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SEEN IN JOHNSTON


MORE PHOTOS INSIDE





PARSONS SPEAKS ABOUT STATE FAIR: Iowa State Fair CEO and Manager Jeremy Parsons, pictured with Sharon Vickery, Johnston Chamber of Commerce president, spoke at the Chamber luncheon June 25. ■


JOHNSTON WEATHER FORECAST

WED. HIGH 83 | LOW 62
Partly sunny; p.m. t-storms 

THURS. HIGH 83 | LOW 67
Partly sunny; scattered t-storms 

FRI. HIGH 88 | LOW 67
Clouds and sun; p.m. t-storms 

SAT. HIGH 90 | LOW 71
Partly sunny and humid 

SUN. HIGH 92 | LOW 73
Partly sunny and humid 

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FROM THE PUBLISHER

WARNING LABELS ON SOCIAL MEDIA?

Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy has called on Congress to require warning labels on social media in a way similar to what is mandatory on cigarette boxes, and I support him on this one.

Keep in mind, I am not a fan of excessive government regulation. At the federal level alone, more than 70 federal regulatory agencies currently exist, employing hundreds of thousands of people to write and implement regulations. They issue 3,500 new rules every year, and the regulatory code now is more than 168,000 pages long. Do we need another one? In the case of social media, the answer is yes.

Think about it. Car seats and baby formula are regulated, and I still won't tear the tag off my pillow because it says I cannot do so "under penalty of law." Not everyone follows the rules, but many do. Warning consumers — including our youth — about the perils of social media will help, and we simply can't trust the big tech companies to regulate themselves.

Here is what Surgeon General Murthy stated in an advisory in 2023: "Children are exposed to harmful content on social media, ranging from violent and sexual content, to bullying and harassment. And, for too many children, social media use is compromising their sleep and valuable in-person time with family and friends. We are in the middle of a national youth mental health crisis, and I am concerned that social media is an important driver of that crisis — one that we must urgently address."



And here is what he wrote recently in an opinion piece in The New York Times: "It is time to require a surgeon general's warning label on social media platforms, stating that social media is associated with significant mental health harms for adolescents. A surgeon general's warning label, which requires congressional action, would regularly remind parents

and adolescents that social media has not been proved safe. Evidence from tobacco studies show that warning labels can increase awareness and change behavior."

Social media is used by most all young people, with up to 95% of those 13-17 years old reporting using a social media platform and more than a third saying they use social media "almost constantly." Recent research shows that adolescents who spend more than three hours per day on social media (and they nearly all do) face double the risk of experiencing poor mental health outcomes, such as symptoms of depression and anxiety.

Will a warning label cure all the problems? No. But I have no doubt it will help.

Have a great week, and thanks for reading. ■



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SEEN IN JOHNSTON

IOWA STATE FAIR CEO AND MANAGER JEREMY PARSONS SPOKE AT THE CHAMBER LUNCHEON JUNE 25.



Jenni Buchanan and Shay Willis



Tony Betzer and Eric Herrmann



Ryan Rohlf and Jennifer Sayers



Luther Lehman and Craig Borwick



Jeremy Parsons and Sharon Vickery



Marla Bundy and Paula Bierle



Tiffany Nielsen and Madeline Ward



Brenda Ballard and Christy Cline

FARMERS MARKET

Johnston Farmers Market will be held on Tuesdays from 4-7 p.m. through Sept. 24 at the Johnston Town Center just north of City Hall, 6245 Merle Hay Road. Shop for fresh produce and homemade products while being entertained by live music. www.cityofjohnston.com/farmersmarket. ■

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. ■

TUNES OF TWILIGHT SERIES AT THE YARD

Enjoy live music in The Yard, 6245 Merle Hay Road.

- **Thursday, July 18**, featuring the duo Snacks
- **Thursday, Aug. 8**, featuring the all-female quartet June Bugs
- **Thursday, Sept. 12**, featuring The Sons of Gladys Kravitz.

The concerts will be from 7:30-9:30 p.m. More information is available by visiting www.cityofjohnston.com/1439/Tunes-at-Twilight-Series. ■

POLK COUNTY CONSERVATION

Visit <https://www.polkcountyiowa.gov/conservation/events/> for information about upcoming programs offered by Polk County Conservation and for registration links.

- **Pond Study at Yellow Banks:** June 22, 10 a.m. Meet at the pond parking lot and come discover what creatures live in and around a pond. All sampling equipment will be provided. The event is free, for ages 3 and older, and does not require registration.
- **Epic Adventures of Recycle Rabbit Puppet Show:** Sunday, June 23, 1 p.m., at Jester Park Nature Center. Join Recycle Rabbit as he goes on an adventure where he will help you understand how to face challenges, make the world a better place and become Champions of Conservation. This free event is for all ages and does not require registration.
- **Story Tellebration:** Wednesday, June 26, 10 a.m., Down at the Pond; Wednesday, July 24, 10 a.m., Color, Color Everywhere; Wednesday, Aug. 28, 10 a.m. I Love Bugs. Join volunteer storyteller Carmen Epstein for a fun, interactive tale tailored toward children ages 2 to 6 that explores the wonders of the outdoors. During each program, participants enjoy interactive stories and an activity. No registration required for this free event. ■

JOHNSTON SUMMER SERIES

Formerly the Summer Yoga Series, this Summer Series has expanded with a broader range of activities as well as a vendor fair, all in support of the Johnston Partnership Food Pantry. The series will highlight and promote not only women-owned businesses, but many different locally owned businesses. For more information and to register, visit www.johnstonsummerseries.com.

- **July 9, 6-7 p.m.:** Social Drumming, sponsored by Adventures in Social Development
 - **July 21, 2-5 p.m.:** Vendor Fair
 - **Aug. 20, 6-7 p.m.:** Dance Fitness, sponsored by Reagan Taylor, cosmetologist
- All events are held at 5870 Merle Hay Road, Johnston. ■

CITYVIEW'S
2024 EAST VILLAGE
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TICKETS AND INFORMATION AVAILABLE AT summerstirs.dmcityview.com

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SOFT TRAIL STROLL: SYCAMORE TRAILS

Come walk the singletrack (dirt trails) of Sycamore Trails, 4640 N.W. 66th Ave., Johnston, on Tuesday, July 23, starting at 10 a.m. This event is part of a free series for people looking for a simple way to become more active. Meet in the gravel parking lot on the south side of 66th Avenue, just east of the soccer fields and west of the Des Moines River. The group will walk slowly, think “stroll,” and no one will be left behind. The walk distance will be about 1.6 miles. If the dirt is muddy, the group will walk on the paved trails instead. More information and updates are available online at www.roccasecca.fitness/stroll. ■

JOHNSTON PARTNERSHIP NEEDS

The Johnston Partnership provides food and personal hygiene products to those in need. Almost 600 families are being served per month, so the need is high. In particular need at this time are baby food, toilet paper, shampoo and laundry soap. 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 can use fruit cups, macaroni and cheese, Ramen noodles, granola bars, individual shelf-stable milk and individual peanut butter. ■

MERLE HAY ROAD CANOE/ KAYAK LAUNCH OPEN HOUSE

An open house will be held Thursday, July 11, 5-6:30 p.m. at Johnston City Hall, 6221 Merle Hay Road, to unveil the preliminary design plan for the new Merle Hay Road Canoe/Kayak Launch. This is an excellent opportunity for community members to review the design and provide valuable input. Your feedback is crucial to the development process, and city officials encourage everyone to participate. The project is expected to be under construction by fall and continue into the winter. ■

JOHNSTON RESIDENTS REPORT HIGH SATISFACTION

ETC Institute presented the results of the sixth community survey during the Johnston City Council meeting on July 1. The overall results were positive and reflected the city leaders’ decisions to ensure that residents’ and businesses’ tax dollars are spent wisely, city leaders said.

“City leaders work hard to ensure residents value the quality of life in our community,” said Mayor Paula Dierenfeld. “Our strategic planning process focuses on the top priorities of our community, and we look forward to improving the top emphasis concerns regarding maintenance, services and economic development priorities. Thank you to the residents who took the time to provide feedback, as it helps to identify areas of improvement and focuses our efforts on resources needed to ensure our residents stay satisfied with the quality of life in Johnston.”

Residents continued to give Johnston high marks for the overall feeling of safety, quality of life and quality of services, as follows:

- 94% are satisfied with the quality of fire and EMS
- 94% said they feel safe in the city
- 92% are satisfied with the quality of police services
- 89% are satisfied with the maintenance of city buildings/facilities
- 87% are satisfied with their quality of life
- 86% are satisfied with the quality of city services
- 86% are satisfied with the quality of maintenance of city parks

Communication is crucial to keep residents well-informed about community events. City employees excel at promoting awareness and maintaining transparency with projects, news and overall communication to ensure residents can access the information they need, city officials said.

A complete report of the survey is available by visiting the following links: Survey results: www.cityofjohnston.com/DocumentCenter/View/13090; Open-ended comments: www.cityofjohnston.com/DocumentCenter/View/13147. ■



EVENTS IN THE AREA

EMAIL YOUR EVENT INFORMATION TO
TAMMY@IOWALIVINGMAGAZINES.COM

COUNTY FAIRS

- **July 9-13:** Dallas County Fair in Adel.
www.dallascountyfair.com
- **July 12-18:** Marion County Fair in Knoxville.
www.marioncofair.com
- **July 17-21:** Madison County Fair in Winterset.
www.madisoncountyfair.net
- **July 17-21:** Story County Fair in Nevada.
www.sc-fair.weebly.com
- **July 18-21:** Boone County Fair in Boone.
www.boonecountyfairia.com
- **July 19-25:** Jasper County Fair in Colfax.
www.jaspercofair.com
- **July 24-29:** Warren County Fair in Indianola.
www.warrencofair.com
- **July 25-28:** Polk County Fair at the Iowa State Fairgrounds in Des Moines.
www.polkcountyfairiowa.com

ANKENY SUMMERFEST

July 12-14

**The District at Prairie Trail,
1500 S.W. Main St., Ankeny**
www.ankenysummerfest.com

Over the course of this three-day long event, 24 food vendors will set up shop to serve hungry attendees, 13 musical acts will be performing throughout the weekend for listening pleasure, and plenty of family-friendly activities like a parade and carnival will be in the area.

CLIVE FESTIVAL

July 19-20

**Clive Aquatics Center parking lot/
Greenbelt Landing**

Highlights include the annual Thunder Over Clive Fireworks Show both evenings at 9:30 p.m., live music, the popular Clive Fire Department

Slip-N-Slide, Clive Running Festival, and much more. For more details, visit https://www.cityofclive.com/parkandrecreation/programs_and_events/clive_festival.php.

FOUR SEASONS FESTIVAL

July 19-20

Polk City

Highlights include the parade at 10 a.m. Saturday, July 20, the Bill Riley Talent Show, live music, festival food, kids activities and more. For details, visit gopolkc.com/four-seasons-festival.

WAUKEE ARTS FESTIVAL

July 19-20

Centennial Park, Waukee

www.waukeeartsfestival.org

Centennial Park in Waukee will host plenty of eye-catching local art from some of the area's best artists over the two-day-long festival. Live music and food trucks will be available to enjoy alongside the artwork.

NATIONAL BALLOON CLASSIC

July 26-Aug. 3

**Memorial Balloon Field,
1136 150th Ave., Indianola**

www.nationalballoonclassic.com

Just look up. Beautifully colored hot air balloons adorn the skies of Indianola. The National Balloon Classic has been dropping jaws of Iowans and travelers with its wondrous display for more than 50 years. ■

RECIPE

CAESAR SALAD-INSPIRED TACOS

(Family Features) From putting a family meal on the table after activities to hosting a large crowd at your next get-together, a seasonal favorite like Caesar salad can serve as the perfect canvas for creating quick, easy-to-prepare meals.

With more than 100 varieties of fresh, healthy and convenient ready-to-eat salads – including 11 Caesar salad varieties like the Caesar Chopped Salad Kit – Fresh Express provides tasty, versatile salad kits that can be modified to fit nearly any kind of meal you might be craving.

Available in the refrigerated produce department, these premium mixes can be eaten as a standalone salad when time is of the essence or taken beyond the bowl and fused with another beloved classic, like tacos, for a burst of flavor and texture in every bite. These Fried Chicken Caesar Tacos, ready in just 30 minutes, feature savory Caesar salad – crisp, chopped romaine; herb-seasoned crouton crumbles; cracked pepper; grated Parmesan cheese; and a delicious Parmesan Caesar dressing — enveloped in a crispy, golden chicken shell. ■

CHICKEN CAESAR TACOS

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 20 minutes

Servings: 4

Ingredients:

- 3 eggs
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 packet taco seasoning
- 2 chicken breasts, sliced in half horizontally
- 3 cups neutral oil
- 1 bag (9.4 ounces) Fresh Express Caesar Chopped Salad Kit

Directions:

In shallow bowl, beat eggs. In separate bowl, combine flour and half packet of taco seasoning.

Place chicken in resealable bag and, using meat tenderizer, pound to 1/4-inch thickness.

In medium saute pan, heat oil over medium heat.

Season chicken breasts with remaining taco seasoning.

Coat chicken in flour mixture, dip into beaten eggs then coat chicken in flour mixture again, pressing firmly to adhere.

In pan with hot oil, cook battered chicken until golden brown, flipping halfway through, until chicken reaches minimum internal temperature of 165 F, 4-5



minutes per side (depending on thickness). Fry in batches to avoid overcrowding pan, if necessary.

Once fully cooked, fold chicken over to create taco shell shape. Place sheet pan on top to hold shape, 3-4 minutes.

In large bowl, combine lettuce, dressing, croutons and cheese from salad kit.

Once chicken taco shells set, carefully remove sheet pan. Fill each taco shell with prepared salad mixture.

To build sandwiches, place sliced pork on bottom halves of toasted buns. Top with prepared salad mixture and sauteed onions. Finish with top halves of buns.

SIGN UP FOR THE MAYOR'S RUN FOR THE TRAILS

The Mayor's Annual Run for the Trails 5K + Kids Fun Run will take place on Saturday, Aug. 10. The Kids Fun Runs and 5K walk will start at 8 a.m., followed by the 5K Run at 8:15 a.m. Register at <https://runsignup.com/Race/Info/IA/Johnston/MayorsRunfortheTrails2022KidsFunRun>. ■



2024 MOVIES IN THE YARD

Mark your calendars for an unforgettable lineup of outdoor Movies on the Yard this summer at Johnston Town Center, 6245 Merle Hay Road. The lineup includes:

- **Thursday, Aug. 15:** "Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3"
- **Thursday, Sept. 19:** "Wonka."

All screenings begin at dusk. Bring your blankets, lawn chairs and loved ones for an evening of free entertainment. ■

SOUNDS OF SUMMER AT THE YARD

The music will begin at 7 p.m. on the stage, just west of Johnston City Hall. Bring your lawn chair and blanket and enjoy the free music. More information is available by visiting www.cityofjohnston.com/1438/Sounds-of-Summer.

- **Saturday, Aug. 24** – Mixtape
- **Saturday, Sept. 28** – The Pork Tornadoes ■

JOHNSTON BASKETBALL CLUB 2024 TRYOUTS

The Johnston Basketball Club (JBC) girls and boys tryouts are scheduled on Sunday, Aug. 11, at Johnston High School Gym, 6500 N.W. 100th St. Grades eligible for tryouts are first through eighth (grade they will be attending in the fall of 2024). Check the JBC website (johnstonbasketballclub.com) to register for tryouts in July. Specific times for tryouts per grade will be on the website in August. ■

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BABYSITTING: I am a Johnston Middle School associate teacher and planning to do babysitting during summer months starting June. I love being with kids and possess the caring and kind personality. I guarantee you will be satisfied with my service. Call/text me at 925-246-3816.

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