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JOINT LEGISLATIVE LUNCHEON


THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE LUNCHEON HELD ANNUALLY BY THE JOHNSTON, GRIMES, POLK CITY AND URBANDALE CHAMBERS WAS HELD FRIDAY, NOV. 17 AT THE HOLIDAY INN & EXPRESS CONFERENCE CENTER, ANKENY.





MORE PHOTOS INSIDE


The speaker panel included Rep. Bill Gustoff, Rep. Heather Matson, Rep. Molly Buck, Rep. John Forbes, Rep. Dan Gehlbach, Sen. Jack Whitver, Sen. Mike Boussetot and Rep. Eddie Andrews ■


JOHNSTON WEATHER FORECAST

TUES. HIGH 41 | LOW 23
Cloudy and breezy 

WED. HIGH 50 | LOW 36
Warmer; partial sunshine 

THURS. HIGH 59 | LOW 40
Mostly sunny and mild 

FRI. HIGH 53 | LOW 33
Sunny 

SAT. HIGH 41 | LOW 23
Mostly cloudy and breezy 

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FROM THE PUBLISHER

TRACTOR TIRE TUBING

Where are some of your favorite places to sled, skate or ski in the area? We don't have the mountains of Colorado or the frozen lakes of Minnesota, but with a bit of effort and a little creativity, one can find plenty of places locally to enjoy Iowa's winter weather.

As a child, my buddies and I would bundle up in our "snowmobile suits," as we called them, and head for the hills of River View Cemetery in my hometown of Algona. Yes, a cemetery. And, no, we didn't try to swerve around the tombstones like moguls. We found a steep hill on the back side of the cemetery that didn't have any occupied graves. That was our Copper Mountain.

I would call it sledding, but we didn't have sleds. We had inner tubes. And the bigger, the better. Today's fancy inflatables weren't available when I was a kid, so we simply made do with these black, rubber donuts. Most were a standard size, but when a massive tractor-sized inner tube was available, my friends and I couldn't strap on our snow boots and

mittens fast enough.

The challenge was to see how many of us could stack up on that inner tube while it slid down the hill. And, if you were lucky, you weren't the first one to fall forward and be run over by the oncoming circle of childhood angst.

As a child, I didn't experience ice skating or snow skiing, and it was my mother's fault. Kind of. She told me a story of her childhood friend falling backwards on her skates and having the back of the blade stabbed into the back of her, well, you can guess. This friend had to make a trip to the doctor — with the blade still intact. No thanks. I have since tried skating a handful of times as an adult, but that image continues to be stuck in my mind.

Snow skiing certainly looked like a lot of fun, but that required ski equipment and money, neither of which I had. Once out of college with a few bucks in my pocket, I did give it a shot. The first effort



wasn't so great, though. Lessons were for sissies, I mused. So I strapped on the skis and jumped on the lift with my now-wife, Jolene. I assumed she would tell me how to unmount from the chair lift while we were being transported to the top of the hill. What she gave me instead was complete silence... and I landed head-first and then did somersaults down the hill, with my skis and poles following. Once I gathered my equipment and swallowed my pride, the next stop was for ski lessons.

So, ice skating and snow skiing are OK, but tubing is still more my style. Maybe you can relate. If you can, or even if you can't, be sure to let me know where you can sled, ski, skate — and even tube. And when you go, bring a tractor tire innertube — if you dare.

Have a great week, and thanks for reading. ■

Shane Goodman

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Living Weekly

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JOINT LEGISLATIVE LUNCHEON

THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE LUNCHEON HELD ANNUALLY BY THE JOHNSTON, GRIMES, POLK CITY AND URBAN DALE CHAMBERS WAS HELD FRIDAY, NOV. 17 AT THE HOLIDAY INN & EXPRESS CONFERENCE CENTER, ANKENY.



ABOVE: Mike Pogge-Weaver, Joshua Laraby, Ryan Rohlf and Elizabeth VanGundy
LEFT: Brenda Ballard, Eddie Andrews and Samantha Winebrenner

JOHNSTON PARTNERSHIP'S CURRENT NEEDS

The Johnston Partnership provides food and personal hygiene products to those in need. Current needs going into the holidays are baby wipes, lotion, toothpaste, toothbrushes and toilet paper. Donations can be dropped off at 5870 Merle Hay Road, Suite C, Tuesdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 4-6 p.m., and on Thursdays and Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Every third week of the month, they collect for the Friday food bag program that serves food insecure students at all nine Johnston schools. They are currently providing about 200 bags per week. Their needs are: Ramen noodles, macaroni and cheese, granola bars, individual shelf stable milk, individual peanut butter and fruit cups. ■

HOLY DAY MASS

The public is invited Thursday, Dec. 7, for Feast of the Immaculate Conception Holy Day Mass at 6 p.m. or on Friday, Dec. 8, for Holy Day Mass at 8 a.m. at St. Mary of Nazareth Catholic Church, 4600 Meredith Drive, in Des Moines. Contact 515-276-4042 if you have any questions. All are welcome. ■

HOT COCOA WITH SANTA

Brrrrrr! What better way to warm up a Monday than by having a cozy mug of hot cocoa, topped just the way you like it, while telling Santa how good you've been this year? Stop in at Backpocket Pin & Pixel, 6205 Merle Hay Road, Suite 110, on Monday, Dec. 18, 5-7 p.m., for a hot cocoa bar, pictures with Santa, and a cookie decorating bar. No registration required, just bring your holiday spirit. See the Facebook event page at <https://fb.me/e/1tNVgHLyy>. ■



HISTORICAL SOCIETY HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

Johnston Station Historical Society is hosting its annual holiday open house in conjunction with the Johnston Public Library's Holiday Ornament Craft event on Saturday, Dec. 9, from 10 a.m. to noon. ■

JOHNSTON LIBRARY

6700 Merle Hay Road • 515-278-5233 • www.johnstonlibrary.com

By LIBRARY STAFF

We're feeling festive here at JPL and ready to celebrate the holiday season with great events for all ages. The JPL Book Tree is up, holiday displays with books, movies and music are curated, and librarians are wearing flashing lightbulb necklaces and reindeer sweaters. As your own festivities gear up this season, make sure to save the date for these library happenings in December.

KIDS:

Satisfy a sweet tooth and learn a skill at the same time at our Kids Kitchen cooking class on Thursday, Dec. 7 at 4:30 p.m. Kids will learn basic cooking skills and practice following a recipe. This month we'll be making cookies in a jar. Kids will practice measuring ingredients and will come home with a mason jar layered with all the ingredients to make a batch of cookies. Registration for this free cooking class for elementary school kids is required.

Bring the whole family to the library on Saturday, Dec. 9 from 10 a.m. to noon for Quick Crafts. This month we'll be making colorful ornaments. This is a drop-in program for kids, so no registration is necessary. Available while supplies last.

Finally, ring in 2024 with Escape the New Year Escape Room on Wednesday, Dec. 27. Can you follow the clues to escape the room before time runs out? Kids will work together to solve the puzzles and find hidden objects. For kids in kindergarten through fifth grade. Register online for one of the three sessions.

TEENS:

Join us on Tuesday, Dec. 12 at 6:30 p.m. for Teen



Paint Night. Enjoy a fun evening of art-making, creativity and friends. This chill series will feature a different guided painting project each month. Teens can follow along with the project or use the paints provided to create their own unique masterpiece. Registration is required. Sixth grade and up.

ADULTS:

Know someone in your life who is learning English? JPL offers two free classes per week for English speakers of other languages. Let's Talk meets every Monday from 6:30-7:45 p.m. and is a casual program designed for non-native English speakers to practice their English conversation skills with a native English speaker. Discussions focus on current news, events and American culture.

Everyday English meets every Thursday evening from 6:30-7:45 p.m. Lessons focus on functional English — learning basic phrases and expressions useful in everyday conversation. Both classes are available in person or via Zoom. No registration is necessary for either class but for Zoom sign-in information, email us at esol@johnstonlibrary.org.

More information about all library programs is available at www.johnstonlibrary.com or by calling the Johnston Public Library at 515-278-5233. ■

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EVENTS IN THE AREA

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Santa's Rock N Lights

LIVING WELL CLASSES: OVERCOMING ANXIETY OR DEPRESSION**Orientation: Thursday, Jan. 18, 7 p.m.****Ankeny First United Methodist Church Christian Life Center, 710 NE 36th St., Ankeny**

Two separate Living Well Classes: Overcoming Anxiety or Depression will be held for eight weeks, Thursdays, Jan. 25 through March 14 from 7-8:30 p.m. Classes are confidential and supportive. For information, call Jim White at 515-313-3701 or email jcjlwhite@live.com.

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA AND MRS. CLAUS**Sunday, Dec. 10, 8 a.m. to noon****West Des Moines Elks Lodge,
2060 NW 94th St., Clive**

Special guests, Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus, will be giving out goody bags, talking with the children and providing photo opportunities at the monthly Elks breakfast. The breakfast buffet includes biscuits and gravy, French toast, scrambled eggs, bacon, sausage patties, cheesy potatoes and all-you-can-eat pancakes (including blueberry and chocolate chip), orange juice, milk and coffee. There will also be a Christmas bake sale. Enjoy a bloody Mary or mimosa for \$3.50. Cost is \$10 for adults and \$5 for children 10 and younger.

Breakfasts are held the second Sunday of the month. Proceeds support the Elks' Hoop Shoot Program, other youth activities and community charities.

Through DEC. 31: Santa's Rock N Lights. Holiday-themed light show occurring daily from 5-9 p.m. at Living History Farms, 11121 Hickman Road, Urbandale; lhf.org/event/santas-rock-n-lights.

Through DEC. 31: Holiday Hullabaloo. Now in its second year, experience a family-friendly holiday event with festivities and entertainment every weekend through the dates posted. Horizon Events Center, 10320 Hickman Road, Clive; horizoneventscenter.com.

DEC. 1-17: "All Is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914." Des Moines Community Playhouse, 831 42nd St., Des Moines. dmplayhouse.com.

DEC. 2-17: "A Charlie Brown Christmas." Des Moines Community Playhouse's Kate Goldman Children's Theatre. dmplayhouse.com.

DEC. 7-10: BDM Presents "The Nutcracker." Hoyt Sherman Place, 1501 Woodland Ave., Des Moines; balletdesmoines.org

DEC. 7-9: "The Nutcracker." Iowa Dance Theatre presents at Des Moines Civic Center, 221 Walnut St., Des Moines; dmpa.org

DEC. 8-17: "A Christmas Carol." Stoner Theatre, 221 Walnut St., Des Moines. iowastage.org.

DEC. 9: Santa 5K run. 521 E. Locust St., Des Moines; fleetfeet.com/s/desmoines.

DEC. 14: Christmas with Lorie Line. 7 p.m. at Hoyt Sherman Place, 1501 Woodland Ave., Des Moines. hoytsherman.org. ■

RECIPE

SWEET AND SAVORY WAY TO SHAKE UP HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS

(Family Features) 'Tis the season for sweet and savory favorites – from the mouthwatering desserts you crave each year to starters and snacks that hold over hungry guests. Elevate your holiday entertaining with the right combination of appetizers, main courses, sides, sweets and beyond that start with the same seasonal staple: pecans.

To help celebrate the holiday season, the American Pecan Promotion Board introduced a digital Pe-Calendar to highlight the many ways pecans can be enjoyed in and beyond a traditional pie. From Dec. 7-18, the interactive calendar will unveil tasty recipes for pecan fans to enjoy, along with fun games that can enter you in to win exciting prizes each day. From delicious Baked Brie with Pecans and Cranberry Orange Chutney to nutritious Pecan Snack Mix with Cranberries and Chocolate, along with prizes, the calendar provides an ultimate way to shell-cebrate with the must-have holiday nut. ■

BAKED BRIE WITH PECANS AND CRANBERRY ORANGE CHUTNEY

Recipe courtesy of the American Pecan Promotion Board

Cook time: 24 minutes

Servings: 8

- 1 bag (12 ounces) fresh cranberries
- 1/2 cup maple syrup, plus 1 teaspoon for garnish, divided
- 1/2 cup water
- 1 orange, zest and juice only
- 1 teaspoon freshly chopped thyme, plus additional for garnish, divided
- 1 teaspoon freshly chopped rosemary
- 1 tablespoon bourbon (optional)
- 1 round brie (13.4 ounces)
- 1/2 cup roasted pecan pieces
- crackers
- toasted bread
- apple slices

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 F. Line baking sheet with parchment paper or silicone baking mat.

In medium saucepan over medium-high heat, bring cranberries (reserving some for garnish), 1/2 cup maple



syrup and water to boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and cook, stirring occasionally, until cranberries pop and mixture thickens, 8-10 minutes.

Remove cranberry mixture from heat and stir in orange zest, orange juice, 1 teaspoon thyme, rosemary and bourbon, if desired.

Place brie on parchment-lined baking sheet. Bake 5-7 minutes, or until inside of cheese softens while outside remains intact.

Transfer brie to serving platter and top with chutney and roasted pecans. Drizzle remaining maple syrup over brie and garnish with remaining fresh thyme and reserved cranberries. Serve with crackers, toasted bread and apple slices.

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA

Johnston American Legion Auxiliary, Unit 728, and the Johnston Lions Club are holding Breakfast With Santa on Saturday, Dec. 9, 9 a.m. to noon at the Lions Club, 6501 Merle Hay Road. The event features a pancake breakfast, games and activities, and Santa's reading of "The Night Before Christmas." This is a freewill donation event. ■

CHRISTMAS CARNIVAL IS DEC. 10

The public is invited on Sunday, Dec. 10 from 4-6 p.m. to experience the reason for the season at the Christmas Carnival at The Bridge, 10025 N.W. 62nd Ave., Johnston. Enjoy carnival food, cookie decorating, crafts, games and the telling of the Christmas story to highlight the real meaning of Christmas. This is a free come-and-go event for the community, and no registration is needed. ■


HELP THE BLUE DRAGON PROGRAM BRIGHTEN THE HOLIDAYS

As we enter the holiday season, the Blue Dragon Program announces a magical shopping event. The Johnston Police Department is inviting the community to help create unforgettable memories for less fortunate children or those who have experienced tragic incidents. This heartwarming annual initiative pairs Johnston police officers with children, and, together, they go on a special shopping spree for gifts at the Grimes Walmart. By participating, you can play a crucial role in making this experience an unforgettable one for the children involved.

Monetary contributions can be sent to the Police Department or made online. You can send or drop off your monetary donation to the Johnston Police Department, Attn: Blue Dragon Program, 6373 Merle Hay Road, Johnston, IA 50131. Make checks payable to the Johnston Police Officers Association. To donate online, visit the Donor Box at <https://donorbox.org/blue-dragon>. For more information, contact Sgt. Grandon at 515-278-2345. Your generosity ensures that, together, we create cherished moments and kindle the warmth of the holiday spirit for those who need it most. ■

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FOR SALE: Nice bunk beds. Solid built. \$175. Call or text 515-238-3198 and I can send photos.

LOOKING TO BUY VINYL RECORDS: Paying cash for 60's-90's rock and jazz and blues. Please call Brian at 515-326-5033.

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

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