

JOHNSTON

FEBRUARY 2024

Living

MAGAZINE

Golden EMPLOYEES

Retirement-age workers
share why they continue
to report for duty

Meet Dana Zahn
EDUCATION

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WELCOME

WHAT'S next?

Five years ago, retirement wasn't even a thought in my wandering mind. Today, at age 55, it's becoming more of a reality. Not next week, next month, next year or likely even the next decade, but it's coming around the corner, sooner than I may realize.

I enjoy my job, and I like to work. Those are good things. At this point, it is difficult for me to imagine what I would do to fill my day if I wasn't working. I don't particularly enjoy traveling, I am not old enough to golf, and I would likely drive my wife crazy if I was around the house too much. I have a feeling many of you who are reading this can relate, in one way or another.

With the labor force in short supply, many opportunities abound for retired people who still want to work. Part time. Full time. Employee. Contractor. As a retired person in today's world, you can take your pick of jobs. In years past, this age group was highly desired among many employers, as those in it were quite often dependable and experienced. The COVID-19 scare changed this, as many retired folks who had come back to work opted to not do so any longer. This created a massive employment gap for many businesses that continues to exist today. Little by little, some seniors who are willing and able are coming back to the workforce. That's good news for everyone.

We have been fortunate in our business to have many folks who are past the traditional retirement age continue to contribute to our company. Some have written stories. Others have sold advertising. And many deliver publications for us. We are grateful and appreciative of the work those in the past have done and those currently continue to do. If I am blessed with good health and a sound mind in my later years, I hope to be able to do the same. And in a few decades, I might even take up golf. Maybe.

Thanks for reading. ■

SHANE GOODMAN

President and Publisher
Big Green Umbrella Media
shane@dmcityview.com
515-953-4822, ext. 305

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Tammy Pearson
Editor
515-953-4822 ext. 302
tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com

Andrea Hodapp
Advertising Account Executive
515-883-0523
andrea@iowalivingmagazines.com



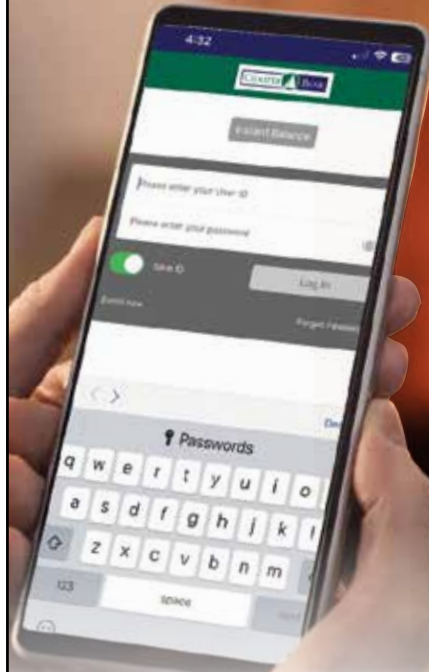
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Golden EMPLOYEES

**Retirement-age workers
share why they continue
to report for duty**

By Ashley Rullestad

The vision of what life is like “after retirement” is as unique as each individual. For some, that vision focuses on leisure: traveling to warm beaches, afternoons spent reading, extra rounds of golf, more time for hobbies, friends and families. For others, however, employment continues to be an important aspect of their lives. From those who continue full-time careers to those who put in a few hours to keep busy, work can be a key part of life after retirement age.

Even at age 87, Jim Forbes is a full-time employee.
Photo by Todd Rullestad

Still going strong

Jim Forbes is no stranger to hard work. He spent his career building bridges — after first working as a tow truck driver and pouring basements in both Iowa and Wisconsin.

“I went into bridge construction and worked for Cramer and Associates, and they’re one of the biggest bridge companies in this part of the country, and I retired from there,” he says. “I spent my time building bridges, running dozers and cranes, and I was the carpenter supervisor.”

Forbes is also no stranger to death, having lost his wife and two children. It’s partially because of those losses that he continues to be as active as he can, keeping his mind and body busy. After retiring from Cramer, he continued to work, spending time at Des Moines Feed. Now, the 87-year-old is putting in nearly 50 hours a week at Git ‘N Go.

“I’ve been there going on five years,” Forbes says. “I’m a stocker. I like the people, and I have a really good lady boss I’ve worked under for five years, and we’ve never had an argument, and we get along really well.”

Forbes has worked in 11 different Git ‘N Go stores, and he’s able to walk right in and get

started no matter where he’s assigned. He did have some health issues that led to his being hospitalized last summer and even being told he probably wouldn’t walk again. But he does, though he uses a walker to help him.

“I figured they’d let me go, but they said, no, I know too damn much,” he laughs.

Forbes did finally sell his home in Beaverdale where he had lived since 1963 and moved to Johnston to an independent living facility. He says it was too hard to keep up with all the household chores as well as snow and grass maintenance while also working. But he says he plans to keep on working as long as he can.

“The secret to staying so active is staying busy,” he says. “The doctors say don’t retire and quit moving because you’re too active. Your body will shut down. Stay active and keep going. That’s what I plan to do as long as I keep my health.”

Teacher for life

Brad Johnson, like many teachers, credits his desire to become an educator with the positive experience he had with one of his teachers — in



Brad Johnson retired from teaching but continues to work as a substitute teacher for the Johnston Community School District. He has, however, cut back so he and wife Shelly can spend more time with grandchildren.

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this case, his elementary P.E. teacher, Mr. Earl Dugan.

“He made such an impression on me that I knew I wanted to be just like him. From the time I was in fourth grade, I never wavered from this thought,” Johnson says.

He attended Simpson College and double-majored in physical education and elementary education. He retired five years ago in May of 2019 from the Johnston Community School district after 32 years of service.

“I know it sounds very cliché, but it is the truth — the last five years have literally flown by. I am really trying to slow things down with absolutely no success,” he says.

When Johnson retired, he wanted to work full-time as a sub until the age of 62, so he signed up for both the Des Moines and Johnston school districts and subbed almost every day. He has worked in all five Des Moines high schools, all 10 middle schools and several elementary schools multiple times, as well as most of the school buildings in Johnston.

“It was very exciting and a bit challenging, but I loved meeting new principals, teachers,

students and all of the people associated with education in both districts. Each school building has its own personality that I found fascinating. It was exactly everything I wanted to experience and more,” he says.

Now, the Johnsons have four grandchildren younger than 5, and this year Brad made the decision to slow down with subbing to be more present with them. These days, he typically only subs one or two days a week and only at the upper levels in the Johnston district.

Johnson notes the benefits of being a substitute teacher. He can set his own schedule and doesn’t have to do the “tough” parts of teaching like lesson planning, attending “meetings after meetings,” or dealing with the small percentage of difficult students or parents who often take up a lot of a teacher’s time. He adds, it has also been fun reconnecting with former students he taught either as elementary students or at Summit.

After 42 years of teaching in three different school districts and subbing the last five years, he says the challenges with students are still the same.

“Children not only need boundaries, but

they actually want them,” says Johnson. “Of course, they won’t admit this when they are young, but as they grow and mature into responsible and productive adults, they often have shared that they appreciated the many boundaries and consistent implementation of those boundaries that I gave my classes.”

Now that things might actually be slowing down a bit workwise, Johnson has plans to do a lot of fishing and golfing, attending various grandchildren’s activities, and traveling.

“I’ll probably still work a little, too. Everyone needs a reason to get up in the morning.”

New beginnings

Lloyd Unverferth is from Arkansas, and it was there he met his wife-to-be, an Australian who convinced him to move back to her home country.

“I moved to Australia in 1980 and lived there for 28 years. I had been interested in pursuing a career in physical therapy before we moved, and I was able to get into the University of Sydney program and get my education and be licensed as a physiotherapist,” he says.

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FEATURE

Unverferth moved back to the states and settled in Johnston. His father was living at McAuley Terrace, and he has a sister in Ankeny. Since his physiotherapy credentials would not translate to America, he started thinking about trying something new. Now, he works as a resident assistant at McAuley Terrace, where he lives.

“Basically, for instance, we carry a few phones in case one of the residents needs anything. We are considered independent living, but we are the safety net in case anyone needs help or needs to contact their family, as needed.”

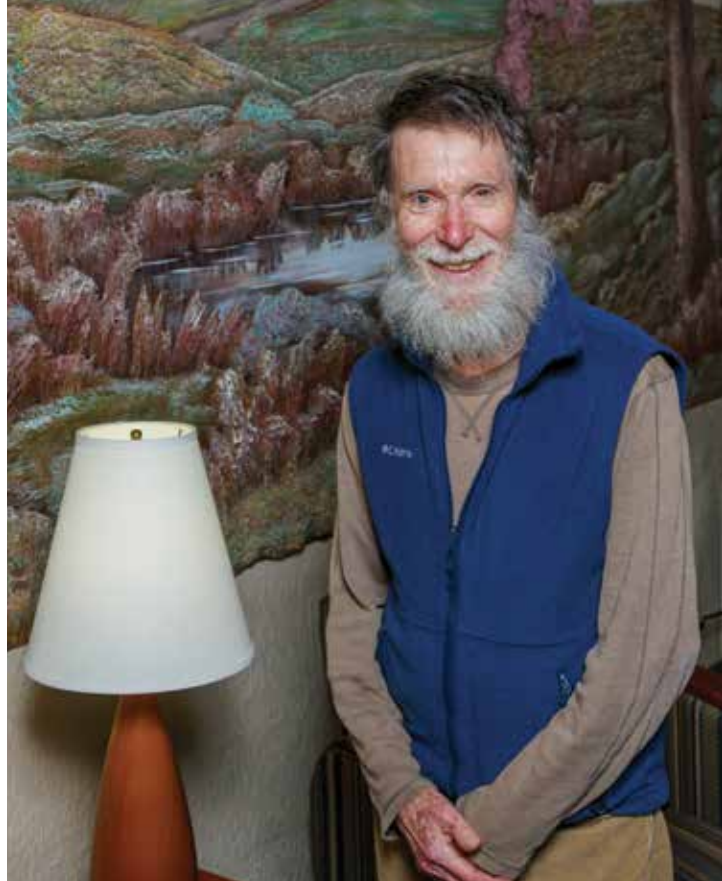
Unverferth works each weekend now with a couple other assistants, but there have been times during his last 12 years living at McAuley Terrace that he’s the only person on duty nearly full time.

“It’s a way to do something different and still help people,” he says. “I also started a science club

for us to get together and discuss various issues here with our residents. I also teach English on the internet to people who are wanting to learn. I speak a couple languages, including Russian, and if you can explain English in their language, that helps.”

Unverferth views his “retirement” work as a way to stay busy, learn new things, and help others. He enjoys taking on new challenges, so the residents are quite used to seeing him take charge and organize various learning activities.

“The job keeps me active, and I feel it’s essential to keep learning,” he says. “I have a desire to help others, being in the fields I’ve been in. It’s an opportunity to explore new interests. My experience has been, when moving from a home to this, you have extra hours in a day that you aren’t having to do certain things around the house, and now you have that time to explore new things.” ■



Lloyd Unverferth enjoys exploring new activities and shares that passion by organizing activities as a residents assistant at the senior living community where he lives. Photo by Todd Rullestad

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BILLIONS left on the table by short-term tax thinking

According to one analysis, as much as \$650 billion in tax savings are left on the table each year that could be in the hands of U.S. retirees with better retirement income planning — an astonishing amount of money that could help fund your retirement. So how does this happen?



Regarding taxes, we are taught to look at the year at hand, find the write-offs, pay your fair share, and move on to next year. That's OK during the working years, but, as you get closer to retirement, the key to saving money on taxes is thinking long-term.

We meet with many families and individuals daily who have most of their retirement savings in a 401(k) or similar employer-sponsored account.

Some forward-thinking is involved in making the most of this type of account when

you retire. The money in a traditional 401(k) is pre-tax, so when you take distributions, they count as ordinary income. If you have a \$1 million 401(k) and do no long-term tax planning, you could see a \$500,000 tax bill in retirement.

But what if you started thinking about the tax impact of spending that money five or 10 years before retirement? That's when you can start implementing strategies that leave less on the table and put more in your pocket.

One strategy involves converting some or all of that pre-tax money into a Roth account. The year you convert, you pay income tax on the amount rolled over, but you never pay taxes on the money again — not the growth or the qualified distributions. The more time you have before retirement, the more strategic you can be about converting amounts that have less of an impact on your tax situation each year.

If you convert the money, you don't have to worry about the government requiring you to take taxable distributions at age 73. Traditional

401(k)s and IRAs are subject to the required minimum distribution (RMDs) if you don't.

That's just one long-term tax strategy. It's not right for everyone. It would help if you worked with a retirement planner and a trusted CPA to ensure you do it right.

Before implementing this or any strategy, we show the families and individuals we work with the potential tax savings in dollar amounts. That way, they understand precisely how and why they are taking steps that could help them leave less on the table and have more to spend in retirement. ■

Information provided by Loren Merkle CFP®, RICP®, Certified Financial Fiduciary®, Merkle Retirement Planning, 1860 S.E. Princeton Drive, Grimes, 515-278-1006. Source: Manganaro, John. "When Advisors Have Tax Blind Spots, Clients Leave Billions in Returns on the Table" ThinkAdvisor.com, 17 Oct. 2022, <https://www.thinkadvisor.com/2022/10/17/advisors-tax-blindspots-leaves-billions-in-returns-on-the-table/>

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LOTS to love at JPL

There's a lot to love at your Johnston Public Library this month for kids, teens and adults. 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. 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.

Teens

Have an artistic teen? Sign them up for **D.I.Y. Teen Craft Club**, where creativity flows like a broken glitter glue bottle. Join us monthly as we embark on a journey into the wild world of crafts. On Tuesday, Feb. 13 at 6:30 p.m., we'll be creating hot glue gun canvas art. We'll use a hot glue gun and acrylic paint to make a three-dimensional piece of art to hang on your wall. All materials will be provided. This program is for teens in grades 6-12. Registration is required for this free event.

Did you know there's no school in Johnston on Tuesday, Feb. 20? Bring your teens to a cocoa-fueled extravaganza at JPL's first-ever **Chocolate Olympics** from 1:30-3 p.m. Kids in sixth through 12th grade are invited to compete in chocolate-inspired challenges for fabulous prizes, all while grooving to the tunes of 1980s pop icon Rick Astley. Plus, they can visit the hot chocolate bar, make a miniature chocolate book craft, and pose with our Rick Astley cardboard cutout. Registration is required. Please be aware that food at the event may contain allergens.

Adults

Find your zen at JPL's three-week **Mindfulness Meditation Series** taking place on Wednesdays, Feb. 14, Feb. 21, and Feb. 28 from 10:30-11:30 a.m. Each session will have mindfulness information including different types of meditation, resilience and stress reduction, followed by 30 minutes of practice. All levels of experience are welcome at these free classes. Participants are welcome to bring their own yoga mat or a towel. Chairs will also be available. Please register for this free event.

Love local lit? You won't want to miss the second annual **JPL Read Local Author Fair** on Saturday, Feb. 24 from 2-4 p.m. Stop by for some refreshments, then mix and mingle with local authors. Authors will present their latest works, answer questions, and sign books in this open house style event. You'll have a chance to browse a selection of books for purchase and enter to win fun literary prizes. No registration is necessary to attend this fabulously literary and fabulously local event.

More information is available at www.johnstonlibrary.com or 515-278-5233. ■

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CHOOSING a senior living community

As individuals approach their golden years, the prospect of transitioning to senior living communities often becomes a topic of consideration. While some may view this decision as a reaction to changing health or lifestyle circumstances, there is a compelling case to be made for approaching senior living as a proactive and strategic choice. Senior living can be a proactive decision that enhances quality of life, promotes wellbeing, and ensures a fulfilling future.

1. Preserving independence. One of the key advantages of choosing senior living proactively is the ability to preserve and even enhance independence. By moving to a senior living community before health issues escalate, individuals can maintain control over their lives, making decisions about their living arrangements, activities and daily routines. Proactive decision making empowers seniors to choose a community that aligns with their



preferences and lifestyle, ensuring a smoother transition.

2. Social engagement and community connection. Senior living communities offer a vibrant social environment that fosters connections and friendships. Choosing to move into a senior living community before isolation becomes a concern allows individuals to proactively build a network of friends and engage in various activities. This social interaction is vital for mental and emotional wellbeing, contributing to a more fulfilling and enriched lifestyle.

3. Access to healthcare and support services. Proactive senior living decisions also involve considering healthcare needs and support services. By making the move before health issues become critical, individuals can access onsite healthcare services and support tailored to their needs. This proactive approach ensures a continuum of care, addressing potential health challenges in a timely and comprehensive manner.

4. Reducing caregiver stress. For those

with family caregivers, making a proactive decision to move into a senior living community can alleviate stress and concerns for loved ones. Instead of waiting for a crisis to prompt a move, seniors and their families can collaboratively plan for the transition, making it a more thoughtful and deliberate process.

5. Financial planning and peace of mind. Planning for senior living ahead of time allows individuals to make informed financial decisions. Proactive financial planning can include exploring various senior living options, understanding associated costs, knowing the resources available and making arrangements for long-term care insurance. This approach provides peace of mind and ensures that financial aspects are well-managed. Choosing senior living as a proactive decision involves careful consideration of lifestyle preferences, health needs, and long-term wellbeing. ■

Information provided by Susan Babcock, Community Relations Coordinator, Edencrest at Green Meadows, 6750 Corporate Drive, Johnston, 515-250-3052, WelcomeGM@EdencrestLiving.com.

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PROCLAMATION signed for Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month



On Jan. 2, 2024, Mayor Dierenfeld and the Johnston City Council were perfect hosts and advocates for our Johnston Rotary proclamation. Rotarians in attendance at the signing were Eddie Andrews, Neil Hyde, Wayne Johnson, Gene Nelsen, Mike Pogge-Weaver, Amy Ratekin (Ankeny Rotary), Nikki Roorda, Mike Schoville, Allen Stoye, LuAnn White and Steve Grasso. The proclamation reads:

WHEREAS, the United States was founded upon the principle that all people are created with the inalienable right to freedom, and added the 13th Amendment to the Constitution, making slavery illegal; and

WHEREAS, slavery within the United States today is most often found in the form of forced labor and sex trafficking, which weakens our social fabric, increases violence and organized crime, and debases our humanity; and

WHEREAS, this heinous crime is found within our own community; and

WHEREAS, the Rotary Club of Johnston is working to abolish all forms of human trafficking through education, prevention, volunteerism, advocacy and collaboration; and

WHEREAS, even though awareness of this crime is growing, human trafficking continues to go unreported due to its isolating nature, the misunderstanding of its definition, and the lack of awareness about its indicators; and

WHEREAS, increased community education on how to identify victims of human trafficking, along with increased knowledge of local resources and services for those affected by these criminal actions, can help restore freedom and dignity to identified survivors, as well as help diminish the number of future victims; and

WHEREAS, every business, community organization, faith community, family and individual can make a difference by choosing products that are not made by forced labor, by working to protect our young people from sexual exploitation, by addressing the problem of internet sex trafficking and pornography; and by becoming more aware of the problem and possible solutions; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Paula Dierenfeld, Mayor of the City of Johnston, Iowa, do hereby proclaim the month of January 2024 as Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month and encourage all our citizens to become more informed on this growing problem, to be vigilant and report suspicious activity, and to work towards solutions to end trafficking in all its forms in our community.

If you see something that doesn't look right, take action and call the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 888-3737-888. For more information and resources about trafficking in Iowa, go to the Network Against Human Trafficking and Slavery website at www.iowanaht.org. ■

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.

Johnston Rotary Club UPCOMING EVENTS

February 6: Joe Stevens, Joppa

February 13: Tiffany Tauscheck, Greater Des Moines Partnership

February 20: Laura Kacer, Polk County Emergency Management

February 27: Josh Laraby, Mayor Dierenfeld, Mike Pogge-Weaver, City of Johnston Updates

March 5: Kevin Foley, Executive Director, Des Moines Airport Authority



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THE IMPORTANCE of advance directives

Everyone should have an advance directive in place that expresses your wishes regarding medical care and nominates a person to make those decisions for you.

Competent adults have the right to refuse or accept medical treatment after being informed of the procedures and risks. However, there is concern over how these medical decisions will be made when a person is unable to make these decisions. An advance directive states your health care choices in writing while you are still able to articulate your decision.

If you have not executed an advance directive and are unable to make decisions, others will make health care decisions for you. Difficult and emotional decisions may fall to your spouse, children or parents. If your family disagrees on a course of action, problems can



arise.

An advance directive expresses your health care choices in writing and nominates someone to carry them out. Without one, you have no control over who makes the decision or the choices made.

Two advance directives are crucial. A Durable Health Care Power of Attorney is a document through which you name another person to make health care decisions for you if you are unable to make them. Your agent is required to follow the directions you provide. If your wishes aren't known, your agent will make decisions in your best interest based on discussions you have had with your agent. The document is "durable" because it remains effective even if you become incapacitated or incompetent.

A Living Will is a written document that expresses your directions for your medical care if you are unable to express your wishes yourself. It can direct your physician to

withhold or withdraw certain life-sustaining procedures if you are in a terminal condition. However, it can be much more comprehensive, including what you want to happen in various situations.

These two documents work together. The health care power of attorney nominates somebody to make medical decisions for you. The living will gives your agent directions on specific decisions.

Advance directives allow you to anticipate medical emergencies and participate in your future care. These documents make health care decisions in advance and create peace of mind for you and your family. The most effective estate planning is accomplished before you need it. ■

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

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RECIPE

A BETTER-FOR-YOU breakfast favorite

(Family Features) Whether you're encouraging loved ones to start a new wellness kick or looking to add new ideas to an already-nutritious menu, families at any stage of a journey toward better health can use newfound favorites to bring fresh flavors to the table.

Start by ramping up your family's breakfast with these slightly sweet mini Greek yogurt pancakes with cinnamon-maple topping for a protein-packed way to start the day with a healthy addition of fresh berries. This dish from Milk Means More provides a delicious breakfast that allows you to bring everyone together for a tasty, nutritious meal no matter the occasion. Dairy foods, like the low-fat or fat-free milk and yogurt found in this recipe, are fundamental to good nutrition.

Constructing a better-for-you menu calls for a balanced diet with a variety of foods to get essential nutrients. This balance is important for maintaining healthy gut and immune function while optimizing overall wellness.

Find additional better-for-you recipe inspiration at MilkMeansMore.org. ■

Mini Greek yogurt pancakes with cinnamon-maple topping

Recipe courtesy of Marcia Stanley, MS, RDN, culinary dietitian, on behalf of Milk Means More
Total time: 25 minutes

Servings: 6

Topping:

- 1 3/4 cups plain Greek yogurt (fat free, 2% or 5%)
- 1/3 cup maple syrup
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon

Pancakes:

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 3/4 cup plain Greek yogurt (fat free, 2% or 5%)
- 1/2 cup milk (skim, 2% or whole)
- 3 tablespoons melted butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- oil
- 1 cup fresh blueberries or chopped fresh strawberries

To make topping:

Stir yogurt, syrup and cinnamon. Cover and refrigerate.

To make pancakes:

In mixing bowl, stir flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt. In separate bowl, whisk egg, yogurt, milk, butter and vanilla. Add yogurt mixture to flour mixture. Stir just until combined (batter should be slightly lumpy).

- Scrape batter into large plastic food storage bag. Oil nonstick griddle or large nonstick skillet. Heat over medium heat. Cut off about 1/2 inch from corner of plastic bag. Squeeze batter, about 1 tablespoon at a time, onto hot griddle. Cook 1-2 minutes per side, or until pancakes are golden brown, turning to second sides when bubbles form on surface of pancakes and edges are slightly dry.
- Serve warm pancakes topped with cinnamon-maple yogurt and sprinkled with berries.



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PaulaSDierenfeld@gmail.com

CITY COUNCIL

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bburkhardt@cityofjohnston.com

Tom Cope
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tomwcope@msn.com

Jim Evans
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PRESIDENTS' DAY CLOSURES

Johnston city offices, including the library, will be closed on Monday, February 19, for the Presidents Day holiday. Trash and recycling pickup days are not affected by this holiday. The Johnston City Council's work session and meeting, which are usually scheduled, will take place on Tuesday, February 20, at 6 p.m.

VOLUNTEER AT KITES ON THE GREEN

The annual "Kites on the Green" event is scheduled to take place on Saturday, May 4, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The event will be held at Johnston Commons Park, which is located near the Johnston Public Library. This is a great opportunity for families to come together, fly kites and enjoy the beautiful weather. In order to make this event a success, volunteers are needed for multiple shifts. Volunteers will be helping kids and families build kites, assisting with special activities, or managing donation booths.

You can sign up for volunteering by visiting www.cityofjohnston.com/KOTGVolunteer.



SUBMIT YOUR CONCERN ONLINE

The City of Johnston has made it simple to submit a concern online, which will help the city staff to quickly identify and address the issues. You can report concerns like code enforcement, playground issues, or potholes by visiting www.cityofjohnston.com/concerncenter.

REQUEST A STREETLIGHT REPAIR

In Johnston, the maintenance of the neighborhood streetlights is done by MidAmerican Energy. The parking lots at public buildings such as Johnston Library, Crown Point Community Center, City Hall, and Public Works are maintained by the Johnston Public Works Department. If you need any repairs, please reach out directly to MidAmerican Energy by visiting bit.ly/JohnstonStreetLight.

In case of an emergency, such as a leaning pole, broken glass, or hanging fixture, please call 888-427-5632 for an immediate response.

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



UPCOMING EVENTS IN JOHNSTON

The City of Johnston and the Johnston Town Center are hosting family-friendly events throughout the year. We recommend that you mark your calendars to ensure you don't miss out on these exciting events. For more information about the City of Johnston events, please visit www.cityofjohnston.com and view the calendar. For information about the events at Johnston Town Center, please visit johnstontowncenter.com.

Tuesday, April 9

Annual Tree sale
Online only beginning at 8 a.m.

Saturday, April 13

Kite Building Workshop
2 – 4 p.m.

Monday, April 15 and Tuesday, April 16

Spring Cleanup
West of NW 86th Street is Monday, April 15 and
East of NW 86th Street is Tuesday, April 16

Thursday, April 18 through Saturday, April 20

Tree Branch Cleanup
Johnston Public Works. Times vary based on the day.

Tuesday, June 4 – Tuesday, September 24

Farmers Market
4 – 7 p.m.

Saturday, May 4

Kites on the Green
10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

JOHNSTON SEES \$117 MILLION IN NEW CONSTRUCTION VALUE

The City of Johnston achieved significant growth in 2023, recording an impressive \$117 million in new construction value, marking a year of substantial progress and development.

Key highlights from the 2023 construction activities include:

- **Residential Expansion:** A total of 126 new residential units were added, with a notable emphasis on single-family residences, accounting for 102 units. Additionally, townhome/duplex construction remained steady, with 24 new units.
- **Commercial Projects:** Nine commercial projects contributed to a remarkable \$47 million in new construction, representing the most substantial commercial growth since 2013.
- **Commercial Remodeling:** The city saw 23 commercial remodel permits issued, with a combined value of \$8.7 million.

The statistics are part of the 2023 Community Development Department Annual Report, www.cityofjohnston.com/2023CDAnnualReport.

STAY INFORMED ABOUT SNOW ORDINANCE ACTIVATIONS – SIGN UP TO RECEIVE ALERTS!

The Public Works Department wants to make sure you stay informed when the snow ordinance goes into effect. Sign up for alerts at www.cityofjohnston.com/JohnstonAlerts. If you wish to subscribe to SMS text messages only, text 50131 to 38276. There is also a mobile app available.

For more information about the city, please call 515.278.2344

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INVESTMENT

By Tim Hanstad

HOW CAN women bridge the retirement gap?

March 8 is International Women's Day — a day for celebrating all the accomplishments of women around the globe. But many women still need to make up ground in one key area: retirement security.

Women's challenges in achieving a secure retirement are due to several factors, including these:

- **Pay gap** — It's smaller than it once was, but a wage gap still exists between men and women. In fact, women earn, on average, about 82 cents for every dollar that men earn, according to the Census Bureau. And even though this gap narrows considerably at higher educational levels, it's still a source of concern. Women who earn less than men will likely contribute less to 401(k) plans and will ultimately see smaller Social Security checks.

- **Longer lives** — At age 65, women live, on average, about 20 more years, compared to almost 17 for men, according to the Social Security Administration. Those extra years mean extra expenses.

- **Caregiving responsibilities** — Traditionally, women have done much of the caregiving for young children and older parents. And while this caregiving is done with love, it also comes with financial sacrifice. Consider this: The average employment-related costs for mothers providing unpaid care is nearly \$300,000 over a lifetime, according to the U.S. Department of Labor, which translates to a reduction of 15% of lifetime earnings. Furthermore, time away from the workforce results in fewer contributions to 401(k) and other employer-sponsored retirement plans.

Ultimately, these issues can leave women with a retirement security deficit. Here are some moves that can help close this gap:

- **Contribute as much as possible to retirement plans.** Try to contribute as much as you can afford to your 401(k) or similar employer-sponsored retirement plan. Your earnings can grow tax deferred, and your contributions can lower your taxable income. (With a Roth 401(k), contributions aren't deductible, but earnings and withdrawals are tax free, provided you meet certain conditions.) At a minimum, contribute enough to earn your employer's matching contribution, if one is offered, and try to boost your contributions whenever your salary goes up. If you don't have access to a 401(k), but you have earned income, you can contribute to an IRA. Even if you don't have earned income, but you have a spouse who does, you might be eligible to contribute to a spousal IRA.

- **Maximize Social Security benefits.** You can start taking Social Security at 62, but your monthly checks will be much bigger if you can afford to wait until your full retirement age, which will be around 66½. If you are married, you may want to coordinate your benefits with those of your spouse — in some cases, it makes sense for the spouse with the lower benefits to claim first, based on their earnings record, and apply for spousal benefits later, when the spouse with higher benefits begins to collect.

- **Build an emergency fund.** Try to build an emergency fund containing up to six months' worth of living expenses, with the money kept in a liquid account. Having this fund available will help protect you from having to dip into your retirement accounts for large, unexpected costs, such as a major home or car repair.

It's unfortunate, but women still must travel a more difficult road than men to reach retirement security. But making the right moves can help ease the journey. ■



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SERVICES to help you remain at home as you age

As you age, you'll likely want to stay in your home for as long as possible. Without the right support plan and resources, "aging in place" is not always possible, but options are available.



The best option for many is at-home services — a varied, customizable, and all-around excellent solution. Here's a brief primer.

What are at-home services? You might have heard the phrases "home care," "home health," "in-home care," or "at-home services." They generally involve bringing support from an outside entity into the home. In most cases, an aide, certified nursing assistant, nurse, or other professional will visit you a designated number of hours per week to provide personalized support. You'll receive a thorough assessment, and then you, your care team, and your medical provider (if needed) will establish

a plan.

Benefits of at-home services: You'll receive the support you need where you feel most comfortable. Other benefits include increased choice when setting your schedule, decreased risk of accident or illness, and peace of mind. Also, when you receive just the right amount of assistance with daily tasks or chores, you'll likely feel more energetic and less stressed, and you'll be able to maintain or reclaim a sense of independence.

Non-medical in-home services: These involve support for non-healthcare-related needs, such as light housekeeping, meal preparation, grocery shopping, pet care, and transportation to and from appointments or events. Caregivers providing non-medical services can also offer support with bathing, dressing, or other activities of daily living as well as companionship to help prevent or ease social isolation and loneliness.

Healthcare services: Typically provided by a visiting nurse, therapist or other clinician,

healthcare services can involve injection administration, post-surgical rehabilitation care, wound care, management of diabetes or other chronic conditions, and much more. Physical, occupational and speech therapy can also be brought into your home. In most cases, healthcare services require a prescription from your physician and can last for a short or longer period of time.

What's my first step? If you're interested in home services, contact an organization that provides them. Look for one that's well-established and can offer a full range of services so you're not having to deal with a number of providers. The provider can help coordinate with your physician, if needed, to ensure everyone is on the same page and your needs are being met. ■

Aaron Wheeler is vice president of Home and Community-Based Services for WesleyLife, which offers health and well-being services in Iowa and Illinois through communities and an array of at-home services. To learn more, please visit wesleylife.org.

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HEALTH

By Lance Andersen

GET LOST — in a daydream

"How will you go about finding that thing the nature of which is totally unknown to you?" —Meno.

This may seem like a philosophical question, but it appears just as important for every individual to answer today as when it was first said in ancient Greece. Wishing others to "get lost" could be well intentioned, because getting lost can cause what was unfamiliar to appear. "Lost" comes from the Old Norse "los," and one translation is "falling out of formation." This implies it's an action rather than a state of being.

Good news is you can access the expansive blue from anywhere thanks to the power of your mind. Daydreaming stimulates creative innovation in the brain's right hemisphere but also activates the hippocampus, which suggests this could help improve learning and memory. Somewhat paradoxically, daydreaming about recent events helps cement them into memory, so the wandering mind is perhaps never lost. If daydreaming sounds lazy, call it "quiet wakefulness," which is a relaxed state of environmental awareness that helps us process things when we are both awake and at rest. Without it, we may never have heard of Einstein. It's up to you to find what "flow state" helps spontaneous connections in your brain. It's clear from MRI scans that your brain is very active during daydreaming, but how active is it at other times? ■



Information provided by Lance Andersen, LMSW, SS Therapy and Consulting, Ltd., 4725 Merle Hay Road, Suite 205, Des Moines, 515-528-8135, www.sstherapyandconsulting.com, andersen@sstherapyandconsulting.com.

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PLAN AHEAD

By Sarah Masteller

WHY would I prepay funeral expenses?

Preplanning one's final arrangements is something that everyone should do. While it is not necessarily an easy topic to address, having arrangements in place can provide a great deal of peace of mind, both for the person making the arrangements and for those loved ones who will be left behind.

No one comes through the doors of the funeral home on the day that their loved one has died and regrets that the plans have already been made. In fact, it is quite the opposite. Families experience great relief knowing that plans are in place, decisions have been made and, perhaps, the expenses have already been handled.

While prepaying funeral expenses is never a requirement for someone to place their arrangements on file with a funeral home, it is an option available and one that you should know about.

There are many benefits to prepaying funeral expenses. Most importantly, it allows a person the opportunity to purchase funeral arrangements at current prices, with the guarantee that those services and merchandise selections will be provided, at no additional expense to the family, at the time the funeral home's services are needed.

Keep in mind, funeral arrangements will never be less expensive than they are today.

Whatever your funeral home of choice is, make sure you understand your options, and then make the decision that is right for you. ■



Information provided by Sarah Masteller, Advanced Planning Counselor, Hamilton's Southtown Funeral Home, 5400 S.W. Ninth St., Des Moines, 515-697-3679

FOUR foods to add in 2024

Use January as your motivation to stock your kitchen with good-for-you foods to help you feel your best. Start with these four:

Oranges

In the winter months, citrus fruit, like oranges, are readily available and incredibly delicious. Oranges can last up to 10 days on your countertop (if you see it, you're more likely to eat it) and up to 21 days in the crisper drawer of your fridge.

Oranges are a natural source of folate and thiamin, and they have a unique plant compound called hesperidin, which has been shown to support blood pressure health, among other positive outcomes.

It's also a great way to get vitamin C, a key nutrient that promotes a healthy immune system. And since winter is cold and flu season, grabbing an orange is a delicious way to get a little extra immune support.



Seafood

There are hundreds of studies that point to the health benefits of eating seafood, but Americans often struggle to make it a regular part of their diet. Nutritional guidelines recommend consuming seafood at least twice a week. That's where convenient and often more affordable canned and frozen varieties come in.

Canned seafood, like salmon, is an excellent source of omega-3s and contains selenium, iron, vitamin B-6, B-12 and protein, which are vital nutrients that promote optimal overall health and wellness. Canned seafood can easily be used to create delicious meals like tacos, salads or wraps.

Spinach

Spinach made the list and for good reason. Spinach is a nutrition powerhouse and a versatile ingredient. Fresh or frozen, spinach makes a great addition to almost any meal. Throw it in soups, stews, salads, pasta dishes and sandwiches.

Spinach boosts the nutrition of the dish, but it also "bulks" up the meal, making it more satisfying and enjoyable. One cup of spinach delivers more than 100% of the daily value for vitamin K — a key nutrient for maintaining strong bones.

Mushrooms

Mushrooms are a great source of beta glucan, a type of soluble fiber. This type of fiber has been shown to help decrease LDL cholesterol and total blood cholesterol levels, making them a great food for those who struggle with managing health conditions such as heart disease and hyperlipidemia.

Plus, some mushrooms are also sources of vitamin D. Vitamin D is called the sunshine vitamin, as we get most of this nutrient from exposure to sunlight. But it can also be found in a few foods, like egg yolks, fatty fish (like salmon or sardines) plus dairy and dairy alternatives or juices fortified with Vitamin D. Vitamin D is important because it can help with everything from absorbing calcium and phosphorus for bone health to supporting a healthy mood. ■

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

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Do you have long-term care insurance?



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INSURANCE

By Janis Van Ahn

WHAT is long-term care insurance?

Long-term care insurance (LTCI) is a specialized insurance product designed to cover the costs associated with long-term care services. Long-term care refers to a range of services that help meet the personal care needs of individuals who have difficulty performing activities of daily living (ADLs) independently due to chronic illness, disability or cognitive impairment. These services may include assistance with tasks such as bathing, dressing, eating and mobility.



One of the primary purposes of long-term care insurance is to provide financial assistance for the significant expenses associated with long-term care. Traditional health insurance plans, including Medicare, typically do not cover long-term care services extensively. As a result, individuals may need to rely on their savings or assets to cover these costs, which can be substantial and potentially deplete one's financial resources.

Long-term care insurance policies vary, but they generally cover a range of care settings, including nursing homes, assisted living facilities, adult day care centers and home care services. The coverage may include expenses related to skilled nursing care, custodial care and rehabilitation services. Some policies also offer benefits for home modifications to accommodate the insured individual's needs.

The cost of long-term care insurance premiums depends on various factors, including the individual's age, health status, the amount of coverage desired, and the chosen options or riders. Premiums are typically lower when individuals purchase policies at a younger age, emphasizing the importance of planning for long-term care needs early.

Long-term care insurance often comes with a waiting or elimination period, during which the policyholder is responsible for covering their care expenses. Once the waiting period expires, the insurance benefits kick in, helping to cover the costs of eligible long-term care services. Policyholders can choose the length of the waiting period based on their preferences and financial situation.

It's essential for individuals considering long-term care insurance to carefully review policy details, including benefit amounts, coverage limits, and any exclusions or limitations. Some policies may offer inflation protection to ensure that benefits keep pace with the rising costs of long-term care services over time.

In summary, long-term care insurance plays a crucial role in helping individuals plan for the financial challenges associated with potential long-term care needs. By providing coverage for a range of services and settings, LTCI offers a measure of financial security and peace of mind for policyholders and their families as they navigate the complexities of aging and healthcare. ■

Information provided by Janis Van Ahn, Health Insurance Advisor LLC, 5870 Merle Hay Road, Suite A, Johnston, 515-225-9994, jvanahn@health-insadvisor.com. Contact Health Insurance Advisor if you have questions about individual vision insurance or vision coverage that is available through Medicare Advantage Plans.

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KEYS to decluttering

We are almost to spring. It hasn't been an easy winter by any means, but, hopefully, just a few more weeks, and we will start seeing that nicer weather. I don't know about you, but I have spent my free time this winter "decluttering" my spaces at home. It feels so good to throw away, give away and sell items.

It can seem like a daunting and overwhelming task, but, in the end, it will make you feel so much better. Here is how I got going:



1. Make a list

Make a list of all that you need to get through, and that will help you stay focused and avoid feeling too overwhelmed. Write down every space you want to work on, including cupboards, pantry, closets, desk, dressers, drawers, and lastly, the dreaded storage room.

2. Start small

Start on a kitchen cupboard or your nightstand. As you go along, you will gain more momentum and feel more accomplished. Then you can move on to larger spaces. If you start on the kitchen and go from one cupboard to the next and one drawer to the next, once that is organized, it will feel so good. But we all have that one junk drawer in the kitchen, right? Closets and storage rooms are the most challenging areas to work on, so maybe save those for last.

3. Be determined to declutter items

The best way to tackle this is to have four boxes/bags, one each for trash, items to sell, things you can donate, and treasures you wish to keep. If you haven't worn an item of clothing in more than a year, it may be time to say goodbye. If you have too many knickknacks, it may be time to downsize those items. If something may have some value, you can sell it online or set up a yard sale down the road. Having a game plan is so important, and keep following your list.

4. Organize your spaces

As you go along decluttering and fixing up your spaces, be sure to organize it in a way you like. It is essential to help you feel accomplished in your decluttering that you keep it organized.

5. Stay in control of your spaces

It is an ongoing process, so make it a habit to do this semi-annually so you can get rid of seasonal items you did not use or wear.

A cluttered space can lead to stress, anxiety, and a lack of productivity. If you are too busy, and this is overwhelming to think about, there are several organizational companies out there to help you. Reach out to your local Realtor for further tips or if you are looking to sell your home. ■

Information provided by Joleen Roskamp, ABR, MRP, SFR, SRES, RE/MAX Precision, 8705 Chambery Blvd., Johnston, 515-505-4769, www.liveloiveiowa.com. Licensed in the State of Iowa.

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Kiwanis lunch meeting

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.

Winter Jam 2024

Feb. 2, 6 p.m.

Wells Fargo Arena, 223 Center St., Des Moines

Tickets for this event are \$15 at the door. Jam Nation Entry is at 5 p.m. with general admission and pre-show at 6 p.m. Event starts at 7 p.m. For lineup, visit <https://jamtour.com>.

One Big Table 2024 Gala and Auction

Feb. 22

Hilton Garden Inn, Johnston

Johnston Partnership for a Healthy Community will hold its One Big Table Gala and Auction annual fundraiser Feb. 22 at Hilton Garden Inn in Johnston. Tickets are now on sale and available online at <https://givebutter.com/c/ZQIKC>. Help fight hunger and give a gift that makes a difference in the community.

Dome 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.



Rhythms of Grace FUNdraising GALA

Saturday, Feb. 3

Iowa State Fairgrounds

The Rhythms of Grace FUNdraising GALA is not your typical gala. Put on your western wear (or business casual if that's more your speed) and plan on a fun night with dinner (enjoy some great barbecue), a dessert auction, live music, games, live and silent auctions, and a heart-warming program that will leave you inspired as you learn about Rhythms of Grace's equine therapy programs and the lives being transformed with horses, hope and healing. Plus meet their new miniature horses live and in person. Tickets are available at <https://my.onecause.com/event/organizations/f231ab3a-e996-4b64-8f34-83e6aaf3ff57/events/vevt:b897a05a-3946-4ca4-87b6-95731f76f8cc/home/story> or by scanning this QR code.



Coming soon...

2024 MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY & COMMUNITY GUIDE



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FEB. 22

MISSION STATEMENT

Encourage, engage,
and advocate for our
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SCHOOL, CITY, CHAMBER NEWS & EVENTS



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 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 chocolatwalk.dmcityview.com.

EVENTS IN THE AREA

Be sure to check for cancellations

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

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



Des Moines Performing Arts productions

Des Moines Civic Center, Cowles Commons, Stoner Theater, Temple Theatre, 221 Walnut St., Des Moines
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"



Sixth Annual Super Bags Tournament

Feb. 11

Smash Park, 6625 Coachlight Drive, West Des Moines
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.

Chinese New Year

Feb. 11

Jester Park Nature Center, 12130 N.W. 128th St., Granger
jesterparknaturecenter.com

Celebrate Chinese New Year at Jester Park Nature Center. Registration is required. Those who attend will learn about the history of the Chinese New Year and similarities between Chinese zodiac and western astrology. Shadow Fist Kung Fu will perform a live lion dance and kung fu demonstration. ■

COMMUNITY

By Lindsey Giardino

JOHNSTON girls wrestling picks up steam

Exciting year for up-and-coming program



Head Girls Wrestling Coach Timothy Franklin, pictured during a meet, says the Johnston program is building momentum. Photo courtesy of Jeannine Blackorby

The Johnston girls wrestling program is small but mighty.

The program is in its second season, as 2022 was the first year of sanctioned girls wrestling in the state of Iowa.

"We are a young and small team with seven middle school girls and eight high school girls," says Timothy Franklin, special education associate in the Johnston school district and head girls wrestling coach. "We are always welcoming new girls who want to come and try it out. All the girls on our team only have one or two years of experience, so that goes to show how brand new it is and how anyone at any age can join."

What Franklin has enjoyed most since the program got off the ground is simply seeing the girls grow within the sport.

"Our middle school girls tore the house down this year at every tournament they went to, and our high school girls keep competing for top spots in our conference and bringing home medals," he says.

On Jan. 26, the Johnston girls competed in the super regional meeting in downtown Des Moines, and they hope to have some girls qualify for the state tournament in early February.

"(It's great) seeing the girls want to get better and want to succeed," Franklin says. "The more matches they wrestle, you can tell they want to win every match, and they talk to each other about different things they could have done after. It's one of the best things to see as a coach."

For Franklin, being head coach for the girls wrestling program means he gets to teach new athletes about the sport of wrestling and what it takes to be part of it.

"These girls are tough, and they show it every day at practice and on the mat," he says.

Franklin adds that girls wrestling is the fastest growing sport today, so many colleges are ready to award scholarships to student-athletes.

"It's a great opportunity for them if they want a higher education," he says.

For those with younger children who want to get them into wrestling, Franklin points to the Johnston Wrestling Club, which aims to educate and develop competitive wrestlers in grades K-8 and helps with the development of all Johnston wrestlers. ■

WHO'S who in the Chamber?

Our members are business owners, parents, longtime residents and vital people dedicated to making Johnston a fun place to be.

This month, we're excited to showcase our Ambassador of the Year, Brenda Ballard, with Bishop Drumm. Brenda has been an amazing member of the chamber since 2012. She attends events, hosts events, volunteers with the Education Appreciation Committee and makes the best cinnamon rolls.



How long have you worked at Bishop

Drumm? Twenty-plus years. It warms my heart to feel and witness God's presence every day at work. I absolutely love my residents and their families.

What is your favorite thing about Johnston? I always say, "I eat, sleep, work and play in Johnston." Growing up in the country, I love the small-town feel here. People are friendly and support each other. I also appreciate our parks, trails and outdoor spaces.

What do you like about the Chamber? I enjoy learning about the different businesses and being directly involved with them. Getting the opportunity to know them allows me to confidently refer someone to one of our local businesses.

What is something that a lot of people might not know about you? Don't ask me to, because I will say no, but I can play eight instruments. Also, I have a truly amazing family.

Check out our upcoming events at johnstonchamber.com ■

Information provided by Samantha Winebrenner, Johnston Chamber executive director, samantha@johnstonchamber.com, 515-276-9064.



2024 Johnston Chamber Ambassador of the Year **BRENDA BALLARD!**

Thank you, Brenda for all you do for the Chamber and our Johnston Community!

JOIN THE CHAMBER TODAY!



FOR MORE INFORMATION

PH 515.276.9064

www.johnstonchamber.com

MEET Dana Zahn

Seeing a lot of growth in preschool students

Although her family moved to different cities during her early elementary years, Dana Zahn mostly calls Watertown, Wisconsin, home. She graduated from Drake University before returning to school three years ago to receive a special education endorsement. Before joining the Johnston Community School District, Zahn taught pre-K in private preschools around the metro area. Now, she has entered her sixth year teaching with the district and currently works as a 4-year-old preschool teacher for the Johnston Early Learning Academy.



Dana Zahn enjoys making a difference for her preschool students.

"I like that the district is large enough but also feels small at the same time. I know many of the teachers from all the schools. The students and staff are amazing here. I feel as if the staff work to really get to know each and every child in their classrooms," Zahn says.

As a preschool teacher, Zahn enjoys being the first educator, aside from parents, to spark the love of school and learning in each child. She says preschool is important for the jump start into kindergarten, and her hope is that her students leave her classroom ready for kindergarten.

One fun project Zahn's students have participated in this year was making gingerbread houses as a family event. Each student had at least one parent come to help them decorate their house. Zahn says it is fun watching the students interact with their parents to complete a task, and it is great to see parents interacting with other parents and helping all the kids succeed.

"I love when a child tells me they are so happy to be at school today. I feel as if I make an impact on each child that comes through my door — even if it is short lived," she says.

Her students have also started participating in Leader In Me assemblies. For this activity, the staff chooses a few students each month who have shown how they are using each of the program's habits in their classroom.

"It's so fun seeing how excited the students are when they have been chosen as a role model of certain habits. I love hearing the students using the verbiage of the habits — hearing a 4-year-old telling a friend they are 'being proactive' is so wonderful," Zahn says.

When not teaching, Zahn enjoys spending time with her husband and two daughters. She enjoys planning vacations her family can enjoy, especially to national parks. She is also looking forward to watching her students grow during the remainder of the school year.

"It's amazing to me how much they change from the beginning of the year. When they come back from spring break, it seems most of the kids have matured and grown so much academically — they are ready for the challenges of kindergarten," Zahn says. ■



Athletic and Activities Director Heather Semelmacher, Nancy Ibeling, Huda Anglo, Samuel Musa and Coach Tim Franklin at Johnston Girls Wrestling Senior Night on Jan. 15.



Athletic and Activities Director Heather Semelmacher, Michelle Kruse, Sydney Jackson, Jason Kruse and Coach Tim Franklin at Johnston Girls Wrestling Senior Night on Jan. 15.



Athletic and Activities Director Heather Semelmacher; Dave Gross, Kelly Brown Gross, Carson Brown, Kristy Brown and Richard Brown; and Coach Aaron Tecklenburg at the Johnston Boys Wrestling Senior Night on Jan. 11.



Athletic and Activities Director Heather Semelmacher; Lindsey, Carson and Chad Cornwell; and Coach Aaron Tecklenburg at the Johnston Boys Wrestling Senior Night on Jan. 11.



Athletic and Activities Director Heather Semelmacher; Andrea, Collin and Troy Hodapp; and Coach Aaron Tecklenburg at the Johnston Boys Wrestling Senior Night on Jan. 11.



Athletic and Activities Director Heather Semelmacher; Raven Parizek, Terri and Ron Holmgren and Coach Aaron Tecklenburg at the Johnston Boys Wrestling Senior Night on Jan. 11.



Athletic and Activities Director Heather Semelmacher; Bill, Jeannine and Braden Blackorby; and Coach Aaron Tecklenburg at the Johnston Boys Wrestling Senior Night on Jan. 11.



Athletic and Activities Director Heather Semelmacher; Elizabeth Pouliot, Kathryn Gentry and Coach Aaron Tecklenburg at the Johnston Boys Wrestling Senior Night on Jan. 11.



Athletic and Activities Director Heather Semelmacher, Shalome Ndatsinze, Usher Hirwa and Coach Aaron Tecklenburg at the Johnston Boys Wrestling Senior Night.



Athletic and Activities Director Heather Semelmacher; Stanley Togba; Coach Zach Thompson; and Coach Aaron Tecklenburg at the Johnston Boys Wrestling Senior Night on Jan. 11.



Athletic and Activities Director Heather Semelmacher; Jameson Lux, Allisson Furman and Coach Aaron Tecklenburg at the Johnston Boys Wrestling Senior Night on Jan. 11.

OUT & ABOUT



Brenda Ballard and Jill Vicker at the Johnston Chamber Jumpstart at Simpson Barn on Jan. 18.



Paula Bierle and Kelli Vorrath at the Johnston Chamber Jumpstart at Simpson Barn on Jan. 18.



Jenni Buchanan and Mike Pogge-Weaver at the Johnston Chamber Jumpstart at Simpson Barn on Jan. 18.



Ryan Rohlf and Dan Fitzgerald at the Johnston Chamber Jumpstart at Simpson Barn on Jan. 18.



Jenni Buchanan and Christy Cline at the Johnston Chamber After Hours held at WineStyles on Jan. 10.



Julia Bradshaw and Ryan Rohlf at the Johnston Chamber After Hours held at WineStyles on Jan. 10.



Brianne Fitzgerald and Meg Kinnetz at the Johnston Chamber After Hours held at WineStyles on Jan. 10.



Derek Trobaugh and John Denny at the Johnston Chamber After Hours held at WineStyles on Jan. 10.



Dan Fitzgerald and Nate Kinnetz at the Johnston Chamber After Hours held at WineStyles on Jan. 10.



Gina and Allan Graham at the Johnston Chamber After Hours held at WineStyles on Jan. 10.



Sharon Vickery and Eric Herrmann at the Johnston Chamber After Hours held at WineStyles on Jan. 10.



Keagan Simons and Quincy Hill at the Johnston Chamber After Hours held at WineStyles on Jan. 10.

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