

# JOHNSTON Living Weekly

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## SEEN IN JOHNSTON



**RIBBON CUTTING FOR NEON HEART SALON:** Johnston Chamber Vice President Sharon Vickery and Neon Heart Salon owner Erin Poindexter at the ribbon cutting for Neon Heart Salon on Dec. 1. ■

### JOHNSTON WEATHER FORECAST

**TUES. HIGH 43 | LOW 30**  
Partly sunny and mild



**WED. HIGH 49 | LOW 36**  
Partly sunny and mild



**THURS. HIGH 52 | LOW 41**  
Low clouds; spotty drizzle



**FRI. HIGH 52 | LOW 41**  
Low clouds and mild



**SAT. HIGH 50 | LOW 43**  
Low clouds and mild



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FROM THE PUBLISHER

**IOWA'S MOST POPULAR CHRISTMAS MOVIE IS...**

If you are a regular reader of this column, you know I am a fan of the Christmas season. In fact, I have some holiday music favorites playing in the background right now. But it's not just Christmas music that gets my sleigh bells a jingling. There's nothing like settling in for the night on the couch with a warm blanket and your sweetie while watching a Christmas movie. My favorites are the Bass Rankin stop motion Christmas specials I circled in the TV guide and watched so many times as a child. You may remember them. "Rudolf the Red-Nosed Reindeer." "The Little Drummer Boy." "Santa Claus is Coming to Town." And my all-time favorite, "The Year Without a Santa Claus."

Now, they may not be official Christmas "movies," but I don't care. I know what I like. Meanwhile, I received a press release from a company called Comparitech that published a study showing the most popular Christmas movies by state. And in our great state of Iowa, they determined that "The Santa Clause" from 1994 starring Tim Allen is the most popular.

How did they arrive at this conclusion? Well, here is how they describe their methodology. "Using Google Trends to search for the term 'Christmas movie' in each state, we looked to see which movie was a rising topic in the related topics section. Rising topics are the top related search terms users looking at Christmas movies also searched for over the past year and saw the biggest influx in searches during that period."

It may not be perfect, but it is certainly one way to determine the answer, and, if nothing else, it's entertaining. Of course, you are curious how our top pick compares with our friendly neighbors.

Nebraska? The top choice is "Christmas with the Kranks," which also starred Tim Allen along with Jamie Lee Curtis in this 2004 film that I have seen. It was good, not great.

Illinois? "A Christmas Carol," the 1951 film adaptation of Charles Dickens' classic novel, is their pick. I can't argue with that.



Minnesota? "Merry Kiss Cam," whatever that is. I had to look it up. From way back in 2022, this movie was filmed entirely in Duluth, Minnesota. As you know, Minnesotans don't venture out much.

Missouri? "A Christmas Vintage." Vintage? It's from 2023. Seriously. And, you guessed it, the film was made in Missouri.

South Dakota? The selection is "Spirited." I haven't seen this movie either, but it looks like something I might like. This 2022 musical comedy is a modern retelling of "A Christmas Carol" and a satire of the adaptations since. It stars Will Ferrell, so I am willing to give it a shot.

Any of these holiday movies connect with you? Or did something else come to mind? Send me a note and let me know. And do yourself a favor and watch "The Year Without a Santa Claus."

Have a great week, and thanks for reading. ■

**Shane Goodman**

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# SEEN IN JOHNSTON



**RIBBON CUTTING FOR STYLED BY JJ:** The Johnston Chamber held a ribbon cutting for Styled by JJ on Nov. 29. ■

## ST. MARY OF NAZARETH CATHOLIC CHURCH – CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

St. Mary of Nazareth Catholic Church, 4600 Meredith Drive, Des Moines, announces its Christmas Mass schedule. Christmas Eve Masses are at 4 p.m. with music prelude 3:30-4 p.m. by STM Youth Choir; 6 p.m. with music prelude 5:30-6 p.m. by Beautiful Music including a woodwind ensemble; and 9 p.m. with music prelude by STM Choir the half hour prior. Christmas Day mass is 9 a.m.

The Feast of the Holy Family is Dec. 30 and 31 with the normal weekend schedule. Solemnity of Mary Vigil Mass is Dec. 31 at 5 p.m. and daytime Mass Jan. 1 at 9 a.m. ■

## JOHNSTON PARTNERSHIP'S CURRENT NEEDS

The Johnston Partnership provides food and personal hygiene products to those in need. The biggest current need is winter coats. They have given away more than 600 and are in need of 600 more to make it through the winter months. The goal is to ensure each of their clients gets a warm winter coat. People can donate used coats of all sizes or shop their Amazon wishlist. Also needed 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. ■

## RING IN THE NEW YEAR

Ring in the New Year with an evening of music and fun Dec. 31 at Backpocket Pin and Pixel, 6205 Merle Hay Road, Johnston. The public is invited to the taproom for a night filled with fun, live music with DJ Jaide Knight, a champagne toast at midnight, and a special signature cocktail. Music starts at 9 p.m. No registration is required. This is a 21 and older event. ■

## TREE COLLECTION AND COMPOST IT!

Winter tree collection and Compost It! for residents living west of N.W. 86th Street in Johnston will be Jan. 2 and Jan. 8. For those living east of N.W. 86th Street, it will be held Jan. 3 and Jan. 9. ■

## CITY MEETINGS

- Thursday, Dec. 21: Library Board Meeting, 5:30 p.m.
- Thursday, Dec. 21: Board of Adjustment Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
- Monday, Dec. 25 - Tuesday, Dec. 26: City office buildings closed for the holidays
- Monday, Jan. 1: City office buildings and Library closed for New Year's holiday
- Tuesday, Jan. 2: City Council Work Session, 6 p.m.
- Tuesday, Jan. 2: City Council Meeting, 7 p.m. ■



## FUNERAL NOTICES

*Funeral notices can be emailed to [tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com](mailto:tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com)*

### JOHN MARTINEZ

John Martinez, 87, of Johnston, died at MercyOne Medical Center in Des Moines on Saturday, Dec. 9, 2023. He was born in Des Moines on Aug. 7, 1936, to Joseph and Augustina (Bernal) Martinez. He attended Lincoln High School where he was active in football and wrestling. A big accomplishment was that he made it to the state wrestling tournament all four years of high school. John was also the homecoming king his senior year.

John worked as a bricklayer for 50 years, retiring from Ross Masonry. John also volunteered three mornings a week for 15 years at the VA for a total of 7,500 hours.

John is survived by his wife, Marilyn; daughters, Theresa (Paul) Drew, Carla (Terry) Garber, Gina (Chad) Paine and Elizabeth (Douglas Isackson) Martinez; son, John Christopher Martinez; grandchildren, Erin, Amber, Amanda, Matthew, Maria, Danielle, Kristin, Natasha, Joseph, Julia, Tyler, Hannah, David Wyatt, and Alyssa; brothers, Arthur, Vincent and Albert; and sisters, Dolores, Margaret and Raquel. He was preceded in death by his parents and sisters, Anna Mitton and Mary Ellen Chapman.

Visitation was Dec. 17 at Caldwell Parrish Funeral Home and Crematory with a rosary service. Mass of Christian burial was Monday, Dec. 18 at St. Pius X Catholic Church. Online condolences may be expressed at [www.caldwellparrish.com](http://www.caldwellparrish.com). ■





**MEADOWVIEW**  
OF JOHNSTON

# HOLIDAY SIP AND STROLL

Thursday, December 21, 2023 | 3-6 p.m.

**We are rolling out the red carpet for an afternoon of holiday delights!**

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## EVENTS IN THE AREA

EMAIL YOUR EVENT INFORMATION TO  
TAMMY@IOWALIVINGMAGAZINES.COM

Iowa Wild

**IOWA WILD GAMES****Wells Fargo Arena, 233 Center St., Des Moines***Iowawild.com*

The Iowa Wild are the affiliate program of the Minnesota Wild. Home games through December are:

**Dec. 22** at 7 p.m. vs. Manitoba (Winnipeg Jets)**Dec. 23** at 6 p.m. vs. Manitoba**Dec. 28** at 6 p.m. vs. Colorado (Colorado Avalanche)**Dec. 30** at 6 p.m. vs. Colorado**MIRACLE ON 86TH STREET****Through Jan. 8****Charles Gabus Memorial Tree Park,  
3600 86th St., Urbandale**

Bundle up this winter and stroll through the Charles Gabus Memorial Tree Park. The park features a large custom-built train, larger-than-life ornamental displays, an ice-skating rink, and holiday-themed events all season long. The park is lit with more than 50,000 holiday lights.

**SQUARE DANCE LESSONS****Sunday nights starting Jan. 4, 6:30 p.m.****Douglas Avenue Presbyterian Church,  
4601 Douglas Ave., Des Moines**

Ankeny Square Dance Club is sponsoring Square Dance Lessons. Cost is \$20 per person for the entire session, accepted at the third lesson. Attend with or without a dance partner. You'll learn

the calls, one call at a time, taught by a caller (instructor) and volunteers. For more information, call Sandy Townsend, 515-291-2624, or visit [www.ankenysquares.com](http://www.ankenysquares.com).

**LIVING WELL CLASSES:  
OVERCOMING ANXIETY OR  
DEPRESSION****Orientation: Thursday, Jan. 18, 7 p.m.****Ankeny First United Methodist Church Christian  
Life Center,****710 N.E. 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](mailto:jcjlwhite@live.com).

**MUSEUM OPEN****Urbandale Historical Society, 4010 70th St.**

The Olmsted-Urban House will be open for viewing the first Sunday of each month 2-4 p.m. Members of the society will be there for guiding tours and showing the collection of things that might have been in Grandma's house. The Rolling Green school quilt made by the students and the painting given in memory of Pamela Powers are now at the Olmsted Urban House. These items can be viewed during the museum's monthly open house.

**WAUKEE FAMILY FEST****Saturday, Jan. 20, 9 a.m. to noon****Lutheran Church of Hope - Waukee**

This free, family-friendly event will help kids burn off some cabin fever energy. Check out Waukee area businesses, enjoy games and prizes and jump on inflatables. To become a vendor, visit [waukee.org/familyfest](http://waukee.org/familyfest). ■

## RECIPE

# A POP OF PEPPERMINT

*(Family Features)* While there are countless ingredients that harken to the taste of holidays past, there's one sweet favorite that truly symbolizes the season: peppermint. Whether enjoyed in the familiar shape of a candy cane — the original kid-favorite — or added to recipes from beverages to desserts and everything in between, it's a delicious way to connect generations.

For example, White Chocolate Peppermint Popcorn Bark offers a tasty way for everyone to get in on the fun. The taste of peppermint and white chocolate make this a perfect holiday treat for sharing with a crowd. Plus, the easy prep means less time in the kitchen and more time savoring the classic flavors.

Better yet, it makes for a delicious gift to send off with guests as another festive celebration comes to a close. Simply package in a small, clear bag tied off with a colorful bow so loved ones can enjoy the tastes of the season in the days to follow.

These favorites are made possible by the versatility of popcorn, one of America's most beloved snack foods. Celebrated for its seed-to-snack simplicity, popcorn's smell, taste and versatility mean it can enhance any occasion as a budget-friendly solution for family gatherings. ■

## WHITE CHOCOLATE PEPPERMINT POPCORN BARK

**Yield: 1 pound**

- 5 cups popped popcorn
- 12 ounces white chocolate baking chips, chopped white chocolate or white candy coating
- 1 cup crushed hard candy peppermints

### Directions:

Cover baking pan with foil or wax paper; set aside. Place popcorn in large bowl; set aside.

In double boiler over barely simmering water, melt chocolate, stirring until smooth, or melt according to package directions. Stir in crushed peppermints.

Pour chocolate mixture over popcorn mixture and stir to coat. Spread onto prepared pan; cool completely.



When chocolate is cooled and set, break into chunks for serving.

Store in airtight container at room temperature.

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# HOLIDAY BINGO

The Dragon Scholarship Fund is hosting a Holiday Bingo night on Wednesday, Dec. 27 at 6:30 p.m. in the Johnston High School cafeteria, Door 2. Doors open at 5:45 p.m. Concessions will be available and cash prizes awarded. ■

## JOHNSTON LIBRARY

6700 Merle Hay Road • 515-278-5233 • [www.johnstonlibrary.com](http://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:

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.

### 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.

Information about all library programs is available at [www.johnstonlibrary.com](http://www.johnstonlibrary.com) or by calling the Johnston Public Library at 515-278-5233. ■

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