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AUGUST 2024

Living
MAG

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Residents share their experiences as beekeepers

Brewing kombucha, Adventure Passes and more

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WELCOME

THE BUZZ about bees

Apiophobia. Apiphobia. Melissophobia.

Call it whatever you want. I call it a fear of bees — and for good reason.

As a 5-year-old boy, I was stung by a bee — right in the eye. I remember playing in the neighbor's lawn and seeing that blasted buzzard making a bee-line toward my face. After the sting, I made my own one-eyed bee-line across the street, looking for my mom to make it all better. And she did. She laid me down on the couch and, with a set of tweezers, pulled that stinger out of my eye and immediately strapped an icepack on my face. After that incident, I made sure that bees and I never saw eye to eye again. Here's how.



On a kindergarten field trip, we visited a classmate's bee farm. I stayed on the bus.

When the birds and the bees discussion came about, I opted for the aviary.

And, today, when an occasional bee makes its way inside my car, I immediately exit the vehicle.

This is not to say that I have not been stung again by bees since the eye incident. I most certainly have, including the time a bee flew in my shirt sleeve and stung me repeatedly in the armpit until I stripped myself and repeatedly stomped that varmint.

Despite my anguish over bees, there is one thing about them I really love — honey. I have a teaspoon of it with skim milk in my coffee every morning. This has been a healthier option than the creamer I enjoyed so much, and, I am told, the local honey helps with my allergies.

In this month's Living magazine, you will learn about local bee producers and what draws them to this hobby that is fascinating and, for people like me, fearful.

Now you know what the buzz is all about.

Thanks for reading. ■

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WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

Residents share their experiences as beekeepers

By Ashley Rullestad

While the Iowa DNR reports the number of native bees in Iowa continues to decline, more and more apiarists (beekeepers) are emerging to nurture the bee population. As of Jan. 1 of last year, Iowa boasted 36,000 bee colonies for operations with five or more colonies, according to the USDA. That's a big uptick from the prior year's 26,000 colonies and the 15,500 colonies the year before that. But who are these beekeepers, and what drives their passion? Some local apiarists share their stories.

Nicole Smith

FEATURE

Gardening guru

Stuart Spencer has been gardening for a while, and it was the garden that made him think about bees.

“The main reason that we got involved in beekeeping was to help out the pollination of our garden,” Spencer says. “We noticed the need and wanted to try honeybees to see how they did with pollinating. We have been doing beekeeping now for seven years and enjoy the work the bees do and the delicious honey they produce.”

Spencer learned about beekeeping by watching videos online and talking to a lot of different beekeepers. There are several different bee groups on social media where you can present questions or ideas and receive a variety of responses, so he tried to gather as much knowledge as possible.

When he started beekeeping, he had two hives.

“This is highly recommended by a lot of beekeepers, and I would recommend this, too, in case you need to borrow resources between hives. You can also see what is going on in each hive and compare each hive to one another,” he says.

They have since expanded their bee colony,



Stuart Spencer decided to start beekeeping to help pollinate his garden.

and Spencer collects the honey to make honey lemonade, which they sell at the Johnston Farmers Market under the Sweet Bee Prairie Gardens name.

If people want to get started with beekeeping,

Spencer recommends talking with different beekeepers. Local classes are also available to walk people through how to keep bees.

“Bees are great for our world, and the more people who keep bees, the better.”

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Stuart Spencer extracts honey.

Trying something new

Michael Skinner saw that Johnston Community Education had a beekeeping class. He enjoyed looking at bees, so he signed up.

“I like bugs. Seemed like a good idea at the time,” he says. “During Beekeeping 101, our instructor was extremely supportive. She encouraged us to dive in, get hives and go. I ordered two packages of bees that would be delivered in April and spent the next two months learning and building out the hives.”

Skinner installed the packages on April 9, and he had a successful first year. This year is his second year keeping bees, so he stuck with two hives. They are set up in a nook next to his house in the middle of a small garden in his backyard.

He recently harvested about 150 pounds of honey and wax from the two hives. He bottled the honey, and he gives it away to friends and family.

“Everyone loves a bottle of local honey,” he says.



Michael Skinner started beekeeping after taking a class about it in Johnston.

Skinner doesn’t aspire to turn his bees into a business, but he feels like the Beekeeping 101 class set him on a good path for success in backyard beekeeping. In addition to that knowledge, he has made connections with other beekeepers. He’s also joined beekeeping associations and clubs, such as Des Moines Backyard Beekeepers and Central Iowa Beekeepers Association.

“My hives are named Rock and Block, and we can tell the bees apart in manner and appearance, even though they are supposed to be the same kind of honeybee,” he says.

Bee loved

Niki Smith has had a longtime fascination with, and interest in, bees.

“I think it all started from an iconic scene in the movie ‘Fried Green Tomatoes’ when character Idgie Threadgood pulled honeycomb out of a hive in a tree. Then, as an adult, I met other beekeepers and realized I, too, could become a bee charmer.”

Smith took a course through Johnston Community Education to learn about getting started. The course is offered each year, typically in the winter because that’s a good time to order supplies and bees.

Smith ordered her supplies from Mann Lake, a well-known bee supplies distributor out of Minnesota. She ordered her bees locally from

Foley’s Russian Bees in Indianola and from Bell Farms in Runnells.

“Both are so easy to work with and have hearty, well-tempered bees,” she says. “I currently have two hives on my one-acre wooded property in north Johnston. I have a sticker on my water bottle with a picture of a bee, and it says, ‘If we die, we’re taking you with us.’ Most people don’t realize that bees are a crucial part of our food system. I really feel like I’m doing my part to keep this cycle of life alive on our planet.”

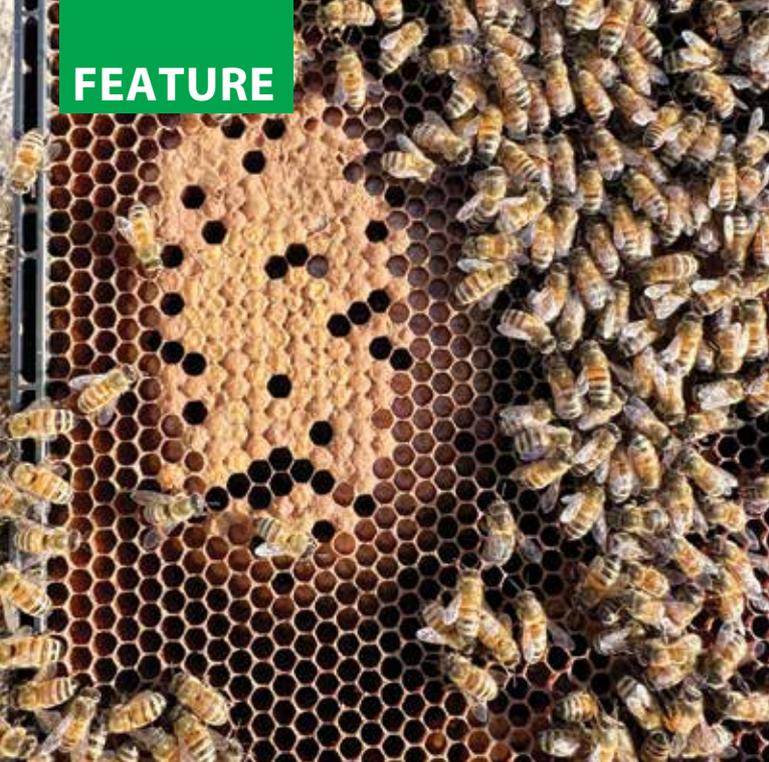
Smith gathered and sold her honey to Confluence Brewing for its Drake Bulldog beer. As a proud Drake alumna, this was a great way to get involved, support Drake, and use her bee products. She also makes lip balm, wood conditioner and wax food wraps with her beeswax.

Her advice for those who are interested in learning is to take a class. Spencer admits that, usually, she dives into things, but, when it came to beekeeping, she took her time. First, she took a class, then spent an entire year watching documentaries, reading books, checking social media groups, and talking to friends who have hobby hives. By the time she was ready to start beekeeping, she felt more confident in her skills.

Last year, her hard work culminated in a blue ribbon at the Iowa State Fair for the extracted frame she submitted.

“There is so much to learn about bees.

FEATURE



Nicole Smith's bees

They are fascinating," Smith says. "I don't think I'll ever stop learning and growing with this hobby. I meet beekeepers who have been doing it for decades, and they tell me the same thing. Bees have been around longer than we have, so they know how to survive without us. I'm just here to give them a nice home to give them the best chance." ■



Nicole Smith won a blue ribbon at the Iowa State Fair for an extracted frame from a hive.



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NEWS from the stacks at JPL

Summer is coming to a close, but we still have quite a few fun events to squeeze in before August is over. Come to a free event to learn how to make your own kombucha, talk books with fellow book lovers at the JPL Ultimate Reading Meet-Up, explore the metro with Iowa Libraries Adventure Passes and more. Read on for all the details.

Learn How to Brew Kombucha at Home on Saturday, Aug. 10 at 10:30 a.m. at JPL. Carissa Thoma, from Down to Earth Living, will cover the process of making this delicious fermented drink, including ingredients, flavoring, health benefits and more. Samples will be provided, and a few lucky winners will take a starter culture home with them. Registration is required for this free class.

Talk about books you love with other book lovers at the **Ultimate Reading Challenge August Meet-Up** on Sunday, Aug. 18, from 1-2 p.m. Join your fellow challenge participants for an afternoon of food, drink and literary fun. Discover new titles to add to your to-read list and chat with others about that thriller you both read. You'll earn one entry to the grand prize for each meet-up event you attend. Registration is not required but appreciated.

JPL is looking for teens who have great ideas, want to have fun, and would like to make a difference at their library by suggesting

services, materials and programs that will make the library a better place for teens.

Teen Advisory Board is open to students in grades 6-12. TAB meets once a month for about an hour and includes a fun activity and yummy snacks. More information and the Teen Advisory Board application are available at www.johnstonlibrary.com/teen-advisory-board.

Finally, Johnston residents with a JPL library card can reserve free passes to multiple attractions around Central Iowa, including Blank Park Zoo, Science Center of Iowa, Des Moines Children's Museum, Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden and Reiman Gardens, with Iowa Libraries Adventure Passes. Passes are available on a first-come, first-served basis and include two adult tickets and two child tickets per reservation. Information about **Adventure Passes** is available at www.johnstonlibrary.com/adventure-pass.

More information about events and resources at Johnston Public Library can be found online at www.johnstonlibrary.com or by calling the library at 515-278-5233. ■

Johnston Public Library

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VOTE TODAY!

Who will be voted favorite in the Northwest Metro?

Includes Grimes, Dallas Center, Johnston, Clive and Urbandale

We all have our favorite local people, places and things. And now it's time to share your choices and honor those who deserve the recognition.

Make your voice be heard and cast your votes in the 2024 Northwest Metro Residents' Choice Poll. This contest is being hosted by Iowa Living magazines, and the results will publish in our Grimes/Dallas Center, Johnston, Clive and Urbandale October editions. You can vote in one or every category, or anywhere in between.

HURRY! POLL CLOSES SEPT. 3, 2024.

See rules and vote at www.iowalivingmagazines.com/residentspoll. One vote per resident, please.

SCAN HERE TO
VOTE TODAY!



FOOD AND DRINK

- Restaurant
- Restaurant for Breakfast
- Restaurant for Lunch
- Restaurant for Dinner
- Restaurant for Dessert
- Place for Ice Cream
- Pizza Establishment
- Bar
- Coffee Shop
- Catering Company
- Server/Bartender

AUTOMOTIVE

- Auto Service
- Auto Body Shop
- Car Dealership
- Auto Parts Store

COMMUNITY

- Preschool/Daycare
- Non Profit
- School (name of building)
- Park
- Community Festival or Event
- Church
- Pastor
- Chamber of Commerce

SHOPPING

- Grocery Store
- Boutique
- Retail Store
- Thrift Store
- Home Improvement Retail Store
- Liquor Store
- Nursery or Garden Center
- Place to Purchase a Gift for a Man
- Place to Purchase a Gift for a Woman

ENTERTAINMENT

- Dad/Child Date Spot
- Mom/Child Date Spot
- Place to Take Your Mom and Dad
- Place to Take Your Kids or Grandkids
- Place for Children's Birthday Parties
- Golf Course

HEALTH/BEAUTY

- Hair Salon
- Health Clinic
- Dental Office
- Orthodontist Office
- Mental Health Services
- Chiropractic Office
- Vision Care
- Health Club or Gym
- Pharmacy

HEALTH/BEAUTY

- Cosmetic Services
- Physical Therapy
- Dance Studio
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- Tumbling Studio

OTHER PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

- Financial Planner
- Law Firm
- Accounting Firm
- Veterinarian
- Dog Groomer
- Pet Care
- Lawn Care Business
- Landscaping Company
- Heating and Cooling Business
- Electrical Business
- Plumbing Company
- Senior Living Establishment
- Insurance Company
- Realtor
- Bank/Credit Union
- Photographer
- Place for Guests to Stay
- Home Building/Remodeling Contractor
- Exterior Contractor (siding, roofing, windows, doors)
- Pest Control
- Tree Service

HOW elections could impact your retirement

As you near retirement, it's important to understand how elections could affect your retirement savings and how you can protect your portfolio from market ups and downs.



Presidential elections are significant events that can bring uncertainty and market volatility. There are many questions during an election year. Who will be the next president? Which party will control the House and Senate? What laws will be passed if power is split in Congress? Historically, stock market volatility tends to increase in the months before an election due to the market's aversion to uncertainty. It's not surprising that the stock market performs better in a year when an incumbent president is re-elected compared to a new administration.

As for whether a Democratic or Republican winner is better for the market, experts agree that there is no clear winner. While

market returns may vary in election years compared to non-election years, the data does not conclusively support a direct correlation between election outcomes and market performance. The stock market has gone up — and down — under all presidents, but the overall trajectory is positive.

In recent history, some of the worst years for stock market volatility and returns have coincided with presidential election years. Still, other factors had the most significant impact on the stock market. For example, the tech bubble burst started in 2000, the year George W. Bush ran against Al Gore. The 2008 housing collapse and subsequent Great Financial Crisis began the same year Barack Obama ran against John McCain. The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic happened the first time Joe Biden ran against Donald Trump.

Plenty of opinions and predictions will make headlines regarding the elections, the party that wins, and the impact on the stock market. However, you are most concerned about your retirement savings and how to invest

for growth while protecting against swings.

Historical perspective can help you focus on what matters in retirement: controlling what you can control. We help families and individuals prepare for market volatility before it happens by building recession resistant retirement plans. We know that recessions happen, on average, every five to six years. By diversifying investments and incorporating long-term, mid-term, and short-term strategies, you can mitigate the impact of market volatility on your retirement savings.

Proactive planning and strategic investing can help those planning for retirement navigate market volatility. Then, you can stay on track to live out your retirement vision regardless of who gets elected or what other factors may impact the stock market. ■

Information provided by Loren Merkle CFP®, RICP®, Certified Financial Fiduciary®, Merkle Retirement Planning, 1860 S.E. Princeton Drive, Grimes, 515-278-1006. Source: McKenna, Kristin, "Here's How The Stock Market Has Performed Before, During, And After Presidential Elections" (Aug. 18, 2020). Forbes.com. Accessed May 17, 2024.



Are you wondering how the presidential election could **impact** the stock market? Scan the QR code to watch this episode or read about it now.



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PLANNING for a disabled child's future

Planning for a disabled child's future care is challenging for parents. Whether the children are minors or adults, family members often have to balance putting money aside for their children's future, while maintaining much-needed government benefits.



To be eligible for programs such as Medicaid and Supplemental Security Income (SSI), an applicant must have less than \$2,000 in countable resources. Not only are there limits to assets, many government programs have income restrictions as well. For example, if an applicant has too much monthly income, it can negate Medicaid eligibility.

The maximum monthly amount of SSI paid to a disabled beneficiary is \$943 in 2024. It can be difficult to locate safe and secure

housing with this income; however, if family and friends contribute to basic living expenses — such as rent — it can be considered “in-kind” support and reduce monthly benefit. Luckily, there is an option.

The Achieving a Better Life Experience Act (ABLE) of 2014 created a way for disabled individuals and their families to save money for expenses relating to the disability. This is a client-directed account, established through the Iowa Treasurer's portal that can be used by the beneficiary to supplement basic needs.

An ABLE account can only hold cash assets, such as paychecks or monetary gifts from family. While there are limits to the yearly amount of money contributed to the account, an individual can accrue up to \$100,000 without losing benefits.

Money from an ABLE account can be used to pay for education, transportation, health services, and employment-related expenses. Additionally, unlike some Medicaid trusts,

funds from an ABLE account can be used for housing and basic living expenses. The disabled individual is also allowed to have direct access to the money.

Currently, to be eligible for an ABLE account, an individual must be disabled and the disability occurred before the age of 26. However, recent adjustments to the law will raise the age limit to individuals found disabled up to 46 years old. The new law goes into effect Jan. 1, 2026.

ABLE accounts can be used in conjunction with other Medicaid trusts. They are a useful tool that assists disabled children and adults in planning for their future. If you have questions about how an ABLE account can complement your estate planning, contact an attorney who specializes in estate planning for individuals with disabilities. ■

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

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TASTY recipes to combat the hustle and bustle

(Family Features) Jam-packed calendars and little spare time at home can make heads spin. When those hectic weeknights are giving your family fits, turn to delicious recipes you can have ready in 30 minutes or less.

Start with kitchen staples like chicken and rice. They're easy to prepare and versatile enough to let you cook a variety of meals without feeling like you're stuck in a dinner rut. For example, these air-fryer bang bang chicken tenders with rice offer a kid-friendly take on bang bang chicken that's both sweet and spicy.

This air-fryer favorite requires just half an hour in the kitchen and calls on the quality and convenience of Success Boil-in-Bag Jasmine Rice to make busy weeknights a breeze. In just 10 minutes, the aromatic rice cooks up soft and fluffy with a uniquely delicious flavor that's naturally gluten free, Non-GMO Project Verified and free of MSG and preservatives.

Find more ways to solve dinnertime dilemmas at SuccessRice.com. ■

Air-fryer bang bang chicken tenders with rice

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 20 minutes

Servings: 4

- 1 pound chicken tenders
- 1/2 cup sweet chili sauce, divided
- 1/4 cup sriracha hot sauce, divided
- 2 tablespoons sesame oil
- 1 bag Success Jasmine Rice
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 1 bag (12 ounces) coleslaw mix
- 1/2 English cucumber, thinly sliced
- toasted sesame seeds, for garnish (optional)
- green onions, for garnish (optional)

DIRECTIONS

- Toss chicken tenders with 2 tablespoons sweet chili sauce and 1 tablespoon sriracha. Drizzle with sesame oil.
- Preheat air-fryer to 400 F. In two batches, without overfilling basket, air fry chicken tenders, turning basket halfway during



- cook time, 10-12 minutes, or until chicken is golden brown and cooked through.
- Prepare rice according to package directions. Stir mayonnaise with remaining sweet chili sauce and sriracha until blended. In large bowl, toss coleslaw mix with 1/4 cup bang bang mayo sauce.
- Divide rice among four bowls. Top with chicken, coleslaw mix and cucumber. Drizzle with remaining bang bang mayo sauce.
- Garnish with toasted sesame seeds and green onions, if desired.



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The benefits of a collaborative approach

In today's real estate market, prospective homebuyers often find the complexities of building a new home overwhelming. However, many families are discovering the benefits of working with a dedicated team of real estate agents and homebuilders. Personalized service, transparent pricing and consistent communication can transform the home building process into a seamless, enjoyable experience.



Realtors play a crucial role by understanding the client's needs and preferences, then communicating those desires to the builder. Builders then use their expertise to ensure the client's vision is executed flawlessly. Strong relationships with vendors, subcontractors and city municipalities positively impact scheduling, pricing and craftsmanship. This teamwork ensures that every detail, from floor plans to final finishes, aligns with the buyer's expectations.

Consistent communication, regular updates and open lines of dialogue between all parties ensure any potential issues are promptly addressed and modifications can be made without delays. This proactive approach keeps the project on schedule and reassures homebuyers that their investment is managed with care and attention. Ultimately, partnering with a dedicated team of real estate agents and builders ensures the final product reflects the buyer's dreams and needs.

Building a new home is an exciting journey that requires careful planning and decision-making.

Here is a step-by-step guide to help you through the process

- **Hire a Realtor:** Ask for referrals from friends and family. Interview Realtors to find one experienced in new home construction. Ensure the Realtor understands your needs and budget.
- **Obtain financing:** Explore different loan options. Understand the details of a construction loan and the process to obtain one.
- **Choose a location:** Research neighborhoods and their amenities. Tour potential areas with your Realtor to get a feel for the community.
- **Select a homebuilder:** Research and shortlist reputable builders in your chosen area. Visit model homes and review past projects. Meet with two to three builders in person to determine if they are a good fit.
- **Design your home:** Utilize the builder's design services. Choose a floor plan that fits your lifestyle and future needs. Select materials, finishes and fixtures within your budget.
- **Construction process:** Your builder will obtain necessary permits and approvals. Regularly communicate with your Realtor and builder and visit the site. Monitor the construction timeline and budget. Address any issues or changes promptly.
- **Final steps:** Conduct a final walk-through to learn the home's systems. Close on your new home and move in.

By following these steps, you'll be well on your way to creating the home of your dreams. Patience and attention to detail are key to a successful homebuilding experience. ■

Information provided by Katie Fliehler, katie@katiefliehler.com, 515-664-0414; and Malinda Garner, malinda@malindagarner.com, 515-991-5092, ReMax, 8705 Chambery Blvd., Suite 100, Johnston.



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SINGING with legends at the state fair

Johnston Middle School choir to perform onstage with Foreigner.



Members of the Johnston Middle School Choir who will perform with the rock band Foreigner at the Iowa State Fair on Aug. 9 include, front row: Colton Pierce, Jason Vis, Micah McGee, Ethan MacFarland, Abe Prince, Tyson Sires, Noah Davidson and David Nadler; and, back row: Didrik Jorgenson, Channing Robinson, Talon Wanderscheid, Conner Dummermuth, Reece O'Leary, Zedric McCorkel, Maxwell George, Calvin Hushagen and Weston Danner. Not pictured: Phinn Lenihan.

A group of 18 soon-to-be sophomore boys from Johnston High School are busy preparing to take the stage Aug. 9 at the Iowa State Fair.

But this isn't just any stage. This is the big one. The grandstand stage. And there's another catch — they'll be accompanying none other than the rock group Foreigner, one of classic rock's most iconic bands.

Jorie O'Leary, vocal music instructor at Johnston Middle School, says the excitement level is off the charts.

"I was telling them at rehearsal that, during the song, the lead singer will announce them to thousands of people who are going to be in the grandstands watching, and they just got these giant eyes and were so pumped about it," she says. "I don't think, though, that, until they're actually living it, they'll realize how big of an opportunity this is. It's going to be surreal for them. They probably don't understand just yet how awesome it will be."

The choir will be singing the band's iconic

hit, "I Want to Know What Love Is" with the group on stage. Foreigner will also donate \$500 to the choir to use for their program.

The chance to share the stage with a famous rock band came about when a local radio station held a contest earlier in the spring in which any youth choir in Iowa could submit an audition tape of them singing a Foreigner song. The winner would get to make the on-stage appearance at the annual Iowa State Fair. The station narrowed the entrants down to the best three, and then it was up to the general public to decide — via a vote — who would be the winner.

"One of our staff at the middle school called one morning and told me about it," O'Leary says. "I talked to my ninth-grade chamber choir boys, and they were all in. It's so much fun because they are so into '80s and '90s rock 'n roll. A lot of the boys listen to, and love, this genre of music."

An audition song was selected, but it wasn't

"I Want To Know What Love Is," the track they knew they would perform at the Fair should they win. Instead, they went upbeat, and "Hot Blooded" was chosen. The week of April 22, the good news came down: They'd won.

"The boys were ecstatic," O'Leary says. "They wanted to start rehearsing right away."

The choir will have an opportunity to meet the band before the show and get some pictures taken with them as well.

"The boys have been asking me, 'Can we bring things for them to sign?' Can we bring T-shirts?" O'Leary says. "I've been telling them I'm sure they will, just not to get too fan-crazed. I really enjoy seeing their genuine excitement, though."

O'Leary will be there, videotaping the performance for parents who may not be able to attend the show.

"It's going to be such a cool experience," she says. "I'm thrilled for them. It's going to be awesome." ■

SCHOOL-TO-WORK program partners with businesses

Students explore career paths in real-world settings.

Johnston High School has offered a work-based learning course for years. Since 2016, students have indicated their planned career path, and the School-to-Work coordinators have matched them with local businesses for hands-on-experience. Each year, Co-Coordinator Kayla Bousum looks forward to finding the best placement for each student in the program. The coordinators work to fit the personality and culture of the business to the correct student so it is a positive experience for everyone involved.



Campbell Love is a finance intern at Charter Bank.

“I absolutely love when students find the right fit and are confirmed in their career path before ever leaving high school. But I also think it is a win when students try a career path and learn that it isn’t the right fit because they haven’t spent time and money in college to find that out,” Bousum says.



Sophie Kindred teaches a lesson in a Beaver Creek Elementary third-grade classroom as part of her internship.

The School-To-Work Internship course is limited to seniors who are on track to graduate on time. The selection process prioritizes communication skills, excellent attendance and punctuality at school, recommendations from teachers, and the student’s enthusiasm for a career path. The program typically has about 60 interns each year. It has provided experience in the areas of dental, construction, legal, medical, electrical, finance, marketing, stage production and information technology, among many others.

“The best part of being in School to Work is how you learn things that high school can’t teach you. Every day, there’s something different to work on or a new situation that comes up. Each day is a new challenge,” Campbell Love, who was a finance intern at Charter Bank, says.

“The best part of being in School-to-Work are the connections and relationships you create with the people you work with,” Sophie Kindred, who was an elementary education intern, says.

Since the program is personalized for students, each year, the program is different and new fields incorporated. For example, the coordinators have worked to obtain an internship related to environmental engineering for the upcoming school year. Businesses interested in working with the program can contact Bousum or Kate White at the Johnston Community School District. ■

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INVESTMENT

By Tim Hanstad

CHOOSING the right trustee



When drawing up your estate plans, you might find it useful to create a revocable or irrevocable trust, either of which can help your estate avoid probate court and give you significant control over how and when your assets are distributed. But who should oversee your trust?

As the person who established the trust — known as the “grantor” or “settlor” — you can also name yourself as trustee. However, this may not be the best move, particularly if the trust is irrevocable. An irrevocable trust protects the assets in the trust from creditors and civil judgments, but if you serve as trustee, this protection will disappear. It might be more advantageous for you to be the trustee of a revocable (living) trust, which can be modified without much trouble and allows you to move assets in and out of the trust and to change trust beneficiaries. You should work with a qualified estate-planning attorney to determine which type of trust, if any, is appropriate for your situation, and to get some guidance on the wisdom of serving as your own trustee.

If you decide to choose someone else as trustee, you'll want to consider the following factors:

- **Trust** – In thinking about whom you might want to serve as your trustee, the most important attribute is trust. Do you trust that this individual will always act in your best interest? If so, then they may be a good trustee candidate, but you'll also need to look at other considerations.
- **Financial management skills** – The person you choose to be your trustee doesn't have to be an accountant or a financial professional — but they should be skilled at managing their own finances. And they should be well-organized and good with details.
- **Mental and physical fitness** – Your trustee could serve in that position for many years, so you'll want to name someone who is in good physical and mental health. Of course, things can change over time, so if you observe that your chosen trustee has begun to suffer physical or mental decline, you may need to name a successor trustee in your trust document.
- **Conflict of interest** – You want your trustee to carry out your wishes in a fair manner — so, you should pick someone who doesn't have a conflict of interest with any of the beneficiaries you've named in your trust. Of course, this can be tricky if you want to name a family member as trustee. So, if you do, you'll need to spell out your wishes clearly — to the trustee and to other family members.

Here's something else to think about: Instead of choosing an individual, you could name a corporate trustee. By doing so, you can receive some key benefits, such as objectivity and potentially avoiding some of the family-related disputes that can arise when an estate is settled. Also, corporate trustees have the expertise and resources to navigate the various tax and inheritance laws affecting living trusts.

Whether it's a trusted individual or a corporate entity, the right trustee can make a big difference in the effectiveness of your living trust — and, by extension, the outcome of your comprehensive estate plans. So, start your search, get the help you need and take the steps necessary to arrive at a choice for trustee that's right for you and your family. ■

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by Tim Hanstad your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Edward Jones, Member SIPC. Edward Jones, its employees and financial advisors cannot provide tax or legal advice. You should consult your attorney or qualified tax advisor regarding your situation.

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UNIQUE new program offers senior living alternative

Stay at home — with peace of mind.

Susan has lived in her Des Moines home since her children were toddlers. She's now 76, and she wonders what the future holds for her health and her living situation.



She has no desire to move into a senior living community, although many of her friends have made that choice and are happy with it. Susan simply wants to stay in her home, but she worries about needing assistance down the road. Her children live out of state, and she has no other family members in the area.

Susan's situation is far from unusual. "Aging in place" — in your home — is not always within the grasp of every person. If you end up needing assistance to remain in the place you love, chronic health challenges can make living independently ill-advised, and full-time care at home can cost as much as community living.

You may be asking yourself, then: "If I

don't want to move into a community but I'm concerned about health issues later on, what can I do?"

The answer: You have more options than ever before. Some organizations that serve older adults have designed Continuing Care at Home (CC@H) membership programs designed to help people proactively focus on their health at home while enabling them to financially plan for potential services and care down the road.

If you're interested in looking into CC@H programs, the questions below can help you make sure the program's premises, amenities and outcomes will be the best ones for you.

• **Do you understand the program and what it offers?** A good CC@H program not only will offer services and amenities to enhance your wellbeing so you can remain independent longer, it will also help fund future long-term care needs.

• **Is personal support included?** Studies show people who embark on any kind of life-altering program or activity, such as a nutrition or exercise regimen, will be more likely to

succeed with encouragement from a trusted adviser or advocate.

• **What will your care options be?** A solid program will help fund your care, if it's needed, whether through home healthcare or services in a senior living community later on. If the program you're considering does offer both, make sure you're comfortable with the services and care provided by the organization's home healthcare team as well as in its communities. A reputable provider will have longevity and solid outcomes behind it.

If you're considering membership in a CC@H program, make sure it feels tailor-made for you. Your wellbeing and your checkbook will thank you for it. ■

Aaron Wheeler is Vice President of Home and Community-Based Services for WesleyLife, which provides health and well-being services, including WellAhead — A WesleyLife Well-Being Experience, a CC@H offering designed for people who never want to move to a senior living community. To learn more, visit wesleylife.org/wellahead.



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LAST CHANCE TO REGISTER: MAYOR'S RUN FOR THE TRAILS + KIDS FUN RUNS

Join us for the Mayor's Run for the Trails, a wonderful family event! Put on your running shoes and take part on Saturday, August 10. The kids' runs and 5K walk will commence at 8:00 a.m., followed by the 5K run at 8:15 a.m. After the race, there will be post-race food for finishers and prizes for the top men and women in each age group. If running isn't your preference, you can still get involved by participating in the 5K walk. The entry fee is \$40 for the 5K and \$15 for the Kids' Runs. It's a fantastic opportunity to show your support for the trails and have some fun! Sign up at www.cityofjohnston.com/Mayors5KRun.



COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS REPORT HIGH SATISFACTION

ETC Institute presented the results of the sixth community survey during the City Council meeting on July 1, 2024. The overall results were positive and reflected the city leaders' important decisions to ensure that residents' and businesses' tax dollars are spent wisely.

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

A complete survey report is available at www.cityofjohnston.com/2024CommunitySurvey.



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



CITY NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2024

JOIN US FOR FREE SUNDAES IN THE PARK ON AUGUST 4

Sundae in the Park is a delightful event to help kids get ready for school! On Sunday, August 4, the Johnston Community School District, Johnston Community Education, and the City of Johnston invite you to an evening filled with music, ice cream, and lots of fun.

City department heads and school administrators will be scooping free ice cream, and there will be exciting activities such as exploring a fire engine, sitting in a police vehicle, and even hopping into the cab of a snowplow.

The event takes place from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at Johnston Commons Park, located at 6050 Morningside Drive. It's a perfect way to make lasting memories before the school year begins. Don't miss out!



GRANT PROGRAM OFFERS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR STORMWATER IMPROVEMENTS

The Stormwater Homeowner Grant Program aims to assist property owners in implementing Stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) on their properties. By integrating these practices, you can significantly contribute to improving water quality and reducing the impacts of stormwater runoff.

What does the program offer?

Residents can receive up to a 50 percent match on the cost of BMPs constructed on your property, with a maximum reimbursement of \$1,250. This allows you to make these important improvements while receiving significant financial support.

Additionally, we understand the importance of rain barrels in water conservation and effective stormwater management. As a result, we are pleased to inform you that rain barrels will be funded at a maximum of \$75 per household. Please note that each address is eligible for a maximum of one rain barrel.

How can you participate?

The Stormwater Homeowner Grant Program makes it easy to participate! If you want to use BMPs or install a rain barrel on your property, just visit our program website at www.cityofjohnston.com/homeownergrants. Join us in the ongoing effort to protect our water resources for future generations! Visit www.cityofjohnston.com/homeownergrants for more information.



SAVE THE DATE

Yoga by the Lake: August 3, 10, 17 and 24, from 8:00 to 9:00 a.m. **Farmers Market:** Tuesdays, 4:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Tunes at Twilight: Thursday, August 8, 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. **Movie on the Yard:** Thursday, August 15; movie begins at dusk

For more information about the city, please call 515.278.2344

CELEBRATING Senior Citizens Day

In a world often preoccupied with youth and progress, Senior Citizens Day stands as a poignant reminder of the invaluable contributions and wisdom of our elderly population. Observed annually on Aug. 21, this day serves not only to honor seniors but also to highlight their significant role in society.



Senior Citizens Day encourages communities worldwide to recognize the elderly for their achievements, sacrifices, and the wealth of knowledge they impart. It's a time to reflect on their lifelong experiences, resilience in the face of challenges, and their enduring impact on families and communities.

Celebrations typically include various activities aimed at fostering intergenerational connections and showing appreciation. From community gatherings and special events to volunteer initiatives, the day serves as a platform for younger generations to learn from their elders and for seniors to share their stories

and wisdom.

One of the fundamental aspects of Senior Citizens Day is advocating for the rights and wellbeing of seniors. It prompts discussions on issues such as healthcare, social inclusion and elder abuse prevention. Governments and organizations often use this day to reaffirm their commitment to improving the quality of life for older adults through policies and support systems.

The day serves as a reminder for individuals and families to spend meaningful time with their elderly loved ones, cherishing moments, and creating lasting memories. Whether through simple acts of kindness, like visiting nursing homes or assisting with daily tasks, or through organized events that celebrate their achievements, every effort counts in making seniors feel valued. Senior Citizens Day prompts us to reflect on the ongoing societal challenges faced by older adults, including issues of loneliness and social isolation. Many seniors experience a sense of disconnectedness, especially as they age, and their social circles diminish. Therefore, this day encourages

initiatives that promote inclusivity and foster a sense of belonging among seniors. Whether through community gatherings, volunteer opportunities, or technology workshops aimed at bridging the digital divide, Senior Citizens Day underscores the importance of building supportive environments where older adults can thrive and continue to contribute their wisdom and unique perspectives to society.

Senior Citizens Day is not just a date on the calendar but a heartfelt tribute to those who have paved the way before us. It's a day to celebrate their accomplishments, acknowledge their contributions, and reaffirm our commitment to ensuring they live with dignity and respect. Let us use this day to express gratitude, foster understanding, and build a more inclusive society where every senior feels valued and appreciated. ■

Information provided by Antoinette Deleon, Community Relations Director, Edencrest at Green Meadows, 6750 Corporate Drive, Johnston, 515-420-0899, Antoinette.Deleon@edencrestliving.com.



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GUEST speakers featured at Rotary meetings

This month, we'll focus on our wonderful guest speakers. Every week at the club breakfast meeting, we have a guest speaker. Our guest speakers are involved in the local community, either through business, school, charitable and/or service organizations, government, etc. The format is fun and relaxed, and each speaker gets 25 minutes to speak. We have a hard wrap at 8 a.m. Our last four speakers are noted below, along with a condensed overview of the organization and topic discussed.

• **Alec Wilcox, Ronald McDonald House of Central Iowa.** Alec is a board member for RMHCI. RMHCI has three locations in central Iowa, the most well-known being 1441 Pleasant St. near UnityPoint/Blank Children's Hospital. All Ronald McDonald Houses are dedicated to providing a safe, free and comfortable place for families to stay while their child undergoes treatment at any of the Des Moines medical facilities. The average stay for a family at a RMHCI facility is 17 days, and people come from all over the state of Iowa, as well as surrounding states. Visit www.RMhdesmoines.org for more information.

• **Rob Denson, president, Des Moines Area Community College.** Rob has been in his position since November of 2003 and is the longest-serving president in the college's 57-year history. DMACC's focus lies on attracting and retaining high quality faculty and staff and in keeping tuition rates low. DMACC has developed myriad public and private partnerships — all in the pursuit of getting people from all walks of life in a position to find good, sustainable employment and develop solid careers. DMACC has credit enrollment of more than 34,000 students, with an average age of 24 and 57% being female. Courses are taught at more than six campuses in central Iowa, and DMACC offers more than 220 degrees, diplomas and certificates. See dmacc.edu for more information.

• **Michelle Book, president and CEO, Food Bank of Iowa.** Michelle's visit highlighted the vital role of food banks in addressing food insecurity. The Food Bank acts as a wholesaler, distributing food to 708 smaller front-line partners, including food pantries, meal sites, schools and churches. Specific to Johnston, they provide food to the Johnston Partnership — 71,000 pounds to the Partnership year to date. Food Bank of Iowa collaborates with national partners like Walmart, Target and Aldi for food rescue. They collect unsellable yet edible food from the retailers and distribute it to those in need, thus preventing a lot of food waste. See foodbankiowa.org for more information.

• **Dan Knoup, executive officer, Home Builders Association of Greater Des Moines.** Dan told us about HBA of Greater Des Moines, a non-profit trade association affiliated with the National Association of Home Builders that was chartered in 1944. Roughly 17% of U.S. GDP is spent on housing, and, in the greater Des Moines area, the building of single-family homes and townhomes creates more than 10,200 jobs and generates annual revenue of about \$390 million. HBA DSM has a "Build My Future" hands-on training academy designed to garner interest and train people for the building trades. Their next event will be at the Iowa State Fairgrounds on April 26, 2025. See www.dsmhba.com for more info. ■

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

- Aug 6:** John Brown - Johnston Historical Society
- Aug 13:** Richard TeKippe - Junior Achievement of Central Iowa
- Aug 20:** Jamie Alt - First Tee - Central Iowa
- Aug 27:** Heather Semelmacher - Johnston CSD - Athletic Director
- Sept 3:** Andrew Batt - General Manager of Iowa PBS

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EXERCISE safely in hot weather

Many people flock outside in warm weather to jog, play basketball or do yard work. But when the temperature rises, “easy” exercise becomes a huge physical undertaking, and intense exercise can be deadly. If your body’s temperature regulation system is overtaxed, you’re at risk of developing a heat-related illness. Here’s what you need to do to protect yourself in extreme summer heat.



Keep an eye on the weather

Exercise and warm weather increase your core body temperature. When you combine the two, even seasoned athletes need to exercise caution. Your body cools itself by sweating, but cooling down is harder in humid weather because perspiration doesn’t evaporate as quickly from your skin. Your heart rate rises as your body works hard to keep itself cool.

Before you lace up your running shoes or head to the tennis courts, take a look at the weather report. If the temperature or humidity is high, scale back your workout. A workout that feels easy on a temperate day can be dangerously intense on a hot, humid afternoon. People with larger bodies, the elderly, kids, and those not accustomed to rigorous exercise should be extremely cautious in hot weather.

Dress appropriately

When exercising in heat, what you wear matters. Light-colored, sweat-wicking clothing is best for hot weather. If you have to suit up in protective padding or helmets, shorten your workout intensity and duration, because these trap heat. A sunburn decreases your body’s ability to cool itself, so don’t forget the sunscreen.

Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate

When the temperature heats up, make sure you drink enough fluids throughout the day to stay hydrated, and enjoy water-rich foods including crisp lettuce, watermelon, grapefruit and tomatoes.

It’s surprisingly easy to lose a few pounds of water weight through sweating. Weigh yourself before and after working out and replace each pound of weight lost with two to three cups of water. If you’re sweating heavily or exercising for more than 60 minutes, sports drinks can help your body rehydrate more efficiently.

Heat exhaustion and heat stroke

Dehydration is a serious medical condition. Exercising in hot, humid weather can rapidly raise your body’s core temperature, putting you at risk of heat exhaustion or heat stroke. Heat exhaustion is a milder form of heat-related illness that can develop after several days of exposure to high temperatures and unbalanced replacement of fluids. Heat stroke is the most serious heat-related illness. Body temperature may rise to 103 degrees F or higher within 10 to 15 minutes. If you see someone with any warning signs of heat stroke, call 911 immediately, then cool them however you can (for example, move them to a shady spot or an air-conditioned location or wet their skin with a sponge or hose). ■

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

NATIONAL Immunization Awareness Month

August is recognized as National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM), a time dedicated to highlighting the importance of vaccination for people of all ages. This annual observance underscores the crucial role vaccines play in preventing serious, sometimes deadly, diseases. As summer winds down and families prepare for the upcoming school year, August provides a timely opportunity to ensure everyone is up to date on their vaccinations.



Vaccines have been hailed as one of the most significant public health achievements of the 20th century. They work by stimulating the body's immune system to recognize and fight pathogens, such as viruses and bacteria. This not only helps protect vaccinated individuals but also contributes to community immunity, or herd immunity, which is vital for safeguarding those who cannot be vaccinated, such as infants, the elderly, and immunocompromised individuals.

For children, August is a critical time to receive back-to-school vaccinations. Many schools require proof of immunization for enrollment, making it essential for parents to check their children's vaccination records. Key vaccines for children include those against measles, mumps, rubella (MMR), diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (DTaP), polio and chickenpox. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides a recommended immunization schedule that parents can follow to ensure their children are protected from these preventable diseases.

Adolescents and adults also need to stay current with their vaccinations. Teenagers may require vaccines such as the HPV vaccine, which protects against human papillomavirus, a common virus that can lead to certain cancers later in life. Additionally, the meningococcal vaccine is crucial for protecting against meningitis. For adults, vaccines like the flu shot, Tdap booster (tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis), and shingles vaccine are important for maintaining health and preventing the spread of diseases within the community.

Older adults and those with chronic health conditions are particularly encouraged to review their vaccination status in August. As the immune system weakens with age, older individuals are more susceptible to diseases such as influenza, pneumococcal disease and shingles. Vaccination can significantly reduce the risk of these infections and their complications, enhancing the quality of life for seniors.

The Affordable Care Act that began in 2010 specifically included vaccinations and preventive care as fully covered services within health insurance. Routine physicals, vaccinations (except for international travel) and mammograms, for example, are types of preventive care covered by health insurance today.

Medicare has also expanded to cover vaccinations for older adults such as shingles shots, flu, pneumonia and COVID-19. If you have questions about how your individual coverage or Medicare supplemental coverage handles vaccinations, contact your health insurance advisor. Here's to good health! ■

Information provided by Janis Van Ahn, Health Insurance Advisor LLC, 5870 Merle Hay Road, Suite A, Johnston, 515-225-9994, jvanahn@health-insadvisor.com.



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HOW-TO

GUIDE

HOW TO CHOOSE A CATERER

For a passionate host, there's no greater joy than an unforgettable celebration spent with loved ones sharing delicious food and good times with your guests. A caterer can help you achieve this effortlessly while minimizing the stress that comes with planning an event. Follow these tips to ensure your best gathering ever:

BOOK WELL IN ADVANCE

The best caterers are highly demanded year-round, and if you want to get on their schedule, start working with them the minute you have the details (budget, date, time, location and approximate number of guests). Secure your day as early as possible to ensure availability and avoid last-minute stress.

CHOOSE WISELY

Word of mouth is powerful. Ask friends for recommendations and check out caterers' websites for menus, photos and pricing to find the perfect match.

VERIFY CATERING CREDENTIALS

For your safety as a consumer, it is important to ensure your caterer is a licensed and insured kitchen. This guarantees professionalism and protects you from liability.

GET EVERYTHING IN WRITING

Your party will only be as good as the information you communicate with your caterer. Clear communication is key. Provide detailed information in advance for accurate quotes and ensure everything is documented to avoid

misunderstandings. Let the caterer know as many details as you can give them: budget, type of occasion and event itinerary.

Once you get a quote, your caterer should send you a catering agreement. The catering crew will be working from this agreement, so make sure all details address your expectations.

RELAX AND ENJOY

Whether you're hosting an intimate dinner party or celebrating one of life's great milestones, once you've hired a great caterer and have all the details ironed out, it's time to sit back, relax, and let the pros do the job of delivering great food — and making you look great, too. ■

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HOW TO CHOOSE AN AUTO REPAIR SHOP

A reality of auto ownership is that, at some point, it will need repairs and upkeep. Some new car owners may naturally gravitate toward their dealers to follow scheduled maintenance to keep their vehicle in top shape. Older cars will likely need more attention. That's why it pays to develop a relationship with a qualified, reliable and professional auto repair shop.

Developing a relationship with a knowledgeable mechanic early on in your vehicle's life can prove invaluable. Talented, honest mechanics can extend the life of your car and help you avoid costly repairs.

Even if your car is new, at some point it will need tires, oil changes or even a new engine. If you have a relationship with a good auto repair shop, you won't sweat it when these things come up.

If you haven't had a regular mechanic in recent years, now is the time to find one.

HERE ARE A FEW POINTS TO CONSIDER

- Less than 40% of new customers in auto shops are walk-ins. That means word of mouth is still king in the industry. Find a shop that gets rave reviews from family and friends, and you'll be in good hands.
 - The Better Business Bureau can inform you about the repair shop's performance and reliability.
 - If you travel often, consider a shop that offers a national warranty.
 - Ask about the shop's range of services. They will need the latest technology to diagnose problems with newer cars. For example, can your prospective shop handle brake systems, electrical components and warranty repairs? Does the shop provide a loaner or shuttle service while your car is being repaired?
 - Look around the shop. Is the equipment in good condition? Is it clean, well-lit and organized?
 - Look for brand names and proper certification. Does the auto repair shop

use brand-name parts? These parts are engineered to meet the manufacturer's specifications and will likely come with a warranty.

- Are the auto technicians certified by the National Institute of Automotive Science Excellence? Is the shop approved by the American Automobile Association? If so, this indicates a customer approval rating of 90% or higher and the ability to adequately perform the services advertised.

Don't pick a shop based on cost; poor repair work will mean higher costs in the long run. You'll also want to ask about the shop's warranty policy. Imagine spending hundreds on a repair only to learn the work isn't guaranteed.

Once you have found a shop you trust, establish a good working relationship and try to use the shop for all of your automotive needs. Your mechanic will come to know you as a dependable customer and be sure to provide you with the highest level of service. ■

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HOW TO CHOOSE GARAGE DOORS

Garage doors are often an afterthought to homeowners — but they shouldn't be. Garage doors are the first thing most notice about a home, so when it comes to choosing them for a new home or replacing them, significant thought and research should take place. If your garage door is part of the front of your house, a new door could dramatically improve your curb appeal and change the overall look of your home. If you're hoping to sell, worn, dated doors tend to say a lot about the condition of the rest of the home. A garage door is also an excellent security asset for your home, allowing you to secure your vehicle inside.

If you're thinking about installing a new garage door, you may be surprised at just how many options are on the market — and how affordable they are.

THE LOOK

Garage doors have seen an explosion in styles, materials and colors that are designed to match the architecture of any home, from rural barns to craftsman bungalows or sleek urban getaways. If you thought your choices were limited to simple basic styles, think again. You should pay close attention to the materials. Today's garage doors can be made with expensive hardwoods, steel, fiberglass or aluminum, all of which will have a big impact on the look and longevity of your doors. Pay close attention to the maintenance needs of whatever material you choose and the direction your garage door will face. Some will hold their color longer than others (direction has an impact here), and real wood doors will likely require regular staining and sealing to keep them looking spectacular.

INSULATION

Depending on climate and how you use your garage, the insulation of your garage door can be an important factor. If you use your garage as a workspace or entertainment space, insulation is something you should include. An insulated door can also make a positive impact on your energy usage by helping to keep the hot and cold weather away from the interior of your house.

SERVICE

The most common issues with garage doors requiring service are broken springs, thrown cables and photo-eye misalignment. These issues are easily resolved with a service call where the spring(s) or cable can be replaced and photo-eyes adjusted or replaced. It is rare for parts like rollers, brackets, bearings or torsion rods to require replacement. ■

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HOW TO **SELL YOUR HOME FAST**

Everyone with a home on the market wants their property to sell fast and for the highest price possible. It not only means money in your pocket, but also speeds up the move into your new home — not to mention the relief of not having to keep your place in tiptop shape every day. However, the quick sale doesn't always happen due to timing, market fluctuations and the condition and attractiveness of your home. But there are some time-tested steps you can take that will make it much easier to see a "sold" sign in your front yard quickly.

PRICING

The most important step is to price your home correctly at the outset. Price it too low, and you'll leave money on the table. Price it too high, though, and your home will take longer to sell. To hit the pricing bull's eye, you've got to know what is comparable in your market. An appraiser

can pull data about recent comps, typically from the last six months, for sales of homes that are similar to yours. The closer your price is to homes that are actually selling, the more likely you are to get a quick sale.

STAGING

Staging your home is sometimes thought of as an elaborate process that involves redecorating and renting beautiful furniture to make your interior look its best, but it doesn't always have to be that intense. Staging is about presenting your home in the most appealing way possible. The goal is to get buyers to imagine putting their own things in your home, so basic steps like clearing out clutter and removing your personal photos can help their imagination go to work.

PHOTOGRAPHY

For most buyers, the first impression of your house won't be made in person. It will

be made through photos of your home they see online or in print ads. That's why it's critical to have good, quality photographs of your home. In some markets, that might mean having a professional photographer shoot images of your home when it's staged at its best. The more clear, well-lit pictures that show off the beauty and features of your home, the more buyers are likely to take the next step and schedule a showing.

FIX IT UP

Finally, you have to pay attention to details to make sure your home is in top shape cosmetically. You'll want to make sure the gardens, flower beds and other landscaping are neat, clean and free of weeds. You should also make a checklist of simple handyman tasks to complete, like replacing burned-out light bulbs, making sure doors and hinges shut properly, and removing stains from your carpet. ■

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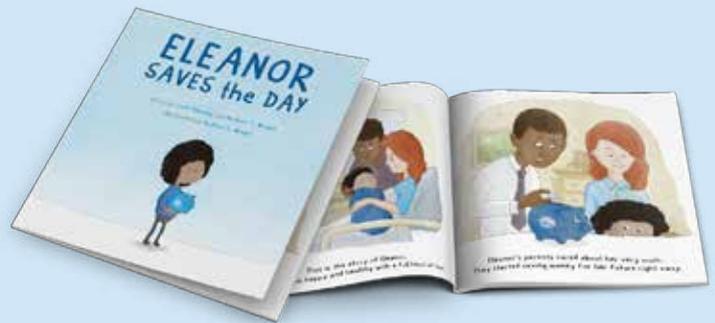
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SDMJW holds celebration

The women of the Suburban Des Moines Junior Women (SDMJW), adorned with their fascinators, celebrated decades of friendship and service on Wednesday, May 10, at Hyperion Field Club. Chair Shari Hawk lead the reading of The Collect followed with a blessing shared by Wanda Snyder prior to the luncheon. Members continue their servant leadership in Women Lead Change, Cemetery Preservation boards (Highland Memorial Gardens and SAPIC), Child and Adolescent Brain and Mental Health Awareness, Iowa Barn Foundation, Friendship Force and their churches. The SDMJW Ambassadors traveled to France, Italy, Croatia, European river cruises and to the states of Colorado, Wisconsin, Arizona, Florida, California and Illinois. Bobbi Segura is chair organizer of the Women Lead Change October conference in Des Moines. Another fascinating time will be May 2025 when SDMJW celebrate with Shari Hawk as the chair assisted by Wendy Tack. The women attended an Interview and Tea event with Enfys McMurry on the publication of her book, "Disaster at 39,000 Feet: How Small-Town America Came Together at a Time of Crisis," which took place in 1962 in Iowa. Flower arrangements were gifted by Nancy Lundstrom. In celebration



Front row: Wendy Tack, Marie Graff, Margo Lierman, Wanda Snyder. Back row: Mary Richards, Nancy Lundstrom, Bobbi Segura, Dr. Eileen May, Dianne Banning and Shari Hawk.

of motherhood, roses were presented by Mary Richards to each woman. Contact Mary Richards at mrichards@netins.net for information about SDMJW including the Ankeny, Johnston, Indianola, Des Moines, Saylorville, Polk City communities. ■

By Lindsey Giardino

PROVIDING literacy tools

Rotary donation helps Literacy Bag project make an impact.

This past summer, Megan Sockness, youth services librarian at the Johnston Public Library, helped make a big impact on the Johnston community.

With a \$1,500 donation from the Johnston Rotary, Sockness was able to put together 144 "literacy bags."

Some of these bags were targeted for kids ages 3-6. They included a book, crayons, dance scarves, shaky eggs and playdough, all of which promote five early literacy skills: singing, talking, reading, writing and playing.

Sockness also put together bags for children ages 7-10. These were filled with age-appropriate books and activity kits, including markers, colored pencils and crafts.

The final 44 bags were created for children older than 10, with higher-level books and the same activity kits as the 7-10 bags.

After compiling the bags, Sockness coordinated outreach events at apartment complexes and playgrounds in town to distribute the bags to children.

"By providing books and art supplies in the literacy bags, I hope children are able to integrate the arts into their summer learning and help prevent summer slide," she says.

Her goal for the project was to increase outreach in Johnston, particularly to underserved populations.



A \$1,500 Rotary donation funded Literacy Bags Johnston Public Library distributed to kids in the community.

"Despite its wealth, Johnston has pockets of poverty, often far from city and county resources with limited transportation options," she shares. "I wanted to bring library resources to these communities and provide kids with something tangible to bring home and use throughout the summer."

Sockness explains that the project would not have been possible without support from the Johnston Rotary. The club's donation funded the entire project, including the purchase of 144 Johnston Public Library-branded bags. She was also able to buy 100 ready-made craft kits for outreach events.

"To stay within budget, I carefully researched and selected items for each bag, considering the ages and interests of the kids," she says. "This was the most time-consuming part, but I enjoyed the challenge. Now, I enjoy going into the community each week, meeting new people, and making a positive impact within the Johnston community." ■

EVENTS IN THE AREA

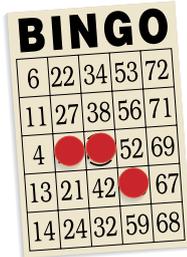
Be sure to check for cancelations

To submit calendar items for consideration, send to tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com

Booster Club Bash

Sunday, Aug. 25, 5-7 p.m.
High School Stadium

The public is invited to the annual Johnston Booster Club Bash for some family fun. The event is free. Inflatables, games and autographs will be included, as well as a chance to meet current high school students involved with athletics and activities at JHS. Attendees will be able to buy some apparel, grab supper and join the booster club.



Johnston Lions Club Bingo

Aug. 8, Sept. 12, Oct. 10,
Nov. 14, 6-8 p.m.
Lions Club House,
6501 Merle Hay Road

Enjoy Bingo at the second Thursday monthly event held by Johnston Lions Club.



Farmers Market

Tuesdays through Sept. 24,
4-7 p.m.

Johnston Town Center just north of City Hall, 6245 Merle Hay Road

Johnston Farmers Market will be held on Tuesdays. Shop for fresh produce and homemade products while being entertained by live music. www.cityofjohnston.com/farmersmarket.



2024 Movies in the Yard

Various dates

Johnston Town Center, 6245 Merle Hay Road

- 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.

Mayor's Run for the Trails

Saturday, Aug. 10

The Mayor's Annual Run for the Trails 5k + Kids Fun Run will take place on Saturday, Aug. 10. The registration fee includes a short-sleeve dri-fit T-shirt. However, shirt size cannot be guaranteed. 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>.

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 tryouts

Sunday, Aug. 11

Johnston High School Gym, 6500 N.W. 100th St.

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.



Tunes of Twilight Series at The Yard

Thursday, Sept. 12,
7:30-9:30 p.m.

The Yard, 6245 Merle Hay Road

Enjoy live music on Thursdays Sept. 12 (featuring The Sons of Gladys Kravits). More information is available by visiting www.cityofjohnston.com/1439/Tunes-at-Twilight-Series. ■

Johnston Community School Foundation Golf Outing

Friday, Sept. 6

Jester Park Golf Course, 11949 N.W. 118th Ave., Granger

The public is invited to join the Johnston Community School Foundation for its 25th annual Golf Outing. Checkin opens at 8 a.m., with a shotgun start at 9 a.m. and lunch provided at 1 p.m. Join as an individual golfer or arrange a team of four. The JCSF also welcomes local businesses as sponsors. The event supports JCSF's mission to fund grants to support classrooms and programs within the Johnston Community School District. Find out more and register online by Aug. 26 at www.wearejohnston.com/register-golf-outing. Email aprilwilson@jcsfoundation.org with any questions.

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CHAMBER

By Samantha Winebrenner

BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT: Iowa Ortho

Each month, we shine the spotlight on a Johnston Chamber member business, highlighting what they love about our local business community. Iowa Ortho is a leader in providing high quality, cost-effective orthopedic care with 12 locations, including two around Johnston, with one location at 5300 N.W. 86th St. and a new surgery center under construction at the corner of S.E. 54th St. and 100th St. in Grimes.

What is your favorite part of being a Chamber member? The Chamber hosts numerous events that provide education, opportunities to connect with other local businesses, and plenty of fun. These connections have enabled us to partner with many local businesses on a variety of successful projects.

Why did you locate your business around Johnston? We chose this location due to the area's significant population growth over recent years. Our patients come from all over central Iowa, and Johnston's convenient interstate access makes it an ideal choice for both our clinic and surgery center.

What do you love about Johnston? The community support of local businesses is strong in Johnston. The spirit and generosity of the community is incredible, and we are proud to be a part of it.

Are there upcoming events you want to highlight? Join us for an open house at our new surgery center in the first week of November. Follow our Facebook page for details. We will be hiring for various positions including nurses, surgical techs and receptionists. Visit our website to apply. ■

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

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PLAN AHEAD

By Sarah Masteller

'IT'S A guarantee'

Did you know that prepaying funeral arrangements allows you the opportunity to have service selections and merchandise selections prepaid and guaranteed?

So, what does that mean? The services provided by the funeral home that are paid in advance will be provided at no additional expense to the family at the time those services are needed in the future. Merchandise selections that are prepaid are also guaranteed to be provided at no additional expense to the family.

You might be wondering, "What if the casket I want is no longer available when I die?" Given that you are guaranteed the casket you select, or one of comparable value, your family would have a replacement option to consider that is guaranteed to not be inferior to the one that was purchased in advance.

Imagine going to the car dealership and purchasing a brand new car — but delaying delivery for several years — all with the guarantee you will be provided a brand new car when you are ready to accept delivery... at no additional cost at that time. That would be a pretty amazing deal.

That is what you can do by prepaying funeral expenses. Plus, you will be making a future event less stressful by giving thought and consideration to these important decisions now.

Ask your preferred funeral provider if they offer a guaranteed plan. ■



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

OUT & ABOUT



Sharon Vickery, Johnston Chamber president, spoke at the ribbon cutting for the new LifeServe Blood Center headquarters.



Stacy Sime, president and chief executive officer of LifeServe Blood Center, spoke at the event.



Johnston Mayor Paula Dierenfeld addressed the crowd at the ribbon cutting for the new LifeServe Blood Center headquarters.



Johnston Chamber members Ryan Rohlf, Paul Bierle, Annie Mielke and Sharon Vickery get a tour of the new LifeServe corporate headquarters in Johnston.



The Johnston Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting for the new LifeServe Blood Center Johnston Donor Center, 5625 N.W. Johnston Drive, on June 26.



Ryan Rohlf and Jennifer Sayers at the Johnston Chamber luncheon June 25.



Luther Lehman and Craig Borwick at the Johnston Chamber luncheon June 25.



Jeremy Parsons and Sharon Vickery at the Johnston Chamber luncheon June 25.



Stuart and Brooke Ruddy at the Johnston High School Senior Night for baseball June 26.



Matt and Ann Hanson at the Johnston High School Senior Night for baseball June 26.



Karli Wagner, Haley Bradshaw, Abby Callen and Ella Pfalzgraf at the Johnston High School Senior Night for softball and baseball June 26.

OUT & ABOUT



Bishop Drumm celebrated its 85-year anniversary on July 9. It moved to its Johnston location in 1980.



Rachel Frank and Fern Parker at Bishop Drumm's 85-year anniversary celebration on July 9.



Macy Theulen and Patti Shawd at Bishop Drumm's 85-year anniversary celebration on July 9.



Shelly Nesheim and Clare Langr at Bishop Drumm's 85-year anniversary celebration on July 9.



Magician Jonathan May and Shirlly Kelly at Bishop Drumm's 85-year anniversary celebration on July 9.



Norma Hagge and Ardie Strawman at Bishop Drumm's 85-year anniversary celebration on July 9.



Pam Kucera, incoming president of Johnston Rotary, presents an award of appreciation to Steve Grasso, outgoing president, at the Johnston Rotary Year-end Party on June 25.



Vicki Renner, Brenda Ballard and Steve Renner at Bishop Drumm's 85-year anniversary celebration on July 9.



Msgr. Beeson and Lori Miller at Bishop Drumm's 85-year anniversary celebration on July 9.



Braedi Kinman and Doug Heisterkamp at the Johnston High School Senior Night for baseball June 26.



Todd and Abby Smithson at the Johnston High School Senior Night for softball June 26.



Jeff and Kim Theobald at the Johnston High School Senior Night for softball June 26.

DONATE BLOOD

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TRIVIA with Joleen Roskamp!

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