

# JOHNSTON *Living Weekly*

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## SEEN IN JOHNSTON

JOHNSTON CHAMBER JUMPSTART WAS HELD AT SIMPSON BARN ON JAN. 18.



Brenda Ballard and Jill Vicker



Paula Bierle and Kelli Vorrath



Jenni Buchanan and Mike Pogge-Weaver



Ryan Rohlf and Dan Fitzgerald ■

### JOHNSTON WEATHER FORECAST

**TUES. HIGH 40 | LOW 25**  
Mostly cloudy



**WED. HIGH 50 | LOW 33**  
Mostly sunny and mild



**THURS. HIGH 46 | LOW 30**  
Times of clouds and sun



**FRI. HIGH 41 | LOW 26**  
Low clouds



**SAT. HIGH 41 | LOW 24**  
Partly sunny



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FROM THE PUBLISHER

# WHAT MAKES SOMEONE A MIDWESTERNER?

I thought I knew where I was from, until I read an intriguing piece in the Wall Street Journal recently. The article was written about the surprising number of things that Americans get wrong about the Midwest. It basically points out how a large number of residents in Wyoming, Montana and even Arkansas consider themselves to be living in the Midwest. I really don't care. The more, the merrier, in my world. But the notion of being a Midwesterner when you are really not one doesn't seem to sit well with other folks from those outlying states. They don't know what they are missing.

Let's start with what states the Midwest officially includes. The U.S. Census Bureau says it is Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin. Most all of us living in these states would likely agree to this definition.

If it were only that easy. The Midwest is apparently one of four

U.S. census regions with the others being West, Northeast and South. Inside those four regions are several divisions, which include Pacific, Mountain, West North Central, East North Central, West South Central, East South Central, New England, Middle Atlantic, South Atlantic and East South Central. We Iowans are in the West North Central.

These designations are as clear as mud — or at least as clear as comedian Steve Martin's routine on smoking marijuana: "I would only smoke it in the late evening. Oh, occasionally the early evening, but usually the late evening — or the mid-evening. Just the early evening, midevening and late evening. Occasionally, early afternoon, early midafternoon, or perhaps the late-midafternoon. Oh, sometimes the early-mid-late-early morning... but never at dusk."

A more important question than where the Midwest is may be what



makes someone a Midwesterner. The website inspiredbyinsiders.com offers "25 Signs That You Are a True Native of the Midwest." Some of this reads like it was written by a person who is not a Midwesterner, but I do agree with a few: We know the importance of a good Jell-O salad. We have a strong connection to our hometowns. We know how to make a good s'more. We have experienced the magic of county fairs. We can handle extreme weather conditions. And we value humility and hard work.

Darn right. But there is one more that should be added: If it makes people feel better, we are also OK with them calling themselves Midwesterners — even if they are not.

Have a great week, and thanks for reading. ■



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# SEEN IN JOHNSTON

## JOHNSTON BOYS SWIM SENIOR NIGHT WAS DEC. 14.



Siddharth Rajkumar and Rajkumar Subramanian



Riddhi, Maanit, Shreya and Jatin Sheth ■



Kent, Jack and Deanne Gummert



Brad, Jack and Jodi Meyer



Pete, Maxwell and Pam Deacon



Marty, Jake and Ann Staton



Renea, Ethan and Mark Barker



Avazbek Erkinov and his host parents ■

## FUNERAL NOTICE

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

### GAYLE EILEEN EASTON

Gayle Eileen Easton died Jan. 21, 2024, from complications of diabetes. She was born Jan. 10, 1951. She attended grade school in Maquoketa and graduated from Marshalltown High School. She received her bachelor's degree in physical education from Truman State University, formerly Northeast Missouri State University.

Gayle worked for Broadlawns Hospital in Des Moines for 38 years, first as a recreational therapist, then as a social worker. She enjoyed her work, cared about the people she helped, loved her family and friends and will be greatly missed by all who knew her. She loved dogs and, through the years, cared for at least one, sometimes two.

Gayle was preceded in death by her parents, Marguerite and Harlan Easton, and a sister, Barbara Easton. She is survived by her sisters, Sandra (Len) and Martha Ann (Dennis); nieces and nephews, Neil (Kristen), Jason (Anna), Jennifer (Cole); and grand nieces and nephews, Keaton, Marguerite, Garret, Leila and Maya; and many cousins.

A celebration of Gayle's life will be held at a later date. Memorial contributions may be directed to the American Diabetes Association or an animal rescue organization of the donor's choice. Online condolences are welcome at [www.IlesCares.com](http://www.IlesCares.com). Arrangements by Iles Westover Chapel. ■



## KIWANIS LUNCH MEETING FEB. 6

The Kiwanis of Johnston lunch meeting will be Tuesday, Feb. 6, 11:30 a.m. at Cozy Café. The speaker will be Wesley Franklin, community impact director for the American Heart Association in West Des Moines. He collaborates with companies and organizations to create a culture of health for their patient population or workforce. His presentation is entitled, "Building a Healthy Lifestyle: For Ourselves, For Our Families & For Our Communities."

Non-members are welcome to attend. RSVP to: Barb Allen, 515-577-2194 or [bjallen713@gmail.com](mailto:bjallen713@gmail.com). ■

## CITY MEETINGS

**Monday, Feb. 5:** City Council Work Session, 6 p.m.

**Monday, Feb. 5:** City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.

**Monday, Feb. 12:** Planning and Zoning Meeting, 7 p.m.

**Thursday, Feb. 15:** Library Board Meeting, 5:30 p.m.

**Thursday, Feb. 15:** Board of Adjustment Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

**Monday, Feb. 19:** City Offices and Library closed for Presidents' Day ■

## COMMUNITY GREETINGS

Johnston Community Greetings would like to welcome anyone new to Johnston with a welcome bag including discounts at local businesses and city information. Contact Missy Shepherd by phone, text or email at 515-991-5014 or [mshepherdgreetings@gmail.com](mailto:mshepherdgreetings@gmail.com). ■

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Email your news by Friday at 5 p.m. to: [tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com](mailto:tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com) or call 515-953-4822, ext. 302

## JOHNSTON LIBRARY

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

There's a lot to love at your Johnston Public Library this month for kids, teens and adults. Check out the second annual Read Local Author Fair. Take the whole family to a model train exhibit. Find your inner calm at our three-part mindfulness meditation series. Get your teen signed up for the Chocolate Olympics. Read on for all the details.

### KIDS AND FAMILIES

Bring the whole family to check out DesMoiNTRAK's Model Train Exhibit in JPL's Large Meeting Room. Members of the DesMoiNTRAK will be on hand to share knowledge about the history of railroads and their passion for model trains. The club plans to have two to four trains running during open

hours of the exhibit. Take a tour through the amazing display and see if you can complete the DesMoiNTRAK scavenger hunt. The exhibit will be available for viewing Thursday, Feb. 8 from 1-5 p.m.; Friday, Feb. 9 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and Saturday, Feb. 10 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

If you need a fun after-school activity to do with the kids, bring them to JPL on Monday, Feb. 26 at 4:15 p.m. for the Little Bookworms program. Kids in grades K-2 will enjoy a book read aloud by Miss Megan along with a snack and corresponding activities and crafts.

Finally, save the date for After-Hours Family Mini Golf on Friday, March 1, at JPL. Registration begins on Friday, Feb. 16 at 9 a.m. ■

## ATTENTION SALES PROFESSIONALS!

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## CITYVIEW



**Call me, Jolene Goodman, on my cell at 515-326-0082.  
LET'S GET TOGETHER FOR A CUP OF COFFEE. MY TREAT.**



## EVENTS IN THE AREA

EMAIL YOUR EVENT INFORMATION TO  
TAMMY@IOWALIVINGMAGAZINES.COM**DOMES AFTER DARK**

Fridays, 6-10 p.m. through March

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

Enjoy the conservatory and gardeners show house which will be illuminated with unique and colorful lighting. Details at [dmbotanicalgarden.com](http://dmbotanicalgarden.com).

**THE SNOW BALL**

Feb. 3, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Science Center of Iowa, 401 W. Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway, Des Moines

[DSM.city/SnowBall](http://DSM.city/SnowBall)

This family-friendly event provides an evening of dancing, refreshments, photo opportunities, art projects and science exhibits.

**DES MOINES ART CENTER EXHIBIT**

Through Feb. 18: "Double Take"

4700 Grand Ave., Des Moines

[Desmoinesartcenter.org](http://Desmoinesartcenter.org)**SIXTH ANNUAL SUPER BAGS TOURNAMENT**

Feb. 11

Smash Park, 6625 Coachlight Drive, West Des Moines

[smashpark.com/location/west-des-moines](http://smashpark.com/location/west-des-moines)

You honed your skills during tailgate season. Now it's time to see if you've got what it takes against the best bags, or cornhole, players in the metro area at Smash Park. Registration begins the day of at 9 a.m.

**DES MOINES PERFORMING ARTS PRODUCTIONS**Des Moines Civic Center, Cowles Commons, Stoner Theater, Temple Theatre, 221 Walnut St., Des Moines  
[dmpa.org](http://dmpa.org)**Feb. 6-11:** "Company"**Feb. 15:** Capital City Pride Presents: Brea Baker**Feb. 17:** The Peking Acrobats**Feb. 20:** Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo**Feb. 27 through March 3:** "Les Misérables"**Feb. 27 through March 17:** "Dixie's Never Wear a Tube Top While Riding a Mechanical Bull"**IOWA WOLVES HOME GAMES**

Wells Fargo Arena, 233 Center St., Des Moines

[iowa.gleague.nba.com](http://iowa.gleague.nba.com)**Feb. 3** at 7 p.m. vs. Sioux Falls**Feb. 6** at 10:30 p.m. vs. Sioux Falls**Feb. 23** at 7 p.m. vs. Rio Grande Valley Vipers**IOWA WILD HOME GAMES**

Wells Fargo Arena, 233 Center St., Des Moines

[iowawild.com](http://iowawild.com)**Feb. 9** at 7 p.m. vs. Tucson**Feb. 10** at 6 p.m. vs. Tucson**Feb. 19** at 5 p.m. vs. Rockford**Feb. 21** at 7 p.m. vs. Rockford**CITYVIEW CHOCOLATE WALK**

Friday, Feb. 23, 5-9 p.m.

West Glen Town Center, 5465 Mills Civic Parkway, West Des Moines

Like chocolate? Like chocolate drinks? Then you'll love this event. For a ticket price of \$25 (\$35 at the door), attendees will receive 10 drink tickets that can be redeemed for sample cocktails at participating venues. Attendees will also be provided tickets for chocolate dessert samples at participating retail stores. A shuttle bus from Majestic Limousine will be providing transportation to each location, although most are only a short walk away. For a link to purchase tickets, visit <https://chocolatewalk.dmcityview.com>. ■

## RECIPE

# A LIGHT BUT SATISFYING SOUP

*(Family Features)* On the lighter side when it comes to soup, but still satisfying, Tuscan 3 Bean Peasant Soup calls for shallots, diced tomatoes, spinach, cannellini beans, cooked small pasta and more for a true winter warmup. Served with toasted bread cubes, it's sure to warm loved ones up from the inside out.

Its key ingredient is Aunt Nellie's 3 Bean Salad, featuring premium green, wax and kidney beans in a light, sweet-tangy vinegar dressing. As a ready-to-eat solution, it can be served chilled, at room temperature or as part of comforting winter recipes. ■

## TUSCAN 3 BEAN PEASANT SOUP

*Recipe courtesy of Sarah Meuser on behalf of Aunt Nellie's*

**Prep time: 20 minutes**

**Cook time: 27 minutes**

**Servings: 8**

- 10 ounces day-old crusty bread, such as ciabatta, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus additional for drizzling (optional)
- 2 medium shallots or 1 small yellow onion, peeled and chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, peeled and chopped
- 1 can (15 1/2 ounces) cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 can (28 ounces) diced tomatoes
- 3 cans (14 1/2 ounces each) low-sodium chicken broth (about 6 cups)
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 cup small pasta, such as ditalini, uncooked
- 2 cups frozen cut leaf spinach or chopped fresh spinach
- 2 jars (15 1/2 ounces each) Aunt Nellie's 3 Bean Salad, drained
- 1 tablespoon lemon zest (optional)

### Directions:

Preheat oven to 375 F. Place bread cubes in single layer on large baking pan. Bake until bread cubes are lightly browned, 8-12 minutes. Set aside.

Heat large saucepan or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add 2 tablespoons oil; swirl to coat. Add shallots;



cook 5 minutes, or until soft, stirring occasionally. Add garlic; cook 1 minute, or until fragrant. Add cannellini beans, tomatoes, broth and black pepper; bring to boil. Add pasta; cook 8 minutes, or according to package directions. Stir in spinach and bean salad. Simmer 5 minutes, or until heated through.

Ladle soup evenly into bowls. Top with toasted bread cubes and lemon zest, if desired. Drizzle with additional olive oil, if desired.

# KEELING WEALTH ADVISORS RECOGNIZED

Keeling Wealth Advisors, a private wealth advisory practice with Ameriprise Financial in Ames, with a Johnston office, was named to the list of Best-in-State Wealth Management Teams published by "Forbes." The list recognizes financial advisors and their teams who have demonstrated high levels of ethical standards, professionalism, and success in the business.

The rankings are based on data provided by thousands of the nation's most productive advisors and their teams. Keeling Wealth Advisors was chosen based on assets under management, industry experience, compliance record and best practices in their practice and approach to working with clients. Keeling Wealth Advisors is led by Richard Keeling CFP®, CRPC, APMA, BFA. The team also includes 11 other financial advisors and 15 support staff. They have collectively served the Johnston community since 2002. ■

## JOHNSTON PARTNERSHIP'S CURRENT NEEDS

The Johnston Partnership provides food and personal hygiene products to those in need. Current needs are winter coats, lotion, shampoo and laundry detergent. 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. ■

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Mini Greek yogurt pancakes with cinnamon  
RECIPE

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