, too. It removes cavity-causing bacteria and helps to keep gum tissue healthy. You can expect an x-ray only when necessary and not at every visit. If your child wears a mouthguard while playing sports, it is a good idea to take it to the appointment. The dentist can then check for any wear, tear or fit. Lastly, sealants can be a nice additional option to prevent cavities. In fact, sealants on permanent molars reduces the risk of cavities by 80%.

Too commonly, we find that annual vision exams come in third place when it comes to prioritizing these appointments for our children. Keep in mind that, to a striking degree, our kids’ school performance and how they behave in class is impacted by their vision. The Academy of Ophthalmology estimates that 80% of all learning during a child’s first 12 years occurs visually. Now consider that 10% of preschoolers and 25% of kids in grades K-6 have vision deficiencies, according to the American Public Health Association.

Let’s keep our kids on track by focusing on their health this school 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. Full articles can be found at Family Health Care of Siouxland: “Everything You Need To Know About School Physicals.” | American Dental Association: “5 Questions to Ask at Your Child’s Back-to-School Dental Visit.”



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CITY OFFICE BUILDING CLOSURES FOR UPCOMING HOLIDAYS

The City of Johnston's office buildings, including the Johnston Public Library, will observe the following closures:

1. On Friday, November 10, closed in honor of Veterans Day.
2. From Thursday, November 23, to Friday, November 24, closed for the Thanksgiving Day holiday.

Please note that these closures do not impact trash, recycling, and yard waste collection schedules.

TRICK-OR-TREAT WITH POLICE AND FIRE ON OCTOBER 25

Come and join your fellow community members for a special Halloween event, Trick-or-Treat with First Responders on Wednesday, October 25, at Fire Station 38, 10225 NW 62nd Avenue. The event will run from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. During this time, the Police and Fire members will be distributing treats, and attendees will have the opportunity to explore police squad cars and fire trucks.

We warmly encourage all children to come dressed in their Halloween costumes to add to the festive spirit. The Bridge Church will host enjoyable activities for the children and will also be providing candy to make this Halloween celebration even more delightful.



BEGGARS' NIGHT PLANNED FOR OCTOBER 30

This year, Beggars' Night is set for Monday, October 30. Ensure a safe and enjoyable experience while trick-or-treating in Johnston's neighborhoods from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Follow these clear safety guidelines:

- **Supervision:** Always have a trusted adult accompany children.
- **Home entry:** Teach children to never enter a home without prior permission from their parents.
- **Vehicle caution:** Instruct children not to approach a vehicle unless accompanied by a parent or guardian.
- **Reflective attire:** Ensure your child wears reflective clothing for visibility.

You can have a fun and secure Beggars' Night celebration by adhering to these safety measures.

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



CITY NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2023

TREE BRANCH AND LIMB DROP-OFF, NOVEMBER 16-18

Each fall, the City of Johnston offers residents the opportunity to dispose of branches and limbs at no charge. You can bring these materials to the Public Works Facility at 6400 NW Beaver Drive between November 16 through November 18. To confirm residency, please bring a valid ID.

Drop-off Hours:

- **Thursday, November 16:** 7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
- **Friday, November 17:** 7:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
- **Saturday, November 18:** 7:00 a.m. – noon

Make the most of this complimentary service and contribute to the cleanliness and sustainability of our community.



Please note the following guidelines:

- Branches should not exceed 18 inches in diameter; larger sizes cannot be accepted due to recycling limitations.
- Stack branches with the cut ends facing the rear of your vehicle for efficient removal.
- Avoid including items like ropes, chains, wire, and fence posts, as they can damage equipment and pose risks to City staff if pulled into the chipper.

CURBSIDE YARD WASTE COLLECTION ENDS NOVEMBER 20 & 21

The curbside collection of yard waste under the Compost It! program is scheduled to conclude on November 20 and 21, aligning with your regular collection day.

This program welcomes small twigs, branches, leaves, lawn clippings, and various garden vegetation for disposal. Please refrain from including dirt, mulch, rocks, or food items in your yard waste.

For a comprehensive list of retailers offering Compost It! bags and stickers, or for additional details about yard waste collection, kindly visit Metro Waste Authority's website at www.WhereItShouldGo.com/YardWaste, or reach out to them at 515.244.0021.



ELECTION AND VOTING INFORMATION

The general election will be held on Tuesday, November 7, 2023. Polls will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

For more information, visit sos.iowa.gov/elections.



For more information about the city, please call 515.278.2344

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INVESTMENT **START** moving toward retirement security

By Tim Hanstad



It's not as well-known as Halloween, but National Retirement Security week happens every October — the third week, to be precise — and, while it doesn't involve ghosts and goblins, it does deal with something even more frightening: the risk of not being able to enjoy a comfortable retirement. Through various events, this occasion highlights ideas about building retirement security. What steps can you take?

Here are some suggestions

- **Don't underestimate your longevity.** Consider this: 65-year-old men can expect to live another 20 years, while 65-year-old women can anticipate almost 22 more years, according to the Society of Actuaries. And these figures are just averages, meaning you could well exceed these ages, perhaps by many years. So, in thinking about how much money you'll need as a retiree, be aware that you could spend two, or even three, decades in retirement.
- **Don't underestimate health care costs.** When you retire, some of your expenses — such as transportation, wardrobe and other costs associated with your career — will drop. Others will not and may even increase. Health care is a prime example: Many people assume that Medicare or their Medicare Advantage plan will take care of virtually all their health care costs in retirement, but that's not the case. Generally speaking, you could plan on spending \$4,500 to \$6,500 per year on health care costs during retirement, excluding the large expenses connected with long-term care. Your actual costs could be higher or lower, depending on your health, prescription drugs and supplemental insurance coverage, but make sure you plan for sizable health care costs in your projected retirement budget.
- **Contribute as much as you can afford to your retirement plans.** Try to put in as much as you can afford to your 401(k) or other employer-sponsored retirement plan and try to increase your contributions whenever your salary goes up. You may also be eligible to contribute to a traditional or Roth IRA, which offers tax benefits and a wide variety of investment options. (Contributions to a Roth IRA may be limited based on your income.)

Once you reach retirement, you can still make some moves that could help boost your financial security:

- **Maintain an appropriate investment mix.** When you retire, you might be tempted to shift most of your portfolio into highly conservative investments to "lock in" gains and avoid being over-exposed to market volatility that could cause short-term losses. Yet, even in retirement, you should still own some growth-oriented investments that can potentially help keep you ahead of inflation. In fact, it's important to periodically rebalance your investments back to your preferred mix to avoid taking too much or too little risk, so you may want to consult with a financial advisor.
- **Identify a suitable withdrawal rate.** You don't want to take out so much from your portfolio each year that you run the risk of outliving your money. So, you'll want to determine an annual withdrawal rate that can reduce this danger. A common withdrawal rate to start retirement is 4%, but your own rate should be based on several factors: your age, size of portfolio, other sources of income and so on.

It can be challenging to make all the moves necessary to help achieve retirement security — but it's worth the effort. ■

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

BELL wins national championship



Members of the Tornado Track Club

Jaida Bell of Johnston recently competed in the Track & Field Nationals at Eugene, Oregon, for the second year in a row and came home as the USATF Junior Olympics National Champion in the triple jump with a jump of 39'0.25. This tied her personal record jump, which broke the state record.

"What makes this story so special is that she might have become Iowa's first USATF Junior Olympics National Champion in triple jump," says Jeff Johannes, head coach for the Tornado Track Club, sprints, relays and horizontal jumps, in which Bell participates. "This event we do not have in our high school season. We are one of the few states that doesn't give our high school athletes a chance to learn it, so when we have an opportunity to do this event in the summer, we are usually at least three to four months behind the rest of the country in practicing it."

This was Bell's first year participating in summer track and competing for Tornado Track Club. In three weeks, she broke the state record by more than four feet, making her Iowa's all time triple jump leader, said Johannes.

"It was exciting to see her step up when a girl had passed her in the first round of prelim jumps," says Johannes. "This was new territory for her to see someone out-jump her. She looked in the stands at me and said, 'Oh, no, you are

not going to take this away from me.' She gave everything she had in the second jump to take first overall."

Bell also competed in the 100m and finished in 12.71 to improve on her ranking.

Previously, Bell won a bronze medal at the AAU Junior Olympic Games at Drake Stadium with a personal record jump of 39'3. "Unfortunately, she only got two jumps in before she pulled her quad," says Johannes. "So, in two months of learning this event, she became National Champion and two-time All American."

With two more years of competing with Tornado Track Club, "the sky is the limit" for Bell, says Johannes.

Other results for Tornado Track Club members AAU Junior Olympic Games

- **Jeremiah Armstrong** of Johnston, 10th place, long jump. He was also Iowa High School State Runner Up Champion behind Abu Sama in May when he jumped 22'3.75 as a freshman.
- **Alijah Armstrong** of Johnston, 17th place in triple jump and 19th place in long jump. Earlier in the year, he had jumped 43'2 in the triple jump. Next year he is looking to break the state record that is 42'4.
- **Steve Tour** of Johnston, **Renzo Saenz** of Perry, **Kolby Dinh** of Johnston and **Jeremiah**



Jaida Bell bites the gold medal she won in the triple jump at the Track & Field Nationals at Eugene, Oregon

Armstrong competed in the 4x100m relay and took 22nd place with a PR time 43.90.

• Also competing were **Eden Cameron** of Altoona, **Jalen Morris** of Johnston, **Uriah Allen** of Valley, **Tony Paye** of Johnston, **Obed Kabamba** of Johnston and **Vincent "Isaiah" Kelly** of Johnston.

Cornhusker Games (National Qualifier to the State Games of America, which will be held in San Diego next year).

• **Keira Johannes** of Johnston qualified in three events: long jump with a gold medal and bronze medals in both the 100m and 200m.

• **Vincent "Isaiah" Kelly** qualified in the 400m and 200m with silver medals.

• **Trinity Cameron** of Altoona qualified in the triple jump with a gold medal and long jump with a bronze medal.

• **Jaxton Meksay** of Waukee qualified in the long jump with a bronze medal.

• **Johnny Nguyen** of Johnston got a bronze medal in the 200m.

• **Jaida Bell** in the 100m grabbed the gold medal.

Other achievements

• **Renzo Saenz**, a sophomore from Perry, broke the 100m State Record at the USATF State of Iowa Championships in 10.80. ■

Be sure to check for cancelations

Discount cards for fun and services

The Johnston Bands are raising money by offering discount cards for \$20 (convenience fee applies) that give access to more than \$500 in savings from local businesses. Eighteen businesses are participating with more than 50 discount opportunities, including seven restaurants, framing services, travel, go kart races, hair care, groceries and pet services. More than 90% of the proceeds support the Johnston Bands from grades 5-12. Cards are available through Oct. 20. Use the QR code to purchase a card to be mailed to your address within two weeks. For information, contact jbandparents@gmail.com.



Belgian Waffles Fundraiser

Saturday, Nov. 4, 8-11 a.m.
Johnston High School Commons

Enjoy an all-you-can-eat Belgian waffles breakfast with sausage links, flavored syrups, butter, non-dairy whipped topping, coffee and juice sponsored by the Johnston Band Parent Association. Cost is \$10 per person in advance and \$12 per person at the door. Kids younger than 5 eat free. Tickets are available at the Johnston Fareway in the morning Oct. 21 and Oct. 28 or online. Scan the QR code for the link.



Yoga by the Lake

Saturday mornings through Oct. 14, 8-9 a.m.

Terra Lake Amphitheater, 6300 Pioneer Parkway

The public is invited to more Yoga by the Lake this fall. Enjoy this free hour of outdoor yoga. City recreation is partnering with IGNIT to offer each session taught by certified yoga instructor Rocio Valea. Dates are Oct. 7 and Oct. 14.

History of Johnston programs

Sundays, Oct. 15 and Nov. 12, 1:30-2:30 p.m.

Johnston Public Library,
6700 Merle Hay Road

Johnston Station Historical Society and Johnston Public Library have partnered on a History of Johnston program that will include a series of presentations at the Johnston Public Library.

On Sunday, Oct. 15, 1:30-2:30 p.m., learn about Johnston in the 20th century. Topics will include: Hyperion Field and Motor Club, Camp Dodge, the Inter-Urban and school consolidation presented by AJ Simpson; Henry Wallace and Pioneer Hi-Bred, presented by Tom Leffler; Ben Dewey and the Johnston Lions Club, presented by Mary Jane Paez; the incorporation of Johnston by John Brown; Saylorville Dam by AJ Simpson; and Green Meadows by Mary Jane Paez.

On Sunday, Nov. 12, 1:30-2:30 p.m. hear the story of the city, from the start of the city, presented by John Brown, to growing pains by Don Coates; to the growth and accomplishments of the City by Mayor Paula Dierenfeld.

Identity theft presentation

Tuesday, Oct. 10, 6:30-8 p.m.

West Des Moines Elks Lodge, 2060 N.W. 94th St., Clive

Ever been a victim of a scam? Do you know anyone who has? Would you like to learn about the latest scams in Iowa and ways to protect yourself and others? The West Des Moines Elks Club invites you to a free Fraud Watch presentation. Financial crimes target Iowans of all ages. The lists of scams are growing, and the scammers are not going away. Learn the latest data on fraud trends and receive tips and resources to protect yourself and your family. The presenter is Neil Shultz, a member of the AARP Iowa Fraud Watch team since it began in 2014 and a retired chief at the Polk County Sheriff's Office.

Benefit show for Maui

Oct. 8, 3-7 p.m.

xBk Live, 1159 24th St., Des Moines

This show to benefit those affected by the fires on Maui will feature the local group Aloha Wind, led by Ilima Young-Dunn, and will include chants, music and more. Tickets are currently \$20 in advance and \$25 the day of the event. Proceeds will be going to the Hawaiian non-profit organization 'Aina Momona to help families affected by the wildfires.



Madison County Covered Bridge Festival

Oct. 14-15, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The Madison County Covered Bridge Festival features family fun, including parade and tours of the namesake bridges. Vendors, demonstrations, kids zone, live entertainment, car show, quilt show, Madison County Historical Complex tours, and much more are sure to please crowds. Festival admission is \$3 or two for \$5 and free for children younger than 11. For more information, visit www.madisoncounty.com/covered-bridge-festival-2/.



Lions Club Trunk or Treat

Oct. 30, 5-7 p.m.

Johnston Lions Club, 6501 Merle Hay Road

Join the Lions Club for a family-friendly trick-or-treating event. Stop by to see the kid-themed trunks and get some sweet treats from community partners.



EVENTS IN THE AREA

Be sure to check for cancellations

Marine Band to perform in Urbandale

Thursday, Oct. 12, 7:30 p.m.

Urbandale High School Performing Arts Center, 7111 N.W. Aurora Ave., Urbandale

For the first time in five years, "The President's Own" United States Marine Band returns to the Midwest on tour, performing a free concert in Urbandale. Organizers from Urbandale High School have helped bring the ensemble from the nation's capital to Urbandale for this community event.

For full details and free tickets (limit four), visit www.marineband.marines.mil/Tour. Seating is general admission and ticket holders must be seated by 7:15 p.m.; remaining seats will be released to the standby line at that time.

Marine Band Director Col. Jason K. Fettig has programmed musical selections in the style of the band's 17th Director John Philip Sousa, who initiated the concert tour tradition in 1891. Concertgoers can expect a mix of works including traditional band repertoire, Sousa marches, contemporary compositions, vocal and instrumental solos and a patriotic salute to the Armed Forces.

MORE EVENTS

• **Through DEC. 21: Cocktails and Cardboard.** Hosted by the Dealt Hand every other Thursday night. Enjoy some of your favorite adult beverages alongside top-tier board games at 6 p.m. 321 E. Walnut St., Des Moines; thedealthand.com.

• **OCT. 7: Cars and Coffee** from 8-11 a.m. at 5901 Mills Civic Parkway, West Des Moines; carsandcoffee.com.

• **OCT. 7: Worldwide Food Truck Tour.** This food-filled tour makes a stop in Des Moines with a wide range of food trucks and entertainment for the whole family. Starting at noon on the Court Avenue Bridge, Court Avenue, Des Moines; worldwidefoodtrucktours.com.

• **OCT. 7: Adult night at Skate South.** The longstanding roller rink invites you to turn back the clock and lace up those skates at 8:30 p.m. 10494 County Line Road, Des Moines; skatesouth.com.

• **OCT. 7: Movies in the park.** Free event hosted by the City of Windsor Heights, a showing of "Hocus Pocus" in Colby Park at 6:15 p.m. 6900 School St., Windsor Heights;

windsorheights.org/526/Movies-in-the-Park.

• **OCT. 7: Yu-Gi-Oh! Regional qualifier.** All comers are welcome in hopes to earn a chance to make a trip to the North American Championship. 730 Fourth St., Des Moines; iowaeventscenter.com/events/detail/yu-gi-oh-regional-qualifier.

• **OCT. 7: Easterseals Fall Festival and Walk.** Experience horseback riding, a rock wall, face painting and more. From 8:30 a.m. to noon at 401 N.E. 66th Ave., Des Moines; easterseals.com/ia.

• **OCT. 8, 15, 22, 29: Sunday Tunes at the Summerset Winery.** Live music every Sunday from various local acts. From 2-5 p.m. 15101 Fairfax St., Indianola; summersetwine.com

• **OCT. 7-8, 14-15, 21-22: Apple and Pumpkin Festival.** Wagon rides, corn maze, corn pool and, of course, apple and pumpkin picking. From 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday and noon to 6 p.m. on Sundays at Wills Family Orchard, 33130 Panther Creek Road, Adel; willsfamilyorchard.com/apple-pumpkin-fest ■

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:

TOWN YOU CURRENTLY LIVE IN:

MILITARY BRANCH:

RANK AT DISCHARGE:

DEPLOYMENTS:

QUOTE: Please answer the question,

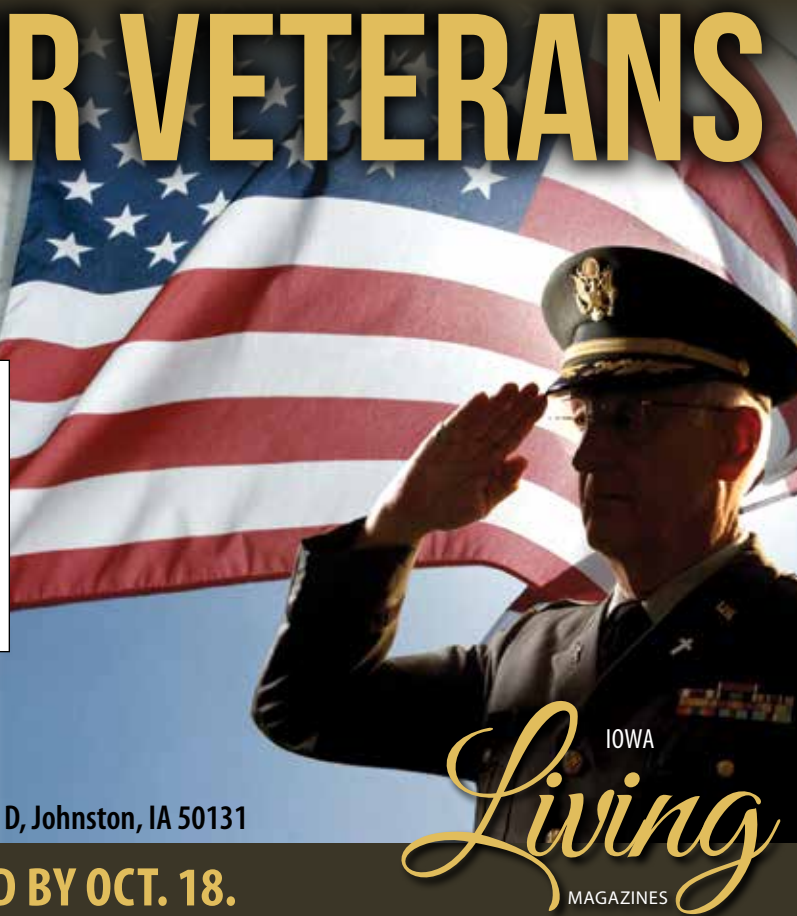
"How can the public best honor veterans?"

Family members submitting on behalf of veterans should include the veteran's answer to the above question.

Email to tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com or mail to:

Big Green Umbrella Media, 8101 Birchwood Court Suite D, Johnston, IA 50131

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HEALTH

By Elijah Evans

EMOTIONAL validation makes or breaks relationships

Emotional validation is a critical skill for healthy relationships. To validate someone's emotions is to communicate the understandability or reasonableness of their feelings. This is not the same as agreeing with the person's stance, and, in fact, this skill becomes all the more important when the feelings of the person you are acknowledging are different from your own. For example, I find coffee disgusting, but, for all the coffee lovers out there, I respect that, to you, it is an invigorating brew in which you find genuine satisfaction. The alternatives to validation include the assertion of one's own perspective (e.g. coffee is gross) or attempts to change a person's feelings (e.g. arguing tea is the superior hot, bitter beverage). These alternatives become problematic when responding to the emotions of others because they imply there is something wrong with the way they feel, since you are either unwilling to relate to their feelings or suggesting they should be different. Instead, practicing validation communicates empathy and respect for differences, which are crucial for navigating conflict. While the coffee example is a mundane way to demonstrate validation, one can easily imagine an emotionally charged interaction in which one person expresses an important feeling, and validation is the only thing that would make them feel seen and cared for. ■



Information provided by Elijah Evans, TLMHC, SS Therapy and Consulting, Ltd, 4725 Merle Hay Road, Suite 205, Des Moines, 515-528-8135, evans@sstherapyandconsulting.com, www.sstherapyandconsulting.com.

BEFORE YOU GO

By Tosha Edmundson

'I DON'T want to talk about that'

I have had the privilege of meeting with more than 100 families in the last few months. Many of them are pre-planning for their future burial needs. Other families have found themselves planning the burial of loved one — burials that had been paid for in advance and burials that required decisions to be made after the death occurred. I have found that families are either grateful that conversations were had about the burial preferences in advance or left wishing someone had approached the subject while they still could. So, let's talk about it.

Upon death, there are primarily two choices — a traditional casket burial or cremation. A traditional casket burial will require burial soon after death. A cremation burial can be planned for any time after the service of cremation is complete — perhaps when the weather is more pleasant, when it is easier for family to all gather, when their spouse dies in the future in order to be buried together or maybe not be buried at all. Both cremation and casket burials can be done above-ground or in-ground depending on available options at the cemetery of your choice. See? It's not so hard to start the conversation. This conversation can avoid burdens in the future when grief and loss are already heavy enough.

Give your family the gift of love and care for your future end-of-life needs in advance. ■



Information provided by Tosha Edmundson, Family Services Representative, Highland Memory Gardens Cemetery, 1 N.E. 60th Ave., Des Moines, 515-289-2230.

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Located on 2nd Avenue, 1 mile north of I-35/80

515-289-2230 www.highlandmemorygardens.com

USING your pumpkin in the kitchen

It seems as though almost every household has at least one pumpkin on their front porch this time of year, many of which will be carved into festive Jack-O-Lanterns for Halloween. Aside from carving, you can use your pumpkin in the kitchen several different ways.

Save the seeds: These are one of the most valuable parts of the pumpkin as they are not only flavorful but packed with nutritional benefits. Pumpkin seeds, or pepitas, are high in fiber, manganese, as well as compounds called phytosterols that have been found to have cholesterol-reducing properties. Manganese is needed to keep bones strong, normalize blood sugar and regulate cholesterol, while zinc is an essential element in bone. Follow one of our recipes below to roast your pumpkin seeds and add them to trail mix, quick breads or muffins, top your soups and salads, or snack on them plain.



How to roast pumpkin seeds

- Rinse pumpkin seeds under cold water and pick out the pulp and strings. (This is easiest just after you've removed the seeds from the pumpkin.)
 - Lay on parchment paper to dry. Overnight is best.
 - Place the pumpkin seeds in a single layer on a baking sheet sprayed with cooking spray. Give the seeds a spray of the cooking spray, stirring to coat.
 - Sprinkle with spices/salt and bake at 325 F until toasted, about 25 minutes, checking and stirring after 10 minutes.
 - Let cool and store in an air-tight container.

Spice combination ideas for pumpkin seeds

- 1 teaspoon garlic salt plus 1 teaspoon onion powder plus 1 tablespoon Parmesan cheese
 - 3 tablespoons white sugar plus 1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper plus 1/2 teaspoon salt
 - 1 teaspoon celery salt plus 1 teaspoon cumin
 - 1 tablespoon white sugar plus 1 teaspoon cinnamon plus 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg

Make your own pumpkin puree

Pumpkins are a very low calorie vegetable, contain no saturated fat or cholesterol and are rich in fiber, antioxidants, minerals and vitamins. Making a puree is an easy way to get those health benefits and can be incorporated into a magnitude of different recipes such as desserts, quick breads or muffins, smoothies or even savory soups. You can even substitute pumpkin puree for oil (1:1 ratio) when baking to decrease the fat content of your baked goods.

- Using 2-4 pounds of pumpkins, cut the pumpkin in half, scoop the seeds out. Bake cut-side down, covered with foil, in a 375 F oven for about 90 minutes or until you can easily insert a knife into the flesh.
- Allow to cool, scoop out the flesh and discard the skin. Puree in a food processor or blender, adding 1-2 tablespoons of water as needed.
- Strain the puree if using for a smooth soup or custard. ■

Information provided by Caitlyn Ferin, LD, RD, corporate dietitian, Fareway, 6005 Merle Hay Road, Johnston, 515-252-9962.

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EDUCATION

By T.K. West

MEET Cole Van Vark

New assistant principal rewarded by helping students find their educational path.

Cole Van Vark grew up in Pella and graduated from Central College with a degree in economics and political science. After attending graduate school at the University of Iowa's Political Economy program, Van Vark worked as an economist in both the federal and state government for approximately 10 years.

Van Vark then went back to school at Drake University where he received a master's degree in teaching before accepting his first teaching position at Lincoln High School. While teaching at Waukee High School, he completed a specialist degree in Education Administration and returned to Lincoln High School for his first associate principal position. Now, Van Vark is in his first year at the Johnston Community School District where he works as an assistant principal at Johnston High School.

"My favorite thing about working with high school students is walking alongside them as their independence and responsibilities both increase and they begin to see themselves as young adults and learn to embrace that," Van Vark says.

Although no two days are alike for an assistant principal, each day Van Vark says he tries to remain available to serve the individual needs of students and staff. He also works to be a good teammate to other administrators, coaches and teachers by identifying opportunities to help improve building-wide systems and processes. As an administrator, Van Vark says he is finding a lot of joy and gratification in learning more about, and helping with, all the clubs, teams and activities throughout the building.

"The greatest challenges for me have always come when I have met students for whom the typical educational structure simply does not fit and fails to serve their needs. The rewards have come from caring about those students and working with them to discover or create an educational program that does serve them and that they believe in. To find and connect them to school or community resources that can help them begin to see a path from where they are to where they want to go is a really cool process," Van Vark says.

When not working, Van Vark enjoys spending time with family, including his four children ranging from 6 to 11 years old. His children are involved in multiple youth programs, and Van Vark enjoys coaching and watching them as often as he can. He says he also enjoys the fall weather and football. ■



Cole Van Vark has joined Johnston High School as an assistant principal.

The grass withers
and the flowers fall,
but the Word of our
God endures forever.

ISAIAH 40:8



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Watch services live at fbcdsm.org

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WEDNESDAYS (Wednesday night activities start Sept. 13.)

Dinner: 6-6:30 p.m. (Free dinner, reservations required.)

Children & Adult Programs: 6:30 – 7:30 p.m.



SHOULD you buy/sell now or wait until spring?

Each year, as we enter fall and then winter, the real estate market begins to slow. People don't like the idea of moving in cold weather, and sellers decide to just wait until spring to list their home. Based on recent data from our local market, however, I'd urge you to hold on a little longer and maybe get that listing out there sooner rather than later.



For most of 2023, the number of sales has lagged behind what we saw in 2022. It's no secret the main reason for this is higher interest rates. People who would have otherwise entered the market this year have been sitting on their hands hoping for more favorable rates. Unfortunately, it doesn't look like we will see much relief before the end of the year. Many experts do predict rates will drop in 2024, but only time will tell.

That being said, the market has shown some signs of new life in the first half of September. I'm speaking specifically about the number of pending sales. The total numbers of sales remain below the numbers from the same period in 2022, but we are closing the gap rather quickly this month. See the following statistics for reference:

Pending sales for existing homes

- Sept. 1: down 17.1% from the same time in 2022
- Sept. 18: down 12.6% from the same time in 2022

Pending sales for existing condos/townhomes

- Sept. 1: down 22% from the same time in 2022
- Sept. 18: down 14.6% from the same time in 2022

Pending sales for new construction homes

- Sept. 1: down 14.9% from the same time in 2022
- Sept. 18: down 7.3% from the same time in 2022

What does this mean for you as a homebuyer? It means there are plenty of viable options on the market right now. It means interest rates aren't scaring others away, so maybe they shouldn't scare you either. If rates really do drop next year, the market is likely to see an incredible influx of buyers. Some experts predict the largest uptick in homebuyer activity the U.S. has ever seen. Jump in now to beat the impending rush.

What does this mean for you on the seller side? Buyers are out there, and they're not afraid to make their move. If your property is ready to list, and you're ready to get it sold, speak to an agent today. An uptick in sales pending inevitably means there's been a downturn in available inventory. The market for existing homes, townhomes and condos remains very favorable to sellers for this very reason.

Regardless of which move you make in real estate this year, you will always have the option to refinance if and when rates improve. Don't let the hysteria scare you away from what could be a great time to buy or sell. ■

Information by Jake Belay, Realtor, RE/MAX Precision, 8705 Chamberly Blvd., Johnston, 319-930-7336, www.jakebelayrealestate.com.

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HOME health care can be a game changer

When Mike was preparing for hip-replacement surgery, he thought his recovery would be a slam-dunk. A college basketball player who had become a coach, Mike had always taken care of his wellbeing.



But while recuperating in the hospital, Mike developed an infection and remained hospitalized for several days before being discharged to short-term rehabilitation. He spent two weeks there, receiving physical and occupational therapy to help him regain his strength.

Finally, the day came for him to return home. But that morning, Mike's doctor threw Mike and his wife, Jan, a curve. "I think you still need some extra assistance," she said. "I'm going to prescribe a few weeks of home health care."

Mike and Jan looked at one another, puzzled. "What will home health care do for me that we

can't handle at home?" Mike asked.

Quite a lot, it turns out.

Home health care is prescribed by a healthcare provider as part of a care plan following a person's hospitalization for illness or injury; it can also benefit people who have been diagnosed with chronic illnesses. It can include: health monitoring; medical testing; administration of prescription medication, shots or other treatments; physical, occupational, and/or speech therapy; and wound care.

Mike's doctor presented him with provider options and asked him to choose one. That evening, Mike and Jan researched providers online and ultimately made their selection. Weeks later, Mike is feeling much stronger and is grateful for the care he received.

If a doctor has told you home health care might benefit you, here are some questions to use during your research.

- **What services does the provider offer?**

Look for one that specializes in physical, occupational and speech therapy, among other services, so caregivers can address a range of

needs.

- **Is the provider established?** Providers can enter and exit the market quickly. Consider one with positive outcomes that can be supported.

- **Is the provider Medicare- and Medicaid-certified?** Certification is a sign that the organization meets state and federal requirements and can be expected to provide quality care.

- **Can the provider break down the percentage of services your insurance will pay for, and how much of the cost, if any, will be out of pocket?** Make sure you thoroughly understand this information before services begin.

You can ask many more questions, but those should get you started. Here's hoping you'll choose a provider that will make a positive difference in your wellbeing for years to come. ■

Ward Phillips is a senior leader with WesleyLife, which offers a broad network of health- and well-being-focused communities and services, including home health care, for older adults. Call Ward at 515-669-2205 or visit wesleylife.org to learn more.

Brio is
growing!



NEIGHBORHOOD19

at brio

Big things are happening at Brio of Johnston, a WesleyLife community! Our award-winning campus is expanding – and you'll want to hear about the townhomes and single-family homes we're building. These specially conceived "thrive-in-place" floor plans are like nothing you've ever seen – and the homes are all just steps away from Brio's services and amenities.

More than half our new homes are already reserved, so don't wait!

To learn more, contact Maria at Brio at (515) 252-5380 or mjordan@wesleylife.org. We'd love to welcome you!



KIDS explore performing arts at non-profit center

Schnack opens The Dancer's Theatre & Midwest Youth Performing Arts Center

Being a kid — and a parent — can be hard these days. Navigating life's challenges is no walk in the park; it's a constant zig-zagging, roller coaster of a ride.

Jessie Schnack of Johnston knows this and is here to help in her own special way.

Schnack, who opened The Dancer's Theatre & Midwest Youth Performing Arts Center this summer, wanted to open another safe and inclusive place for Johnston and Des Moines metro youth to explore their artistic options.

"I want them to feel creative in a place where they're going to have positive feedback and that it's OK to make mistakes," she says of the facility located at 5860 Merle Hay Road in Johnston. "A place where they can try something new and not be scared."

Schnack says she wanted to make the venture a nonprofit in order to reach the community and its philanthropists so they can make their donations and know their the money is going to something that makes them proud.

And although there are other venues around the metro, what they offer might not encompass performing arts as a whole, like The Dancer's Theatre & Midwest Youth Performing Arts Center does, she says.

"One may do amazing things but not have many dance class options, or another may be centered around the theatrical," she says. "I really want to focus on the adolescents who aren't training 15 hours a week in dance or whatever their passion may be. I'm offering shorter term sessions so families don't have to give up 10 months of their life to do a certain kind of program. Here, they can try things and see if they end up loving it.

"They can explore their passions without have to commit too much."

Having taught in the Johnston community in the past, Schnack knows firsthand how passionate residents are about their children and the arts.

"Their theatre is amazing, the show choir wins awards, and the parents and community itself is thriving and really want these options for these kids," she says. "I thought this would be a really good place to start it."

Around 40 kids participated in classes over the summer, Schnack says. A fall session has begun that will last eight to 12 weeks, depending on what classes the individuals sign up for. Also offered are homeschool classes that run the entire semester.

Schnack, who was born in Des Moines, has been teaching and choreographing for more than 20 years.

If anyone is interested in participating or finding out more information, Schnack can be reached via email at thedancerstheatre@gmail.com or phone 515-707-5510. More information can be found at the center's website www.thedancerstheatre.org. ■



Jessie Schnack

KITES on the Green receives Silver Circle Award

The annual Kites on the Green Festival has earned a Silver Circle Award at the 3CMA Savvy Awards. This recognition, presented during the 3CMA Annual Conference, celebrates outstanding local government achievements in communications, public-sector marketing and resident-government relationships.

"We are truly honored to receive a Silver Circle Award from the 3CMA Savvy Awards," said Janet Wilwerding, communications manager. "This is a testament to the festival organizers' dedication and passion, who have worked to create an event that unites the community."

The 3CMA Savvy Awards showcase city and county professionals' dedication and expertise to execute successful innovations in communications and marketing. In a fiercely competitive field of more than 875 entries spanning 38 diverse categories, the Kites on the Green Festival stood out as a shining example of excellence in community engagement. During the awards ceremony, 83 first-place Savvy Awards, 85 second-place Silver Circle Awards and 82 third-place Awards of Excellence were presented. This recognition comes as the festival marks its 10th anniversary, making it a special milestone for the event.

One of the judges remarked, "Wow! What an awesome event and a big task at hand, given this was the 10th anniversary. Very cohesive branding efforts for all marketing collateral. It sounds like the 10th anniversary of Kites on the Green was well received by residents and visitors! Great outreach to help get the word out."

This Silver Circle Award recognizes the efforts of the festival organizers, volunteers and sponsors who have contributed to making Kites on the Green a cherished tradition in Johnston. This recognition inspires the festival organizers to continue promoting community unity, creativity and joy as colorful kites fill the Johnston sky. ■



COMMUNITY HARVEST DINNER: IN-PERSON & TO-GO!

Saturday, Nov. 11 \$10 for Adults, \$5 for Kids (ages 11 and under)
All proceeds benefit veterans' charities.

Menu: turkey (white, dark, or mixed), mashed potatoes w/ side of gravy, stuffing, green beans, dessert

RSVP Online & Pay Online or Call the Church by Nov. 5.

Pick up To-Go Orders from 5:00-5:30 pm
In-Person Seating from 5:30 to 7:00 pm

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IGNIT and City of Johnston break ground on world-class complex



Ignit Sports and Fitness, in collaboration with the City of Johnston, broke ground on its entertainment, sports and wellness complex on Sept. 19. The complex is located immediately north of Interstate 80/35 on Merle Hay Road in Johnston.

"This complex is an extremely exciting project, both for Ignit and for the greater Des Moines area," said Chad O'Meara, co-founder of Ignit. "The facilities will be an exciting venue and gathering place for our community. Plus, it will attract local, regional and national events right here to Iowa, which is exactly in line with the City of Johnston's plans to reinvigorate the Merle Hay Corridor."

Chad O'Meara, Johnston Mayor Paula Dierenfeld and Parks and Recreation Director John Schmitz gave short remarks at the groundbreaking.

The sports and wellness complex will have more than 250,000 square feet of indoor space, as well as the following indoor and outdoor amenities:

- Competition-level track and courts for basketball, volleyball, pickleball and futsal.
- Turfed, lit fields for outdoor sports.
- Sand volleyball courts.
- Outside pickleball courts.
- Walking and cycling paths that tie to regional park trails.
- Connected to a city park/playground, food truck alley and an entertainment plaza.

There are also plans to include a hotel, a golf range, and additional entertainment, restaurants and shops to create a beautiful campus feel.

"This state-of-the-art complex will support a wide variety of prominent national, regional and statewide events," said Brian O'Meara, co-founder of Ignit. "The Ignit business model is designed for inclusion, and we encourage everyone from the community to find a way to enjoy and participate."

The sports and wellness complex project is expected to be completed in late 2024. ■

MURDOCK family embedded in community

Parks, participation and more make Johnston a great place to live

For Rachel Murdock and her family, the neighborhood is the best thing about where they live in Johnston.

"We have a lovely little park that is just a half-block away," she says. "We are right on the route for the Green Days and Homecoming parades and invite friends to park in our driveway."

She adds, "We have great neighbors who keep track of when we have our older kids home or the grandkids in town. We've switched off watching kids in the mornings or giving rides to school or watching pets while others are on vacation."

Murdock and her husband, Joe, also enjoy the parks in town, especially Terra Park.

"When we moved in, Terra Park was just a weed-filled field with an unattractive pond in the center, but now it is a central gathering spot for the city and offers so many amenities," she says. "With Crown Point there as well, we are over in Terra Park frequently."

Murdock goes to Yoga in the Park during the summer, and she and Joe enjoy kayaking on Terra Lake.

"We walk or bike the trails starting in Terra Park several times a week during good weather," she adds. "You can connect to all different parts of town from there, and we've wandered many of the trails, especially my husband, who is a runner. He'll start at Terra Park and go for 10 or 12 miles."

Murdock is familiar with all the parks in town and the recreational opportunities happening in Johnston because of her involvement with the Park Advisory Board.

"In fact, I'm just going to say that the parks are one of Johnston's greatest assets," she says. "We've been doing a lot at Johnston Commons near the library, and that is a lovely park, along with Terra, of course. Dewey Park was always one of my kids' favorites. I won't list all of them, but we do have a nice network of parks and trails in the city that give Johnston a hometown feel."

Murdock also keeps active in town by directing the fall play at Johnston Middle School.

"I don't have children at the school any longer, but I want to see the drama program have continuity from Summit to the high school," she says.

In addition, she's involved in many of the booster organizations at the high school, particularly in the arts, like vocal music, band and drama. Murdock is a board member at DMARC as well, which supports the Johnston Partnership food pantry.

"My daughter is on the teen advisory board at the library as well, so we like to be involved in our community," she says.

Overall, the Murdock family, which has lived in five other states prior to moving to Iowa, finds so many reasons to love where they live.

"It's just a great place to raise a family and live a comfortable life," Murdock says. ■



Rachel and Joe Murdock and their daughter not only enjoy the amenities of their neighborhood and Johnston, they also give back as volunteers.

GET involved in your Chamber

Fall is officially here. Personally, it is my favorite time of the year. It's a great season to take a step back and enjoy all the colors, smells, football, apple cider, fire pits, pumpkin patches, cozy sweaters and more. And, although we enjoy them, the chamber is busy with plenty of opportunities for you to get involved in the community. We love to help spread the word and get our members involved. If you are having a special event or are new to the chamber and need to schedule your ribbon cutting, contact the chamber to see how we can help.



Given most of our major events are behind us for the year, it is time to start planning for 2024. In our efforts to plan successful and meaningful events for the community and our members, we are seeking volunteers for our ambassadors group and committees such as events, membership engagement, and marketing. If you are looking for a way to get more involved and to have a voice, we will be seeking board nominations as well. If you are interested in any of these opportunities, we want to speak with you. Contact Sam at Samantha@Johnstonchamber.com or 515-276-9064.

We are excited to partner with JEDCO on Oct. 11 for the Community and Development Bus Tour. We will have two full buses that will travel around Johnston to see all the upcoming developments and changes taking place in our community. After the tour, we will return and invite everyone to join us at The Cork 50131 for beverages and snacks along with live music from our own member, Joe Parrish with Adventures in Social Development (ASD). We invite you to join us to network, celebrate our community and support ASD.

Finally, we would like to welcome our newest members: Jim Foster – My Wife's Painting LLC, Studio IV, The Dancer's Theatre, and Woof Pack Resort & Spa. Be sure to reach out to these businesses, support local, and stop by or meet them at one of our upcoming events below.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Mercer Zimmerman Open House and Ribbon Cutting**, Thursday, Oct. 5, 3-6 p.m. (Ribbon Cutting at 3:30 p.m.)
- **Business After Hours** – McAuley Terrace Senior Living Apartments, Thursday, Oct. 5 at 4:30 p.m.
- **JEDCO Community & Development Bus Tour and Chamber Social**, Wednesday, Oct. 11, 2:30 p.m. check in, 3:15 p.m., board the bus, 5 p.m. social at The Cork 50131.
- **Chamber of Commerce Day**, Wednesday, Oct. 18.
- **Breakfast Before Business** – Thrivent, Thursday, Oct. 19 at 7:30 a.m.
- **Trick or Treat with First Responders**, Wednesday, Oct. 25 at 5:30 p.m.
- **ASD Halloween Hoedown**, Thursday, Oct. 26 at 5:30 p.m.
- **Business After Hours** – Lashier Graphic & Signs, Thursday, Nov. 2, at 5 p.m. ■

Information provided by Samantha Winebrenner, Johnston Chamber executive director, samantha@johnstonchamber.com, 515-276-9064. For more information, visit www.johnstonchamber.com.

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CHAMBER TO DO

TO DO:

- ✓ Please make sure your profile information is correct on our website.
- ✓ Watch your mailboxes for Chamber Member renewals.
- ✓ Upcoming YP event on October 12, 2023 (40 & under)

Contact the **JOHNSTON CHAMBER** to start enjoying the benefits of membership **TODAY!**



FOR MORE INFORMATION

515-276-9064 | www.johnstonchamber.com

GOLF Outing

The Johnston Chamber's Annual Golf Outing was held at Hyperion Field Club on Aug. 21.



Abbie Cross and Jenni Buchanan



Tyson Handsaker, Taylor Fondell, Tate Handsaker and Drew Albers



Jamison Haller, Tom Cope and Mark Haller



Tony Betzer, Ryan Jensen, Jason Cooper and Dan Lewis



Guthrie Gaylord, Julie Bassman, Scott Edwards and Matt Jennings



Derek McDaniel and Scott Hoaglund



Shane Olson and Aaron Rector



Michael Winters, Josh Winters, Jake Winters and Chris Winters



Dan Fitzgerald, Scott Van Zee, Brad Blackman and Aldrich Cabildo



Trevor Theulen and Kurt Ballard



Rebecca Ziller, James Walford, Jay Mathes and Phil Andeberg



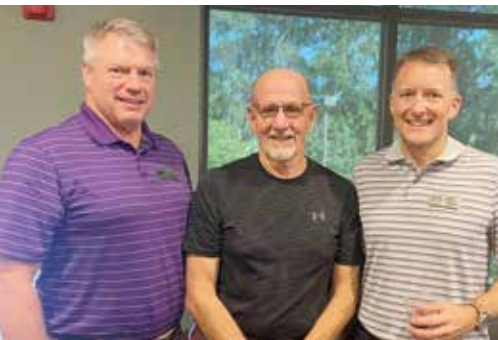
David Daugherty and Jennifer Sayers at the HR Green 110th anniversary celebration open house on Aug. 29.



Tom Cope and Rhonda Martin at the HR Green 110th anniversary celebration open house on Aug. 29.



Annie Mielke, Samantha Winebrenner and Christy Cline at the HR Green 110th anniversary celebration open house on Aug. 29.



Jim Rasmussen, Dan Lovett and Heath Picken at the HR Green 110th anniversary celebration open house on Aug. 29.



Dave Moermond and Joe Frankl at the HR Green 110th anniversary celebration open house on Aug. 29.



Mayor Paula Dierenfeld and Mike Pogge-Weaver at the HR Green 110th anniversary celebration open house on Aug. 29.



Charter Bank celebrated its 25th Anniversary in Johnston on Sept. 7. Front row: Olivia Millar, Leana Klimova, Kayla McBride, Danielle Witzenburg, Brooke Ruddy; and, back row: Tim Heldt, Corey Dutchuk, Matt Morris, Sharm Sisler and Brien Scandridge from the Charter Bank Johnston office.



Brenda Ballard and Chad Fye at the Johnston Chamber After Hours Sept. 7 at Glenn Waterhouse - State Farm.



Dan Fitzgerald and Samantha Winebrenner at the Johnston Chamber After Hours Sept. 7 at Glenn Waterhouse - State Farm.



Jennifer Sayers and Annie Mielke at the Johnston Chamber After Hours Sept. 7 at Glenn Waterhouse - State Farm.



Jason Lozano and Cheri Waterhouse at the Johnston Chamber After Hours Sept. 7 at Glenn Waterhouse - State Farm.

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