

JOHNSTON

FEBRUARY 2022

Living

MAGAZINE

Budding Romance

Couples share how their relationships bloomed

Meet Jean Jansen
EDUCATION

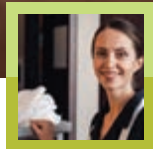
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WELCOME

COURTSHIP communication

I have not been on the dating scene for more than 27 years, and I met my wife at work, so keep those facts in mind as I touch on the subject of how romantic relationships start in today's world.

Like many things in life, courtship processes have changed, but the message is the same. From passing handwritten letters to making phone calls to sending text messages to posting on social media, the way we communicate with those we hope to love has certainly evolved. Some would say for the better. Some would say for the worse. Regardless, the methods are here to stay... at least for a year or two until a new communication method evolves.

Today, many relationships start with online dating sites. That was considered by many to be weird just a decade or so ago. After all, how could someone possibly start dating someone over a computer screen? My single friends tell me it works incredibly well, regardless of age. I have a feeling that a handwritten letter might still work as well — or, heaven forbid, face-to-face communication!

In this month's feature story, we touch on the subject of dating and relationships and how it all began for some local residents. Whether you are single or in a relationship, you will surely be entertained when learning about how some in the community are managing — or have managed — courtship communication.

Thanks for reading. ■



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A man with a beard and a woman are posing together in front of a white curtain with a dark, repeating geometric pattern. The man is standing behind the woman, with his hand on her shoulder. He is wearing a light blue patterned button-down shirt and dark blue pants. The woman is wearing a teal sweater and grey pants. They are both smiling at the camera.

FEATURE

Budding *Romance*

**Couples share how their
relationships bloomed**

By Ashley Rullestad

Chaperoned dates. Internet introductions. Holding hands in the movie theater. Long walks along the shore. Dinners for two — at a burger joint or by candlelight. Rollercoaster rides. Snowball fights. Card games or video games. While the way couples spend time together has changed over the years, one similarity remains: Whatever the path romance takes, it is the special moments along the way that nurture a budding romance into a blooming relationship.

Arnel and Nermina Dubinovic met on Facebook and found they had much in common. Long conversations brought them closer. Photo by Todd Rullestad

Young (digital) love

Nermina Dubinovic and her husband, Arnel, met by chance when Arnel added Nermina as a friend on Facebook by accident in 2016. They quickly realized they had a lot in common — like being from the same part of Bosnia and even working for the same Hy-Vee as teenagers (though they never met there) — and their relationship blossomed.

“He was interesting, and it seemed like we could talk forever,” Nermina says. “We talked all day and all night for a few weeks straight. During the day, we would text, and, at night, we would FaceTime. On our first date, we went to Cool Basil to eat and then we went to go see the movie ‘Central Intelligence.’”

Their budding relationship was complicated by the fact the two weren’t living in the same town when they met; Arnel was living in Sioux Falls at the time. That didn’t stop them, though. They made an effort to talk regularly, and they would send each other little gifts and notes in the mail. They ended up engaged and married the next year.

“We had our daughter in 2018 and, 11 months later, had our son. It has been an eventful few years, but we are excited for more to come.”

They keep the romance as a young couple with kids by having movie nights together at home or weekend getaways when Nermina’s parents can watch the kids. She leaves little notes in Arnel’s lunchbox before he goes to work.

“My husband is seriously one of the best people I have ever met in my life. He has made me change my whole outlook on what love and life is. I am excited about life because he is by my side.”

Like the Dubinovics, Donald and Andrea

“He was interesting, and it seemed like we could talk forever. We talked all day and all night for a few weeks straight. During the day, we would text, and, at night, we would FaceTime.”

— Nermina Dubinovic



Like many modern couples, Donald and Andrea Wilson met online. They enjoyed going to concerts and festivals as their romance blossomed.

Wilson met just a few years ago, in 2017. They met on a dating site called Plenty of Fish, and both were living in Polk County. They met up for a quick drink, both agreeing then they’d decide if they wanted to go on a proper date.

“Donald didn’t have a phone at the time, so when we agreed to meet, I had no way to get hold of him,” Andrea says. “We did start dating, and we did a lot together when we first met. We went to concerts and festivals, and he started coming to game nights with my friends.”

They became engaged in 2019 at Andrea’s school (she’s a third-grade teacher in Des Moines); she bought him a phone as a wedding gift. Now, they still court each other as a married couple, watching football, reading the Harry Potter series, and going on monthly date nights together.

“As for keeping our relationship strong, we have a good foundation in faith, and we communicate daily. He leaves for work around 4:30 a.m., so, every weekday, we talk on my drive to work. We are fortunate to have

a supportive family to watch our daughter, Gertie, 1, so we can have at least monthly date nights.”

Military spark

Bel Hanson and her husband, Thor, are a former military couple who met when they were in different companies in the same battalion stationed in South Korea 20 years ago. At that time, they lived more than an hour from each other, so the early days of the relationship were spent on long phone calls.

“I think that really helped us get to know a lot about each other,” says Bel.

Though Bel wasn’t looking for a relationship at the time, she says, when they met, they just clicked and knew it was meant to be. In those early days, their time together in person was precious because of their schedules and distance, so, when they did get to see each other, they often explored the area where they lived. They later moved to Hawaii.

“It was always cool to see and learn new things together. We both love to travel, learn

“It was always cool to see and learn new things together. We both love to travel, learn and explore, so we have kept this up and try to have a couple’s trip as often as our schedules allow. We try for at least one of these trips a year.”

— Bel Hanson

and explore, so we have kept this up and try to have a couple’s trip as often as our schedules allow. We try for at least one of these trips a year.”

Since the Hansons have spent many months, sometimes nearly a year, apart due to deployments, they make sure to have date nights when they are together. Bel left the military as a captain after five years, and, now, Thor has also retired from the military after 20 years, retiring as a lieutenant captain. They moved to Johnston two years ago, never having lived in Iowa before. While their deployment days are over, Bel still travels some for work, so they are cognizant of appreciating their time together and supporting each other when one of them is out of town.

“Communication is key to keeping a relationship strong. Additionally, part of supporting each other needs to be listening to each other’s needs and not necessarily trying to fix things. Being heard and understood is so important. If you can get to there, it’s a lot easier to work together to fix things.”

Long-time love

Kathryn, 70, and Glen, 71, Braddy will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary in August this year. The couple met when they both attended the same college in Kansas, now called Kansas Newman University.

“A friend of ours was directing a play on campus,” Kathryn says. “We first met when we were outside by a lake learning our lines for the play. It was an all-male cast with one exception — a female nurse.”

The day they met, they talked from the evening into the wee hours



Thor and Bel Hanson, who met while serving in the military, keep their romance strong by enjoying travels together.



Kathryn and Glen Braddy met in college while in the cast of a play. This year, they will celebrate their 50th anniversary.

“A friend of ours was directing a play on campus. We first met when we were outside by a lake learning our lines for the play. It was an all-male cast with one exception — a female nurse.”

— Kathryn Braddy

of the next morning. The pair was inseparable after that, except when school wasn’t in session and they returned to their hometowns. Kathryn was from Kansas City, and Glen was living in Wichita.

Despite the distance, the couple grew closer. They sent each other many letters when they were apart, and they tried to take trips together to see family and friends whenever they could. When they were together at school, they spent time together at movies and concerts or being outdoors hiking, fishing, sight-seeing and more.

After being together for a year, they made plans to marry the following summer. Glen only had an independent study left in order to finish school, and Kathryn was set to student teach the following fall.

The couple has raised two sons, and they stay close to extended family. They reside at Bishop Drumm Retirement Center in Johnston, and they strive to keep their relationship strong.

“As man and wife, we always made time to support and encourage the different activities we loved,” Kathryn says. “We also respected each other’s experiences and learned from them. Even in difficult times, we knew our love was stronger, our sense of humor close by, and always being best friends would overcome any challenges we faced.” ■

JOHNSTON'S taxable valuation increases by \$87.4 million

In 2021, the City of Johnston had a substantial year of growth with \$87.4 million in new taxable valuation. This includes 199 new residential units, of which 120 were single-family residential units — the highest total since 2015. Five commercial projects accounted for \$17.3 million in new valuation and included the first two commercial buildings within the Johnston Town Center.

“With a strong mix of residential and commercial projects, 2021 proved to be a tremendous year of growth for Johnston,” said Community Development Director David Wilwerding. “The foundation is formed for this growth to continue into 2022 and beyond. These growth areas include the Johnston Town Center, Merle Hay Road Gateway and the Northwest Annexation.”

As part of the 2021 Community Development Annual Report, Wilwerding predicts the following for 2022:

- Increase in permits for single-family residential and townhome/villa development due to new and pending developments.
- In partnership with Hansen Companies, construction of the first phases of the Johnston Town Center, including the occupancy of the first commercial structures, will continue.
- The long-planned vision for Merle Hay Road will begin to rapidly advance with construction at the Johnston Town Center, Ignit, and development of the former Heard Gardens property, spurring growth elsewhere along the corridor. ■

CITY of Johnston wins Leading the Way Award

The City of Johnston received the Leading the Way Award on Jan. 3 during the City Council meeting. This award recognizes local governments for outstanding achievements in the delivery of services to residents.

The City of Johnston has used ETC Institute as a vendor to conduct the past four community surveys. This spring, the City will be conducting another survey, allowing City leaders to use the results during their strategic planning sessions.

“Receiving this award is such an honor,” said Communications Manager Janet Wilwerding. “Our City takes great pride in the services we offer our residents. Ranking within the top 10 percent of all cities says a lot about the top quality services we offer and the employees within each of those departments.”

The City of Johnston rated in the top 10 percent of all cities that participated in the DirectionFinder® between August 2020 and August 2021 in the areas listed below.

- Wastewater/sanitary sewer services
- Efforts by police to prevent crime
- The overall quality of police services
- Cleanliness of streets and public areas
- Curbside recycling services

The City of Johnston's combined score was 224 in three areas, which was 60 points above the national average. The combined score needed was 210. The results from the 2020 community survey can be found by visiting www.cityofjohnston.com/742/Community-Survey-Results. ■



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FINANCE

By Sharon Vickery

FINANCIAL advisors can help reduce anxiety

The long-running coronavirus pandemic has fueled a lot of anxieties — including financial ones. But some people have had far fewer worries than others.

Consider this: Among those investors who work with a financial advisor, 84% said that doing so gave them a greater sense of comfort about their finances during the pandemic, according to a survey from Age Wave and Edward Jones.



Of course, many people experience investment-related fears even without a global health crisis, and that's probably not surprising, given the periodic volatility of the financial markets. But financial guidance can come in handy during relatively normal times, too.

A financial professional can help you ...

... Look past the headlines. Inflation, interest rates, pandemics, elections — there's always something in the news that could affect the investment world in the short term. But by helping you construct a portfolio that's built for the long term and reflects your goals, risk tolerance and time horizon, a financial advisor can enable you to look past the headlines.

... Avoid emotional decisions. Many people let their emotions drive their investment choices. When the market goes through a downturn and the value of their investments drops, they sell to "cut losses," even though these same investments may still have good business fundamentals and promising futures. Conversely, when the market is on an uptick, some people chase after "hot" investments, even when they become overpriced and may have very little room to grow. But a financial advisor can help keep you from making these fear- and greed-based actions by only recommending moves that make sense for your situation.

... Work toward multiple goals. At various times in your life, you may have simultaneous financial goals. For example, you could be investing for a retirement that's decades away, while also trying to save for a child's college education. A financial professional can suggest ways you can keep working toward both objectives, in terms of how much money you can afford to invest and what types of savings and investment vehicles you should consider.

... Prepare for the unexpected. Most of us did not need a pandemic to remind us that unexpected events can happen in our lives — and some of these events can have serious financial impacts on us and our loved ones. Do you have adequate life insurance? How about disability insurance? And if you ever needed some type of long-term care, such as an extended stay in a nursing home, how would you pay for it? A financial advisor can evaluate your protection needs and recommend appropriate solutions that fit within your overall financial strategy.

... Adapt to changing circumstances. Over time, many things may change in your life — your job, your family situation, your retirement plans, and so on. A financial professional can help you adjust your financial strategy in response to these changes.

Achieving your financial goals may present challenges, but it doesn't have to cause you years of worry and distress — as long as you get the help you need. ■

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by Sharon Vickery, your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor, 5441 N.W. 86th St., Suite 200, Johnston. Edward Jones, Member SIPC.

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EVENTS IN THE AREA

Be sure to check for cancellations

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

Iowa Wolves fundraising game to eradicate polio

Saturday, Feb. 5 at 7 p.m.
Wells Fargo Arena

Metro Rotary Clubs are working closely again with partner Iowa Wolves for a special event to raise money for the clubs' polio eradication efforts. Tickets are \$20 each with \$10 going toward polio eradication. Purchase tickets online at: <https://fevo.me/rotaryjohnstonia>.



Johnston Chamber Annual Dinner

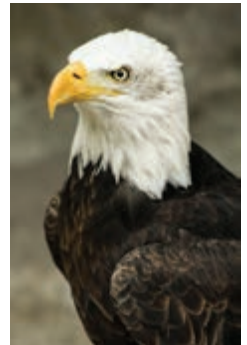
Thursday, Feb. 10, 5 p.m.
Hilton Garden Inn, 8600 Northpark Drive

The Johnston Chamber's annual dinner will begin with social hour from 5-6 p.m. with dinner and program starting at 6 p.m. They will be honoring the Ambassador of the Year, Sharon Vickery; Business of the Year, ShortE's BBQ; and Citizen of the Year, Jim Sanders. To register, visit <https://johnstonchamber.com/news-events/events/#/calendar> and select the event.

Eagle Watch

Sunday, Feb. 27, noon to 4 p.m.
Saylorville Reservoir - Cottonwood Shelter No. 4

Every once in a while, nature gives us a chance to correct a mistake. In the 1970s, only 400 pairs of bald eagles were in the lower 48 states. Come view what is possible when we choose to care for the wilds. Bald eagles again grace the skies in our area. The open waters below the dam at Saylorville Reservoir create feeding opportunities that congregate central Iowa's winter eagles and almost guarantees you a chance to view an eagle. Naturalists will set up spotting scopes to create a viewing station and answer questions. The program is a joint effort between Dallas County Conservation Board and the Corps of Engineers. No registration required.



Kiwanis of Johnston Spring Pancake Breakfast

Saturday, March 26, 8-11 a.m.
Johnston Middle School

Mark your calendars to come out and enjoy the Kiwanis of Johnston Spring Pancake Breakfast.



Des Moines Performing Arts shows

www.desmoinesperformingarts.org

Saturday, Feb. 5: "Step Afrika!" at the Des Moines Civic Center, 221 Walnut St. - Wellmark Family Series.

Feb. 8-13: "Tootsie" at the Des Moines Civic Center, 221 Walnut St. - Willis Broadway Series.

Friday-Saturday, Feb. 25-26: Comedy XPeriment at the Stoner Theater, 221 Walnut St..



Live music in the metro

Various locations
February

Friday, Feb. 4, 7 p.m.: Hailey Whitters will be performing at Wooly's, 504 E. Locust St., Des Moines; www.woolysdm.com. After more than a decade in Nashville, this country singer broke through in 2020. Whitters has added five new songs, and, as the title of her album implies, she is "Living The Dream."

Saturday, Feb. 5, 6 p.m.: Lil Durk at Horizon Events Center, 2100 N.W. 100th St. in Clive; www.horizoneventscenter.com. Durk Derrick Banks, or Lil Durk, garnered a cult following with the release of his Signed to the Streets mixtape series. That led to a record deal with Def Jam Recordings and his debut studio albums, "Remember My Name" and "Lil Durk 2X."

Friday, Feb. 11, 8 p.m.: Chad Elliott at xBk, 1159 24th St., Des Moines; www.xbklive.com. Singer-songwriter Chad Elliott brings his folk roots blended with swampy blues and soulful writing to produce one-of-a-kind live performances. With 17 full-length albums to his credit, Elliot has been lauded as "Iowa's Renaissance man" by Culture Buzz Magazine.

Concerts at Wells Fargo Arena

730 Third St. in Des Moines
www.iowaeventscenter.com

Saturday, Feb. 12: "Eric Church - The Gather Again Tour" at 8 p.m.

Saturday, March 26: "Elton John's Farewell Yellow Brick Road" at 8 p.m.

Monday, March 28: "KORN TOUR" with special guests Chevelle and Code Orange at 6:30 p.m.



'Long Day's Journey into Night'

Feb. 11-20
Stoner Theater, 221 Walnut St., Des Moines

Iowa Stage Theatre Company presents this play about addiction and the resulting family dysfunction. www.iowastage.org

EVENTS IN THE AREA

Be sure to check for cancellations

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

'The Revolutionists'

Tallgrass Theatre
Company, 2019 Grand
Ave., West Des Moines
Feb. 4-20

Four beautiful, tough women
lose their heads in this irreverent,
girl-powered comedy.
www.tallgrasstheater.org

Agatha Christie's 'Murder on the Orient Express'

Feb. 4-20
Des Moines Community
Playhouse, 831 42nd St.,
Des Moines

It's winter 1934, and, when the Orient
Express luxury train is stopped in the snow,
a passenger is found dead in his locked
compartment. Fortunately, the famous
detective Hercule Poirot is also aboard to
solve the case before the killer strikes again.
www.dmplayhouse.com

Cat Show

Saturday - Sunday, Feb. 12-13
Iowa State Fairgrounds

A flood of fancy-footed felines compete
for various awards and distinctions. This
Fairgrounds event will be at E. 30th and
University in Des Moines in the Animal
Learning Center. For more information,
visit www.iowastatefairgrounds.org.



CITYVIEW Chocolate Walk

Friday, Feb. 25, 5-9 p.m.
West Glen Town Center, 5465 Mills Civic
Parkway, West Des Moines

Like chocolate? Like chocolate drinks? They you'll love
this event. CITYVIEW and West Glen Town Center once
again present the Chocolate Walk. For a ticket price of \$20
(\$30 at the door), attendees will receive 10 drink tickets
that can be redeemed for sample cocktails at participating
venues. Attendees will also be provided tickets for chocolate
dessert samples at participating retail stores. Find the
registration link at <https://chocolatewalk.dmcityview.com>.



Iowa Wild Hockey home games

Various February dates
Wells Fargo Arena, 730 Third St.,
Des Moines

Enjoy hockey at the American Hockey
League level, with players that regularly go
on to play for the Minnesota Wild. For more
information, visit www.iowawild.com. Home
games are:

Friday, Feb. 4 vs. Rockford Icehogs, 7 p.m.
Thursday, Feb. 10 vs. Grand Rapids
Griffins, 7 p.m.
Friday, Feb. 11 vs. Grand Rapids Griffins,
7 p.m.
Tuesday, Feb. 22 vs. Texas Stars, 7 p.m.
Thursday, Feb. 24 vs. Texas Stars, 7 p.m.
Friday, Feb. 25 vs. Rockford Icehogs,
7 p.m.

Blue Ribbon Bacon Festival

Saturday, Feb. 26
Horizon Events Center in Clive

After a year off, the bacon fellowship will
resume, according to the Blue Ribbon Bacon
Festival's website. The \$50 general admission ticket
includes live entertainment, 12 bacon-inspired
dishes, one beverage and all the bacon you can eat.
The theme will be "Bacon Gras" and feature bacon-
infused Cajun dishes along with: Bacon Bourbon
Street – Mardi Gras Beads, street performers, local
musical acts, pro wrestling, Iowa's top pop-punk
group The Eugene Levy Band, Silent Club Sizzle,
main-stage music from Tyler Richton & The High
Bank Boys, Not Quite Brothers and BYOBrass,
and you won't want to miss the popular bacon-
eating contest at 3 p.m. Tickets for the event will
be limited to 5,000. For more information, visit
blueribbonbaconfestival.com.

Various shows

February dates
Hoyt Sherman Place, 1501
Woodland Ave., Des Moines

A variety of performances are on tap
for February at Hoyt Sherman Place. For
details, visit www.hoytsherman.org.

Feb. 5: "Brooklyn Rider: Healing
Modes" at 7:30 p.m.

Feb. 11: "Chris Janson: Halfway To
Crazy Tour" at 7:30 p.m.

Feb. 15: "Des Moines Storytellers
Project: Love" at 7 p.m.

Feb. 16: "An Evening With Bruce
Dickinson" at 7:30 p.m.

Feb. 18: "The Mavericks: 'En
Español' World Tour" at 7:30 p.m.

Feb. 19: "Yola: Stand For Myself
Tour" at 8 p.m.

Feb. 24: "Ashley McBryde - This
Town Talks Tour" at 8 p.m.

Iowa Wolves home games

February
Wells Fargo Arena, 730 Third St.,
Des Moines

The Iowa Wolves basketball team is affiliated
with the Minnesota Timberwolves of the NBA
and plays in the NBA Gatorade League, which
is the NBA's official minor league. For more
information, visit iowa.gleague.nba.com.

Saturday, Feb. 5 vs. Agua Caliente Clippers/
Clippers, 7 p.m.

Sunday, Feb. 6 vs. Austin Spurs/Spurs, 4 p.m.

Tuesday, Feb. 8 vs. Austin Spurs/Spurs, 10:30
p.m.

Monday, Feb. 14 vs. Santa Cruz Warriors/
Warriors, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, Feb. 23 vs. Salt Lake City Stars/
Jazz, 7 p.m.

RECIPE

A FRESH take on family dinner

(Family Features) If your family gets stuck in a dinner routine rut, it can feel like you're eating the same recipes over and over again.

However, this fresh and unique recipe for Cuban chicken with salsa fresca might inspire you to think outside the culinary box and give your family members the satisfactory flavor they desire at dinnertime. With fresh ingredients and a wholesome flavor, this meal is perfect to add to your menu.

Find more recipes and family dinner ideas at Culinary.net. ■

Cuban chicken with salsa fresca

Servings: 5

- 1 cup grapefruit juice
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 teaspoons garlic powder
- 2 teaspoons cumin
- 2 teaspoons paprika
- 1 teaspoon crushed red pepper
- 1 1/4 pounds boneless, skinless chicken breasts

Salsa fresca:

- 1 cup grapefruit segments
- 1/2 jicama, cubed
- 1/2 red onion, chopped
- 3/4 cup grapefruit juice
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/2 cup fresh cilantro, chopped
- 1 jalapeno pepper, chopped

Directions

- Heat oven to 400 F.
- In large bowl, mix grapefruit juice, oil, garlic powder, cumin, paprika and red pepper until combined. Add chicken to bowl and turn to coat. Refrigerate 30 minutes or longer.
- To make salsa fresca: In medium bowl, mix grapefruit segments, jicama, red onion, grapefruit juice, olive oil, cilantro and jalapeno pepper until combined. Refrigerate until ready to serve.
- Remove chicken from marinade. Place chicken in baking dish. Bake 25-30 minutes until chicken is cooked through.
- Serve chicken with salsa fresca.



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- Keith & Sara, Parents of Keisha and Keiara



Waggoner Pediatrics of Central Iowa

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"I always know I'm in the best care at Dr. Waggoner's"
- Keiara, 11

"This place is awesome!"
- Keisha, 8 ½



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or book a last-minute beach
vacation. No more worries about
maintenance or shoveling snow.
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heated underground parking, and so much more!



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Are you thinking of replacing your old furnace? There are many options to consider, and searching for the right one can be a tedious and confusing task, especially if you're a first-time buyer. To help you get started, there are a few important factors to consider right now.



First, should you repair or replace your equipment? New furnaces greatly increase energy efficiency, but that's not the only reason why you may consider buying versus repairing. If your furnace is more than 15-20 years old, has a pilot light, lacks vent dampers or a draft fan, or has been converted from coal to gas/oil, it may be time to replace. Some issues may only require simple maintenance, but the best way to determine if you need a replacement is by calling a professional to perform an inspection. Paying for the repair may seem like the cheaper option, but it's important to consider the frequency of repairs needed. Those can add up quickly.

Find the right company. It's important to find a good HVAC professional who is licensed and insured. Call around and ask your local HVAC companies for estimates, and, more than likely, you have friends who can provide great recommendations. Installing a properly sized furnace is key to heating your home correctly. Too small, it won't heat your home. Too big, you'll waste a lot of money with high energy bills. The company you choose should calculate the size of your home and provide options that will help achieve your family's comfort needs.

There are many brands to choose from, so how do you decide? The majority of furnaces available now can save you up to \$500 a year when compared to older models. Each brand has its own trademark of features and advantages, but it's important to also consider variable heat output, variable speed blowers, dual heat exchanger and air filtration. A good company should take the time to explain all of these options to you during your appointment.

It's always recommended to invest in the most efficient unit you can afford; you'll be able to find a range of efficiencies for any budget. A more efficient unit will have a higher upfront cost, but it will pay for itself over the course of its life. Once you factor in the available rebates and tax credits, you may find that you're saving much more than you expected. ■

Information provided by Scott Bontrager,
72 Degrees Comfort Company, 811 S.W. Ordinance Road,
Ankeny, 515-200-2728.

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HOME HEALTH

By Ward Phillips

SHORT-TERM rehabilitation

How to choose the best program for you

Do you know what short-term rehabilitation is? If your answer is "no," you're not alone.

Short-term rehabilitation — sometimes known as skilled rehabilitation — is something many people require when they're discharged from a hospital stay but not yet ready to go home. It's a professional service designed to help you get well and go home as quickly as possible.



It's most common for a person to need short-term rehabilitation after he or she has surgery or has had a prolonged illness, especially one that has resulted in a decrease in function. Individuals don't always plan for this need, and, when faced with choices of places that provide short-term rehabilitation, they're not familiar enough with them to make an informed decision.

If you're looking for a place to rehabilitate, here are some suggestions:

- Choose a program that includes physical, occupational and speech therapy to cover a variety of needs. You won't want to get settled then have to move when you learn the center doesn't offer the help you require.
- As they say, "The proof is in the pudding." Do yourself a favor and choose a program that's been operational for many years and has the experience to handle a variety of scenarios.
- Ask for outcomes. The program should be able to provide you with re-hospitalization rates, survey results and other benchmarks.
- Select a program that offers a network of services to keep you well after you return home. Those can include outpatient therapy, home health services or both.
- Look for a program with an onsite health center. In the event that you require additional medical services while you're rehabilitating, onsite health services can address your needs quickly and thoroughly.
- You'll also want to be aware that short-term rehabilitation is usually covered by insurance. And, for most people, short-term rehab doesn't take long; typical stays range from several days to a few weeks.

If a doctor recommends you spend some time in short-term rehabilitation, don't be scared or nervous; ask to see all your available options. Ask all the questions you need to ask. Then, do your homework to select the program that makes the most sense for you. ■

Ward Phillips is Senior Director of Sales for WesleyLife, which offers a broad network of home-based services for older adults in addition to 55-and-older community living in Iowa and Illinois. Call or text Ward at 515-669-2205 to learn about home health care, non-medical in-home services, hospice care, meal delivery, and much more!

CONSERVATION EVENTS

POLK COUNTY Conservation events

Register online at www.polkcountyiowa.gov/conservation

Story Tellebration

Jester Park Nature Center

Join storyteller Carmen Epstein for a free, 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. Registration required two days before event. Register online at <https://www.polkcountyiowa.gov/conservation/>. Topics are:

Wednesday, Feb. 9, 10 a.m. Hootenanny Owls

Wednesday, March 9, 10 a.m. Spring has Sprung

Wednesday, April 13, 10 a.m. Rain is Raining All Around

Homeschool - Nature Lessons

Jester Park Nature Center

Join the learning for free at the Jester Park Nature Center. This program series will be delivered in a flexible format that is specially designed for homeschool students in grades K-5. These programs will immerse children and parents in the natural world and drive them to learn, discover and appreciate our environment. Registration required two days before event. Register online at <https://www.polkcountyiowa.gov/conservation/>. Topics are:

Friday, Feb. 11, 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. -

Forensic Science

March 4, 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. Signs of Spring

March 25, 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. Water

Explorations

April 1, 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. Protecting our Waters

April 8, 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. Artistic Naturalists

Critter Club

Jester Park Nature Center

Come visit Jester Park Nature Center's resident turtles, snakes and salamanders to learn about these misunderstood animals. You may even get to touch a turtle or snake. This is an open house program, so come anytime between 1-2:30 p.m. No registration required for this free event, offered on Feb. 6 and March 16.

Knee-High Naturalists

Jester Park

Are you ready to get outside and explore?

Come and hear a story followed by some outdoor fun. As naturalists, participants will hike, investigate, and navigate through the trails and grounds of Jester Park as they learn what makes the outdoors such an amazing place. Come dressed to be outside. Registration required the day before this free event recommended for ages 3-6. Register online at <https://www.polkcountyiowa.gov/conservation/>. Topics are:

Feb. 16, 10 a.m. - Reptiles & Amphibians

March 16, 10 a.m. - Seasons

April 20, 10 a.m. - Birds

Book Worms

Urbandale Public Library

Various dates

Join the book club with Polk County Conservation Naturalist Heidi Anderson to discuss an environmentally themed book each month. Registration is due the day before the event. This free book club is for ages 12 and older. Dates and topics are:

Feb. 22, 6:30 p.m., "The Story of More: How We Got to Climate Change and Where to Go from Here" by Hope Jahren

March 31, 6:30 p.m., "Bicycling with Butterflies: My 10,201 Mile Journey Following the Monarch Migration" by Sara Dykman

Toddler Tales

Jester Park Nature Center

Let your imagination run wild with this free nature-themed story time aimed at ages 3 and older. Hear a story followed by the naturalist's choice of an activity such as an animal encounter, puppets or a craft. Registration required the day prior to the event. Register online at <https://www.polkcountyiowa.gov/conservation/>. Monthly themes are:

March 3, 10 a.m. - Ducks

April 7, 10 a.m. - Birds & Nests

Fitness in the Park

Thursdays, March 3 and April 7 at 6 p.m. Jester Park Outdoor Recreation & Wellness Center

Join trainers from Fitness Nomad, a mobile personal training business, at a monthly fitness class. The 45-minute class will focus on a full-body strength and functional fitness workout. Classes will include strength training,

functional fitness, core strengthening, and some interval training. These classes are great for people who are new to their fitness journey as well as for the experienced fitness enthusiasts and outdoor recreation junkies. All equipment is provided. Participants are encouraged to bring a water bottle and dress in comfortable gym clothes. This program costs \$15 and is for ages 16 and older. Registration required two days prior to the event. Register online at <https://www.polkcountyiowa.gov/conservation/>.

Chinese New Year Celebration

Jester Park Nature Center

Saturday, Feb. 5, 10:30 a.m.

Celebrate the year of the tiger. During this program, learn all about the history of the Chinese New Year, similarities between Chinese zodiac and western astrology, and, of course, tigers! All ages are welcome to this free event. Registration required by Feb. 4. Register online at <https://www.polkcountyiowa.gov/conservation/>.

Mindfulness & Movement

Jester Park Nature Center

Tuesdays, Feb. 8 and March 8 at 6:30 p.m.

Sometimes we forget we are part of nature, sharing water and air with all other beings on the planet. Controlling our breath and moving our bodies in focused ways can bring back a connection with the natural world. This class will offer ways to connect with breath, body and the earth, regardless of experience with yoga. Instructors will vary each month. Cost is \$15 for this program for ages 12 and older. Registration required the day prior to the event. Register online at <https://www.polkcountyiowa.gov/conservation/>.

Owl You Need is Love

Jester Park Nature Center

Saturday, Feb. 12, 10:30 a.m.

Join Polk County Conservation to celebrate Iowa's true winter romantics...the owls! By Valentine's Day, owls are often sitting on a nest of eggs. Learn why owls court in winter and which owls call Iowa home. This free program is for ages 5 and older. Registration required by Feb. 11. Register online at <https://www.polkcountyiowa.gov/conservation/>. ■

NEWS BRIEFS

LIBRARY'S ESL classes help a growing population

Johnston Assistant Librarian Peggy Rasmussen and Lead Instructor Chelsea Ladlie spoke about the English Language Program at the Johnston Public Library at the Jan. 18 meeting of the Johnston Rotary Club.

Much of their presentation centered on the Adult ESL (English as a Second Language) program that is available through the library. They said ESL programs are important to a significant and growing group of Johnston residents who need assistance with the English language. Classes are held either in person or online.

Lessons focus on reading to improve vocabulary, speaking to improve pronunciation, and listening to improve comprehension. Lessons have everyday, functional English in mind. Lessons are led by trained volunteers, and follow-up digital materials are available for interested students. Those interested in joining via Zoom can email Peg at johnstonlibraryps@gmail.com for sign-in information. Classes are free and no registration is required.

Volunteer opportunities were also discussed. Volunteer lesson guides are used and volunteers receive coaching to help them gain confidence in their teaching. ■



Peggy Rasmussen (center), Johnston assistant librarian, and Chelsea Ladlie (left), lead instructor, discussed the English Language Program at the Johnston Library. On the right is Johnston Rotary President John Waldron.

LARSON speaks to Rotary Club

Rachael Larson, Siemens Industry, Inc., Smart Infrastructure, spoke to the Johnston Rotary Club on Dec. 21. She manages the Iowa and Nebraska offices for Siemens Infrastructure Regionals Solutions and Services. They help connect people with their buildings through smart technologies, such as building automation, fire, security, and the "Internet of Things." The "Internet of Things" describes the network of physical objects with sensors, software, and other technologies for the purpose of connecting and exchanging data with other devices and systems over the internet.

Larson was able to explain complicated topics of building controls that best manage costs to the audience. A good part of her time was spent on electrical needs of buildings now and in the future. Of particular interest was how the EV automation movement with electrical vehicle charging stations for employee cars is affecting businesses, their electrical needs and the need to manage these additional power requirements. ■



ARNOLD speaks to Rotary on polio eradication

Ed Arnold spoke to the Johnston Rotary Club on Tuesday, Jan. 11, about polio eradication. He is a member of the Northwest Rotary Club, Urbandale, and has been a long-time promoter of polio eradication. Ed and Metro Rotary Clubs continue to raise money for polio eradication. Rotary clubs are working closely again with partner Iowa Wolves for a special event to raise money for this most important eradication effort. The basketball game is Saturday, Feb. 5 at 7 p.m., at Wells Fargo Arena. Tickets are \$20 each with \$10 going toward polio eradication. Purchase tickets online at: <https://fevo.me/rotaryjohnstonia>. For more information, email edarnold1945@gmail.com or alex.barker@iawolves.com.



Rotary has been working to eradicate polio for more than 35 years. Rotary's goal of ridding the world of this disease is closer than ever. Rotary has helped reduce polio cases by 99.9 percent since its first project to vaccinate children in the Philippines in 1979.

Rotary members have contributed more than \$2.1 billion and countless volunteer hours to protect nearly 3 billion children in 122 countries from this paralyzing disease. Rotary's advocacy efforts have played a role in decisions by governments to contribute more than \$10 billion to the effort.

Today, polio remains endemic only in Afghanistan and Pakistan. But it's crucial to continue working to keep other countries polio-free. If all eradication efforts stopped today, within 10 years, polio could paralyze as many as 200,000 children each year. ■



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MEDICARE Advantage

Open Enrollment Period: What does it mean?

If you are Medicare eligible, or close to it, you have probably been noticing the commercials on TV and had many advertising letters sent during the last few months. Most of these are for the Annual Enrollment Period which is Oct. 15 through Dec. 7. What many don't tell you is that they will continue into the new year. There is a separate enrollment period for Medicare Advantage plans called the MA Open Enrollment Period which is Jan. 1 through March 31. This enrollment period is for Medicare members currently enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan. You are not required to make a change during this time, although it is an opportunity to review or change plans if you missed the Annual Enrollment Period or are truly unhappy with the plan you are on.



So, what does this mean? Anyone currently enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan can either

- Enroll in another like plan (Advantage to Advantage) or
- Disenroll from an Advantage plan and go back to Original Medicare

When deciding if you should change, there are also a few things to consider:

- When moving from one Advantage plan to another, ask yourself: Are my doctors in network with the new plan? Do I want a plan with, or without, prescription coverage? Am I comfortable with the out-of-pocket maximum and copayment costs?
- When going back to Original Medicare: Do I want a supplement in force, and, if so, can I answer medical questions that are required to go through underwriting? What prescription drug plan would best fit my retail prescription needs?

There is only one change allowed during this enrollment period. The effective date for the new policy would be the first of the month following the month of enrollment, and the policy will be in effect for the remainder of the year. The most important part of this time frame is understanding the plan designs and knowing what you would be enrolling in. There are some agents and groups with a more aggressive advertising approach as well as the TV commercials sounding "too good to be true." Making sure you have questions ready when responding to these advertisements is important to keep the conversation on track and help you find the answers relevant to your situation and a plan that fits your needs. ■

Just know, at Health Insurance Advisor, we are here to help you answer these questions and educate you on these plans. Sources Used : <https://www.medicare.gov/blog/medicare-advantage-open-enrollment>. Information provided by Betheny Wilson, Health Insurance Advisor LLC, 5870 Merle Hay Road, Suite A, Johnston, 515-225-9994

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PaulaSDierenfeld@gmail.com

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PRESIDENTS DAY CLOSURES

Johnston city offices, including the library, will be closed on Monday, Feb. 21, for the Presidents Day holiday. Trash and recycling pickup days are not affected by this holiday.

The regularly scheduled Johnston City Council work session and meeting will take place on Tuesday, Feb. 22, beginning at 6 p.m.



VOLUNTEER FOR KITES ON THE GREEN

The annual Kites on the Green event will be held on Saturday, May 7, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Johnston Common, near the Johnston Public Library. This great event allows families to come together, fly kites and enjoy the beautiful weather. To ensure a successful event, volunteers are needed for multiple shifts. Volunteers will help kids/families build kites, assist at special activities, or help with the donation booths.

Sign up by visiting
cityofjohnston.com/KOTGVolunteer.



SUBMIT YOUR CONCERN ONLINE

The City of Johnston makes it easy to submit a concern online. This will help city staff identify the problem and address them quickly. Concerns may include code enforcement, playground concern, missed trash or recycling, or a pothole.

Report the concern by visiting cityofjohnston.com/concerncenter.

REQUEST A STREETLIGHT REPAIR

Here in Johnston, the neighborhood streetlights are maintained by MidAmerican Energy. Johnston Public Works Department maintains the parking lots at public buildings, including Johnston Library, Crown Point Community Center, City Hall, and Public Works. We ask that all repair requests be submitted directly to MidAmerican Energy by visiting <https://bit.ly/JohnstonStreetLight>.

If you have an emergency, such as a leaning pole, broken glass, or hanging fixture, please call 888-427-5632 for an immediate response.

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



THE CITY REPORTED \$87.4 MILLION IN NEW TAXABLE VALUATION IN 2021

In 2021, the City of Johnston had a substantial year of growth with \$87.4 million in new taxable valuation. This includes 199 new residential units, of which 120 were single-family residential units – the highest total since 2015. Five commercial projects accounted for \$17.3 million in new valuation and included the first two commercial buildings within the Johnston Town Center. View the full report by visiting cityofjohnston.com/CommDevSummary.

As part of the 2021 Community Development Annual Report, Community Development Director, David Wilwerding predicts the following for 2022:

- Increase in permits for single-family residential and townhome/villa development due to new and pending developments.
- In partnership with Hansen Companies, construction of the first phases of the Johnston Town Center, including the occupancy of the first commercial structures, will continue.
- The long-planned vision for Merle Hay Road will begin to rapidly advance with construction at the Johnston Town Center, Ignit, and development of the former Heard Gardens property, spurring growth elsewhere along the corridor.



UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

The City of Johnston and the Johnston Town Center have family-friendly events coming up this year. We encourage you to mark your calendars to ensure you can attend these events. For more information about the events with the City of Johnston, please visit cityofjohnston.com and view the calendar. For the Johnston Town Center events, please visit johnstontowncenter.com.

Sunday, Apr. 10

Easter Egg Hunt
Johnston Town Center
1 p.m.



The age groups are as follows: 0-2, 3-5 & 6-10

Tuesday, Apr. 12

Annual Tree sale
Online only beginning at 8 a.m.
Trees include: Bur Oak, Centennial Blush Magnolia, Prairiefire Crabapple, Eastern White Pine and Kentucky Coffee

Saturday, May 7

Kites on the Green
10 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Johnston Commons



Saturday, May 14

Mayor's Annual Bike Ride
11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Ride from City Hall to Terra Park



Saturday, Jun. 18

Johnston Green Day's Parade
10 a.m.
Along Pioneer Parkway



Saturday, Aug. 13

Mayor's Run for the Trails 5k + Kids Fun Run
8 a.m.
Terra Park



Johnston Rotary Club UPCOMING SPEAKERS

Feb. 8 - Dave Grove

COVID and employees & small- and mid-sized businesses
Cozy Café, 8385 Birchwood Ct., Johnston

Feb. 15 - Kami Rankin

Polk County Conservation
Hyperion Field Club, 7390 N.W. Beaver Drive, Johnston

Feb. 22 - Nicholas Hanstad

TH Media House/Rotary and social media
Hyperion Field Club, 7390 N.W. Beaver Drive, Johnston

March 1 - Superintendent Laura Kacer

Johnston Schools Update
Hyperion Field Club, 7390 N.W. Beaver Drive, Johnston



ROTARY By Bob Wiley

WHY I joined Johnston Rotary, and why I've stayed

I'm from the small town of Gowrie. I grew up seeing people I know when we went downtown to shop and enjoyed "yuckin it up" with friends for a few minutes.

After moving to Johnston and starting a family, I realized I missed that camaraderie. I decided the solution was to make more friends in this community. I made friends through my work in financial services and church, but I felt like I needed another source.

I looked at the various service clubs in Johnston, and, when I came across Rotary, I was reminded that a small business owner I used to work for in Ames belonged to the Ames Rotary Club. I remember he seemed excited to go to their weekly meetings, and he introduced me to several members who were fun and friendly. I was moved when he insisted his whole office staff go to the funeral of one of their members.

So, in 2005, I called the president of the Johnston Rotary Club, asked him some questions, and he invited me as his guest to a meeting. The president at the time was Iowa National Guard Gen. Mark Zirkelbach. How could I turn that man down?

I was pleased to see the school superintendent at the time, Dr. Dick Sundblad, who I'd met through the school, was a member. Over the course of the next year, I'd met pretty much all of their 50 or so members through visiting at weekly breakfasts and working together on several community betterment projects. A lot of the members were community and business leaders, and all were genuinely interested in building relationships and bettering the community.

As an added bonus, the club invites a speaker to each meeting to talk about his or her area of expertise. Speakers have included Mayor Dierenfeld, Police Chief Dennis McDaniel, Fire Chief Jim Clark, City Manager Jim Sanders, Iowa National Guard officers, House representatives and senators, business owners, non-profit CEOs, Deputy State Medical Examiner Dr. Thompson, and passionate hobbyists from the community or club. As a result, I'm always up to date on new developments in Johnston, Des Moines, and Iowa. I've also added new locations and projects to my bucket list after hearing about their adventures.

As planned, when I go to a Johnston store or restaurant, frequently I'll run into a fellow Rotarian, and we'll yuck it up for several minutes. That makes my day and makes Johnston feel like home.

You may want to visit our website: www.JohnstonRotary.com for more about the club and email one of the club directors at the bottom of the home page. ■

More information about the Johnston Rotary Club can be found at www.johnstonrotary.com or contact Mike Schoville, schovillemike@gmail.com.



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MEET Jean Jansen and Tina Carnine

Special education associates say no two days are the same.

Before relocating to Iowa, Jean Jansen and her family were transferred all across the country due to her husband's job with Chrysler. When they moved to the Johnston area, her kids were entering their fifth school district. Jansen says she decided to apply for a job with the Johnston



Jean Jansen and Tina Carnine work together as special education associates for Horizon Elementary School.

Community School District so she could have the same hours as her children and could work around their activities.

"I started as a sub for the district in 2009 and became full-time contracted in 2011," Jansen says. "I love what I do and the people I work with. I feel the district is a great employer with great benefits and fair compensation comparable to outlying districts."

Tina Carnine, on the other hand, is originally from Des Moines and relocated to the Johnston area in 2005. She started subbing for the district when her youngest started school and was hired on full-time in 2010. Carnine says the Johnston Community School District is a great place to work when you have young kids.

"I love my job. I enjoy the people I work with and have made life-long friends. I enjoy working with the students and having my summers off," she says.

Jansen and Carnine now work together as special education associates for Horizon Elementary School. Carnine says they first met when both of their children were attending Lawson Elementary School and volunteered together at the Scholastic Book Fair. Both say, when it comes to working as special education associates, there is no "typical" day, which they both enjoy. They also say that the job is rewarding.

"I love to see the moment something clicks with the student. Seeing the progress makes it all worth it. I feel like I am making a difference," Carnine says. "This job has taught me a lot about acceptance and compassion. I have gained a lot of patience over the years. I love getting to know each student."

Jansen adds they have a tradition of making cinnamon ornaments each year before the holiday break. During the activity, students are given special aprons and hats to wear and have the opportunity to make and decorate the ornaments. In addition, Jansen also produces a movie capturing the students' year with pictures taken from all of the staff in the room.

"It's fun to recap all the fun we had all year," Jansen says. "I love the rewards of seeing my student grow throughout the year and succeed." ■

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BEFORE YOU GO

By Jan Shawver

A GIFT of love

One of the first questions you will be asked when a death occurs is, "What funeral home/cemetery do you wish to use?" You may or may not know the facilities your loved one would have chosen — perhaps other family members have used a certain funeral home or cemetery. But, have arrangements been made with the funeral home? Have spaces been purchased in the cemetery of choice?




As you consider your future burial needs, please share your wishes with family members so there will be no question when faced with the grief of your passing. What a gift of love to your family if arrangements have been pre-determined and paid in advance.

Another decision which will need to be made is the type of service you want: 1) traditional funeral at the funeral home; 2) a service held at your place of worship; 3) a graveside service at the cemetery; 4) a celebration of life at a favorite gathering place (park, restaurant, lodge); etc.

These decisions may be made in advance and will take a huge burden off of your family. There are numerous difficult decisions to be made at the time of death — but it doesn't have to be so.

Give your family a gift of love and care for your future end-of-life needs now. ■

Information provided by Jan Shawver, Family Services Representative, Highland Memory Gardens Cemetery, 1 N.E. 60th Ave., Des Moines, 515-289-2230.




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HEALTH

By Dr. Tara Federly

DOES COLD air take your breath away?

As expected, we have had some very cold days this winter in Iowa. Not everyone enjoys the cold weather, but, for some children and adults with asthma, the cold air can be a health hazard. Breathing in cold, dry air can trigger the airways in the lungs to narrow. This leads to an asthma attack with coughing, difficulty breathing and sometimes wheezing. Often these attacks happen when outside walking, shoveling snow or sledding. If you have asthma and cold air is one of your triggers, there are steps you can take to help prevent an asthma attack:



- Always wear a scarf or face mask over your mouth when outside in the cold
- Consider exercising inside
- Use your quick relief inhaler before you go outside
- Always carry your quick relief inhaler with you

Asthma attacks can also be triggered by viral illnesses, smoke, strong odors, stress, hormonal changes and allergies. If you think you may have asthma or your asthma is affecting your quality of life, consider seeing an allergist to help you identify your triggers, feel better, and live better. ■

Information provided by Dr. Tara Federly, Cornerstone Pediatrics & Family Allergy, 6800 Lake Drive, Suite 260, West Des Moines, www.cornerstonepfa.com.

UNDERSTANDING risk factors the key to preventing heart disease

February is Heart Month, a time to increase your awareness of cardiovascular disease.

And, for most Iowans, increasing awareness starts with a clear understanding of the risk factors associated with

the disease. Knowing your risk is the first step in prevention. Common risk factors include: age, family history, cholesterol, blood pressure, smoking, diabetes and obesity.

- **Age:** Men are at increased risk for heart disease after age 45. A woman's risk goes up at age 55 or if she has experienced menopause. We tend to overlook the simple fact that our risk for heart disease goes up as we grow older. By the time you hit 40, you should be actively aware of your risks and ready to take action.

- **Family history:** Studies suggest family history may play a role in heart disease, particularly when diagnosed in younger people over successive generations. We're most



concerned about family history when a parent or sibling has early heart disease — before age 45 for men or age 55 for women.

- **Cholesterol:** The body makes all the cholesterol it needs, so any you add through your diet is “extra.” The extra cholesterol forms plaques that can accumulate in the coronary arteries, eventually causing chest pain or a heart attack.

Total cholesterol should be less than 200 mg/dl. Levels of LDL or “bad” cholesterol should be as low as possible, while levels of HDL or “good” cholesterol should be high.

- **Blood pressure:** Blood pressure should be 120/80 or lower. High blood pressure means your heart has to work harder than normal. Left untreated, the condition can weaken artery walls. Adults and children should have their blood pressure measured each year.

- **Smoking:** Smoking contributes to plaque formation in the arteries, which may, in turn, lead to a heart attack or stroke. If you smoke, quitting is the best thing you can do for your overall health.

- **Diabetes:** Nearly two-thirds of people with diabetes die of cardiovascular disease. Patients with diabetes should carefully monitor and control their condition, as well as their other risk factors for heart disease.

- **Obesity:** Obesity makes the heart work harder, increasing your risk for heart disease. In many cases, it also indicates a sedentary lifestyle and a low HDL level.

Try to get as much physical activity as possible and eat a heart-healthy diet to maintain a healthy weight.

Heart disease prevention is critical. It should begin early in life. Start with an assessment of your risk factors. Then develop a plan with your health care team you can follow to maintain a low risk for heart attack. ■

Information provided by Eric Martin, MD, board-certified cardiologist specializing in prevention and wellness at MercyOne Iowa Heart Center, 5880 University Ave., West Des Moines, 515-633-3600, iowaheart.com.

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HEALTH

By Ariel Meaney

HEALTHY boundaries make healthy individuals

During a time when many of us focus on others and their needs, how can we focus on ourselves and maintain a healthy balance within a relationship? Understanding what our own healthy boundaries are could be how we start our self-discovery and reflection. Within our reflection on our life, we can begin to list what we feel we can or cannot balance in our life currently. Other things that may go on this list are what we can and cannot control. Making this list of reflection upon our life will help to define what our boundaries can start to look like.



Being able to have open communication with your significant other about your boundaries is another way to uphold your own wellbeing and sense of self within the relationship. Finding the healthy balance of compromise for each person within the relationship is essential to helping make the relationship long-lasting and respectful.

Implementing self-care, utilizing a support system, and using coping skills are all important factors in maintaining a healthy individual. When we utilize our coping skills, as well as healthy boundaries within our professional and personal lives, we can feel more at peace. ■

Information provided by Ariel Meaney, SS Therapy and Consulting, Ltd, 4725 Merle Hay Road, Suite 205, Des Moines, IA 50322, 515-528-8135, meaney@sstherapyandconsulting.com, www.sstherapyandconsulting.com.

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GOOD mood foods

The winter blues may be in full swing, but there are foods that can actually help improve your mood. Eat for sustained energy, not quick-fix stimulation. Coffee, tea and chocolate may make you happy, but they often lead to blood sugar (and mood) crashes later. High quality foods help produce chemicals in your brain that can improve not only your mood, but also your memory, energy level and sleep quality.



Choose complex over refined carbohydrates:

Refined carbohydrates, things made with white flour, are digested quickly, causing your blood sugar to spike, then drop. This can leave you cranky, tired and reaching for more to eat. Instead, eat whole grains, veggies, fruit and legumes for complex carbohydrates and fiber. Fiber helps slow the digestion of carbs, allowing for a gradual release of sugar into the bloodstream to keep your energy levels stable. It has been shown that even consuming just 2-6 grams of fiber at breakfast can result in better mood and energy levels.

Eat protein at each meal: Heart healthy, lean protein such as lean beef, pork, poultry, fish, nuts, seeds and beans helps your brain release dopamine and norepinephrine shortly after you eat. The effect: You are more alert and focused for hours.

Include fatty fish: Omega-3 fatty acids are a group of essential fats that you must obtain through your diet because your body can't produce them on its own. Fatty fish like salmon and albacore tuna are rich in two types of omega-3s, DHA and EPA, that are linked to lower levels of depression. Although there's no standard dose, most experts agree that most adults should get at least 250-500 mg of combined EPA and DHA. A standard serving of salmon provides more 2,000 mg of EPA and DHA. Eating fish a few times per week is a great way to get these fats into your diet.

Develop a consistent eating pattern: Make sure you start your day off with breakfast within 90 minutes of waking up. Throughout the day, eat every three to four hours for consistent energy and fuel.

Exercise and hydrate: The effects of exercise, like better sleep, help improve mood and assist with a better overall outlook. These effects can last up to 24 hours after exercise. Hydrating properly could also give you an energy boost and help fight fatigue. Even mild dehydration can lead to difficulty concentrating, headaches, sleepiness and irritability. Try to be physically active every day and stay hydrated with plenty of water, fruits, veggies and calorie-free beverages. ■

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

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LIBRARY

A MONTH of love at JPL

There's a lot to love during the month of February at Johnston Public Library. Check out these great programs for kids, teens and adults to keep your creativity flowing, the food on your dinner table healthy and flavorful, and your mind engaged and entertained.

Kids

It's the month of love — valentines for everybody. Grab the little person in your life and visit the library to create the perfect valentine for someone special. We will provide paper, stickers and coloring utensils. This Create a Valentine program is perfect for ages 2-5, but all ages welcome. Then save the date for Tuesday, Feb. 22, for some messy motor-skill fun at Play-Doh Power. A variety of Play-Doh, tools, and mats will be available during this program, as well as information for parents on the benefits of using Play-Doh during regular play time.

Teens

Have a tween who is interested in coding and robotics? Send them our way on the first Saturday of the month for LEGObot Mechanics Club. LEGObot Mechanics Club is a fun, laid-back robotics class for kids ages 11-13 that meets on the first Saturday of the month from January to July 2022. All levels of knowledge in robotics are welcome, including absolute beginners. Coaches and students from the Johnston Robotics Team will teach participants how to build and program a LEGO robot and compete in some fun and laid-back mini-competitions. Kids should try to come every month as the club will build upon knowledge from previous months, but drop-ins are welcome as well. Snacks and necessary materials will be provided. Registration appreciated.

Adults

Adults, are you curious about the current trend toward a diet of less meat, less dairy and more vegetables? Of course you are. Join fab food editor Jill Johnson to explore attainable recipes at our Easy and Delish Plant-Based Cooking class. Jill will go through the basics of a plant-based diet, reasons why we should eat more plant foods, and creative ways to get more of them into our diet. Samples will be provided. Jill Johnson is a former food editor for "Better Homes & Gardens," has developed and compiled recipes for five cookbooks, and contributed to publications such as "Midwest Living," "Diabetic Living," "Hy-Vee Seasons" magazine, and "Life: Beautiful." Healthy cooking has been her passion for more than three decades, and she has implemented plant-based principles in her own kitchen since 2017. Registration is required.

Families

Join us this Valentine's Day when the kids have the day off of school for an inconceivably good time at this special showing of "The Princess Bride" Interactive Movie. We will provide a script as well as a movie prop kit with tons of fun interactive items to help you become a part of the movie. Plus, make a Princess Bride Valentine to give to your "twue wuv" and eat tasty snacks. This program is open to all ages, but those 8 and younger must be accompanied by an adult.

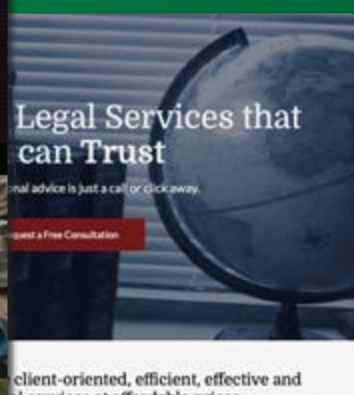
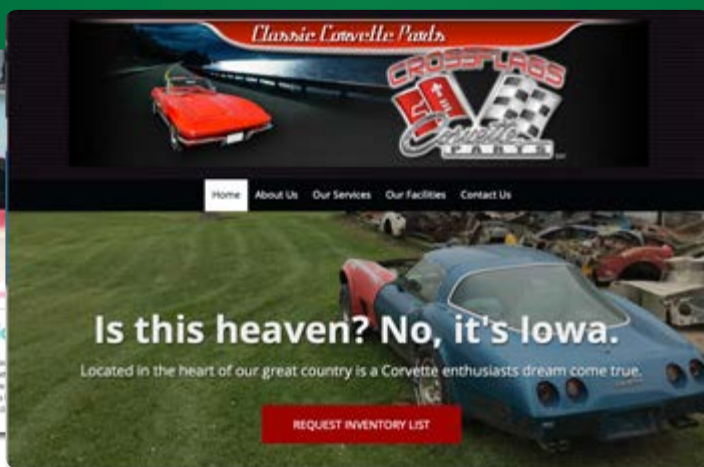
More information and registration for programs is available at johnstonlibrary.com/events or by calling the library at 515-278-5233. ■



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THE 'WILD WEST' of Cryptocurrency

I get asked about cryptocurrency a lot. Is it a good investment? Should I get in now? How much should I invest? I've been watching the cryptocurrency game for a long time and answering the question the same way since investors started playing: "It's like the Wild West of investing." Maybe not the untamed lawlessness of the Western territories in the mid-1800s, but more like the wildness of the DotCom era.



I know you remember it. There was a rapid rise in U.S. technology stock equity fueled by investments in Internet start-up companies. The problem is, there were no actual balance sheets. The bubble burst in 2000 when the capital began to dry up. There was a lot of money to be made and a lot of money to be lost. A few companies survived, such as Microsoft and Amazon, but it took 10 years and 16 years respectively for investors to break even.

I understand why many want to grab the cowboy boots and join in. Bitcoin has seen a 4,700% surge since 2016 (yes, 4,700%). Last year alone, there was a 60% gain. Goldman Sachs recently predicted a 50% increase over the next five years, for a return of 17% or 18%. It's

incredible. But there are a few other numbers to consider before investing in cryptocurrency. There are more than 1,500 cryptocurrencies, and a new one is coming out every week (sound like the DotCom era?). In 2018, the price of Bitcoin fell by about 65% in just one month, from Jan. 6 to Feb. 6. Cryptocurrency is known for its volatility. Cryptocurrency is still largely untamed in the U.S., though the Federal Reserve has talked about roping it in — even talks of regulation impact price.

It's still a speculative investment, so enter this "Wild West" with caution. You have to have the stomach for the swings. You want to invest money that you don't need to live out your retirement vision. If it blew away like a tumbleweed, you wouldn't be upset.

We help people build a comprehensive retirement plan that shows them in writing how their resources will get them to and through retirement. The plan also shows them where they can take some risk, if they desire, on something like cryptocurrency, and do it without disrupting their retirement vision. ■

Information provided by Loren Merkle, CFP®, Merkle Retirement Planning, 1860 S.E. Princeton Drive, Grimes, IA 50111, 515-278-1006. Sources: Worrachate, Anchalee (2022, January 4) Bitcoin Could Surpass \$100,000 if it Replaces Gold as a Store of Value, Says Goldman Sachs. Fortune.com

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REAL ESTATE

By Katie Fliehler and
Malinda Garner

ARE YOU prepared for the spring market?

Are you thinking of moving this year? Do you have a house to sell? Well, if you answered yes, now is the best time to prepare. The spring market in our area usually proves to be the hottest time of year to sell. Year after year, March, April, May and June have the most homes sold and for the highest prices. With that being said, we suggest taking the time now to get prepared.

• **What to do first:** Hire a real estate agent. Have your Realtor visit your home and work with you to create your personalized game plan. Their knowledge and expertise will be your guide to getting your home ready and priced correctly. Should you need additional assistance, they will be able to make recommendations of qualified professionals. Your Realtor is more than someone who will just throw your home on the MLS. They will guide you from pre-listing all the way to closing.

• **Second:** What is your next move? Are you buying another home? Know your financial capabilities by talking with a lender. It's important in this market to know exactly what you can afford, which makes you a more knowledgeable buyer, too.

• **Third:** Interior, exterior and beyond. We suggest considering looking over these items in your home. A clean, staged, and decluttered home leads to a good first impression and adds value to your sale. Show the potential buyers how well you've maintained your home by addressing these items below.

- Deep clean top to bottom. (Windows, floors, bathrooms, kitchen, appliances, etc.) Consider hiring a cleaning professional.
- Replace lightbulbs.
- Organize closets and cabinets.
- Declutter, declutter, declutter. Anything you do not plan to take with you to your new home, consider donating or selling in advance.
- Paint with neutral colors.
- Depersonalize (remove personal affects, pictures, collections, etc.).
- Dust surfaces/blinds.
- Complete home projects and make necessary repairs.
- Eliminate odors.
- Landscape if possible.
- Clean gutters.
- Paint exterior/repair siding/paint front door.
- Stage. It doesn't have to be a pro job; simply rearranging furniture can make a big difference.
- Consider a pre-inspection to check over HVAC, plumbing, electrical, mold, foundation, roof, etc.

By being proactive and ensuring your home is ready to be listed, you will stand out and will maximize the return on your investment of time and money. ■

Information provided by Katie Fliehler, 515-664-0414, katie@katieflihler.com and Malinda Garner, 515-991-5092, malinda@malindagarner.com, Re/Max Precision, 8705 Chambery Blvd., Johnston.



Katie Fliehler



Malinda Garner

WHAT IS probate?

Probate is the process of court-supervised administration of an estate. If you have a will, upon your death your executor will present it to the court. It's a common misconception that merely possessing the will vests someone with the authority to act. In order for a will to be effective, it must be admitted to probate. If you die without a will, the court still has control over the assets of your estate.

Probate is necessary where there are assets which cannot be transferred. For example, real estate titled in the decedent's name cannot be sold without passing through probate. Investments with no beneficiary designation generally require probate to transfer them to heirs.

Banks and financial institutions may



require "Letters of Appointment" or "Letters Testamentary." This is an official document, issued by the clerk of court empowering the executor to act on behalf of the estate.

Court supervision of probate ensures that your executor or the court-appointed administrator handles your estate legally and according to your wishes. To ensure that the will or the rules of inheritance are followed, the personal representative must report the assets, debts, and disbursements of the estate to the court. The personal representative also files tax returns on behalf of the decedent and the estate.

Iowa law requires that notice of probate be published in a local newspaper. The notice must be published for two consecutive weeks. Then, the estate must remain open for four months before it can be closed. During this time, the personal representative will sell real estate, liquidate assets, pay creditors, and make disbursements to beneficiaries. Other factors

may require a longer probate period, but, generally, the probate of an estate lasts around six months.

Attorney's fees and court costs cannot be paid until the estate closes. In Iowa, attorney's fees are statutorily controlled and are approximately 2% of the gross value of the estate. The personal representative is also entitled to fees in the same amount. By comparison, other methods of asset disposal (like a revocable trust) have no fee caps.

Probating an estate is fairly straightforward. Court-supervised administration of an estate is neither lengthy nor overly expensive and has the benefit of ensuring that all the assets of the estate have been disposed of properly and legally. ■

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

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PREVENTING winter dangers

During the winter months, ice, snow and cold temperatures can make life challenging for everyone. Slippery sidewalks and cold weather can cause a wide range of injuries and illnesses — especially for seniors.



Here is some helpful advice for preventing common winter dangers that the elderly population faces.

Avoid slipping on ice. Icy, snowy roads and sidewalks make it easy to slip and fall.

“Unfortunately, falls are a common occurrence for senior citizens, especially during the winter months,” says Dr. Stanley Wang, a physician at Stanford Hospital in Palo Alto, California. Often these falls cause major injuries such as hip and wrist fractures, head trauma and major lacerations.

Make sure to wear shoes with good traction and non-skid soles, and stay inside until the

roads are clear. Replace a worn cane tip to make walking easier. Take off shoes as soon as you return indoors because often snow and ice attach to the soles and, once melted, can lead to slippery conditions inside.

Dress for warmth. Cold temperatures can lead to frostbite and hypothermia — a condition when the body temperature dips too low. According to the CDC, more than half of hypothermia-related deaths were of people older than 65.

So, don't let indoor temperatures go too low and dress in layers. Going outside? Wear warm socks, a heavy coat, a warm hat, gloves and a scarf. In very cold temperatures, cover all exposed skin. Use a scarf to cover your mouth and protect your lungs.

Your body temperature should never dip below 95 degrees — if it does, get medical assistance immediately.

Fight wintertime depression. Because it can be difficult and dangerous to get around, many seniors have less contact with others during cold months. This can breed feelings of

loneliness and isolation.

To help avoid these issues, family members can check in on seniors as often as possible; even a short, daily phone call can make a big difference. Seniors can also arrange a check-in system with neighbors and friends, when each person looks in on one or two others daily.

Eat a varied diet. Because people spend more time indoors and may eat a smaller variety of foods, nutritional deficits — especially vitamin D deficiency — can be a problem. Nicole Morrisey, a registered dietician in southwest Michigan, recommends consuming foods that are fortified with vitamin D, such as milk, grains and seafood options like tuna and salmon.

Wintertime certainly poses challenges for seniors, but with a bit of planning and awareness, you will stay healthy and experience the joys of springtime soon enough. ■

Information provided by Susan Babcock, director, Edencrest at Green Meadows, 6750 Corporate Drive, Johnston, 515-207-1984.

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-Bob H.



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CUL-DE-SAC offers community feel

Becketts appreciate tight-knit, active neighborhood .

The cul-de-sac on which Emily Beckett and her family live just off N.W. Beaver Drive is almost like its own little community.

“Our neighbors are wonderful,” she says. “Even with busy lives, we always find time to get together and keep in touch. Each house on the cul-de-sac is tasked with organizing a dinner, social event, etc. each month. It is a great way to make sure we keep in touch with everyone in the neighborhood.”

Beckett and her neighbors have gotten together for ice cream socials, a hog roast, pool parties, Easter egg hunts and a socially-distanced porch happy hour during the pandemic.

The Becketts chose to purchase their home specifically because it sat on a cul-de-sac — “a place where we could get to know our neighbors and the kids can play outside without much traffic” — as well as the fact that they can walk to Saylorville Lake from their house.

“A short hike through the woods, and we have lakefront beach access,” Beckett says.

The Becketts have lived in Johnston for nearly nine years and have come to appreciate numerous things about the community at large.

“We really love the ‘small-town, yet live-in-a-suburb’ feel,” Beckett explains. “The schools are great. We have amenities close by yet can enjoy the quiet nature surroundings near us.



Emily Beckett and her neighbors get together often for fun activities, including Halloween parties.

“We love the little bit quieter feel in Johnston,” she adds. “Everything we need is here without all the hustle-bustle. That, combined with growing bike trails, family activities and sports, and dependable and safe city services, make Johnston a great place to settle down.”

Before the pandemic, Beckett gave back to the community by volunteering with a local Girl Scout troop and taking part in the school district’s Meals from the Heartland events. Once things return to normal a bit more, she

hopes to again get involved with city activities.

Beckett also appreciates, when she and her family attend events in Johnston, such as pancake breakfasts or Sundaes in the Park, she often sees the mayor there.

“It makes it feel like we have a close-knit community,” Beckett says. “I also very much love the constant communication Johnston puts out — from weekly city emails to road updates on Facebook. I never feel out of the loop. Just a few small things that make Johnston great.” ■



The neighborhood kids get in on the fun, too, with activities like Easter egg hunts.

WHAT EXACTLY does a chamber of commerce do?

It doesn't matter what your industry is or what business you are in — support is key. Support from like-minded people can help you find success. There are many resources that we all tap into — like online groups or social media — but a largely untapped resource is on the community level. The chamber of commerce in your local community can be a huge untapped resource for you and your business.



Helping businesses thrive

Most every community has a chamber of commerce, or at least they should. The goal of any chamber is to help to further the interests of businesses in a local area. The activities can range from hosting events to lobbying local representatives to doing charitable works for the betterment of the community.

How can the chamber help you?

As a business owner, it is imperative that you network. The chamber of commerce gives you the opportunity to meet with other local business owners. Of course, the chamber also presents business owners in a positive light to the community.

- The chamber of commerce is essential to the growth — and, in some cases, the revitalization — of a local area. Through lobbying activities and grant preparation activities, the chamber of commerce can help to find some much-needed funding to improve a local area.
- Free marketing: As a member of the chamber of commerce, you will receive free promotion. Many people use their local chamber as an authority to find products and services. Of course, that free promotion spills over to your ability to market business to business because you will have access to the list of other business owner members.
- Exclusive advertising perks are also a benefit of the chamber of commerce. In many local publications, members of the Chamber of Commerce are listed. It also adds credibility to your business when you are a member.

The chamber of commerce should be viewed as your business partner. It is a valuable tool for any business owner, and it should be fully embraced.

We believe that a healthy business community results in a thriving community. It is our mission to be a catalyst for business growth and development. Learn more about becoming a member by visiting www.johnstonchamber.com or by calling 515-276-9064.

Welcome our new members

We would like to welcome our new chamber members: Children's Cancer Connection and All Star Concrete. ■

For more information about the Johnston Chamber, visit our website at www.johnstonchamber.com. Information provided by Allan Graham, WineStyles, 2022 Johnston Chamber President.



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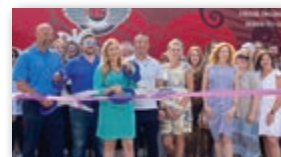
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OUT & ABOUT



Polk Davison, Teresa Rotschafer and Gaby Palacios. Palacios was the speaker at the Johnston Kiwanis Club Luncheon Jan. 4 at Greenbriar. She is with Project Iowa.



Ron Stoen, Gary Dicks and Jim Sanders at the Johnston Kiwanis Club Luncheon Jan. 4 at Greenbriar.



Heather Goodwin and Andrea Hodapp at the Johnston Chamber After Hours held at Block Advisors Jan. 20.



Jay Mathes and Sharm Sisler at the Johnston Chamber After Hours held at Block Advisors Jan. 20.



Dan Goodwin and JP Pearson at the Johnston Chamber After Hours held at Block Advisors Jan. 20.



Kyle Lindeman, Alex Young, Ben Hansen, Hannah Pietila and Matt Spielbauer at the Johnston vs. SEP girls/boys varsity basketball games at Johnston on Feb. 11.



Josh Tobey and Michael Koenigs at the Johnston vs. SEP girls/boys varsity basketball games at Johnston on Feb. 11.



Alisha Dolsen and Heather Goodwin at the Johnston Chamber After Hours held at Block Advisors Jan. 20.



Paris Nwagbo, Joy Nyamu, Sandy Nguyen and Brooke Thulstrup at the Johnston vs. SEP girls/boys varsity basketball games at Johnston on Feb. 11.



Lynnette Hillabolt, Stacie Randall, Jen Cristy and Kelly Sitzmann at the Johnston vs. SEP girls/boys varsity basketball games at Johnston on Feb. 11.

SENIOR Night

Wrestling Senior Night, Johnston vs. Waukee, at JHS was Jan. 13.



Coach Aaron Tecklenburg, Deeana May, Isabelle Hutchison and Matt Hutchison



Coach Aaron Tecklenburg, Angela Schneider, Gabi Cooper and Jason Cooper



Coach Aaron Tecklenburg, Lindsey Petrochelli, Kai Smith-Bui, Andy Bui and Kai's recruiter Petty Officer Moreno of the United States Navy



Coach Aaron Tecklenburg, Karen Scott, Will Scott and Chris Scott



Coach Aaron Tecklenburg, Laura Henderson, Donnie Henderson and Jamie Henderson



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Coach Aaron Tecklenburg, Steph DeWeese, Ryan King and Adam King



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Coach Aaron Tecklenburg, Darren Cornwell, Cooper Cornwell, Mason Cornwell and Heather Cornwell



Coach Aaron Tecklenburg, Carla Dolan, Ian Dolan and Jim Dolan



Coach Aaron Tecklenburg, Shannon Frisk, Evan Frisk and Tory Frisk

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