

JOHNSTON

MARCH 2022

# Living

MAGAZINE

## COLD turkey

Residents share  
their experiences of  
quitting smoking.

**Meet Melissa Grinstead**  
EDUCATION

**Prune, mozzarella and basil skewers**  
RECIPE

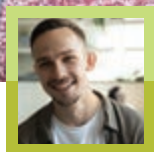
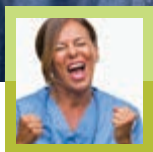
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WELCOME

## KICK the habit

My father told me that he smoked two packs of cigarettes a day since he was 14 years old. He said, in those days, if you were tall enough to put coins on the store counter, you could buy cigarettes. He met his demise at 73 years old from smoking-related cancer. He quit smoking about a year before he died. It was a good idea, but it was, unfortunately, too late for him. The good that did come from him quitting is that my mother and my brother both stopped smoking as well, and both are alive today.

I never understood the draw to smoking. The entire idea of rolling anything up, lighting it on fire, and breathing in the fumes still doesn't sound appealing to me. I don't doubt the addiction, though, as I have seen its impact.

My mother told me that she was determined to learn how to smoke when she was 18 years old. She would try over and over again, she said, one cigarette after another, vomiting in between each one. But she kept trying, and she eventually accomplished her goal and became a smoker — and then she spent the latter part of her life trying to accomplish the more difficult goal of giving it up.

As a result, I grew up in households with clouds of smoke. Second-hand and third-hand smoke were aplenty, and I despised everything about cigarettes. Meanwhile, I have a tremendous respect for people who have quit not only for themselves but for the loved ones around them. We share some of those successes in this month's cover, and I hope their stories provide motivation for you or someone you love to kick the habit as well.

Thanks for reading. ■



**SHANE GOODMAN**

Publisher

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*Shane*



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## FEATURE

Erika Johanik tried multiple times to quit smoking. She weaned herself off cigarettes as her most recent attempt and has so far been successful.

# COLD *turkey*

**Residents share  
their experiences of  
quitting smoking.**

**By Ashley Rullestad**

As most former smokers can attest, breaking the habit isn't easy. Nicotine is addictive, so going "cold turkey" is almost impossible. In fact, the Mayo Clinic reports only about 5% of people who try to quit without the use of a nicotine-replacement product will succeed. And there are many options out there: patches, gum, lozenges, sprays and inhalers. (It's best to consult with your doctor about the options.) But, even with such products, quitting isn't easy. The most effective programs combine using a quit-smoking product with guidance and support from trained professionals. The American Lung Association's "Freedom from Smoking" program includes professional guidance along with support groups to optimize the odds of success.





## FEATURE

Whether it's your first or 15th attempt at quitting, those who have withstood the trials and tribulations and succeeded say you can do it, too — and the many health, social and financial benefits make it worth the effort.

### New Year's resolution

Smoking usually isn't something people plan to do. Often, they give it a try because people around them smoke. Erika Johanik says her experience was no different. She had her first cigarette when she was 16 years old because a friend offered her one.

"I grew up around both my parents smoking, along with my grandmother smoking. On my 17th birthday, my father quit smoking for me. That didn't stop me from buying my first official pack of cigarettes on my 18th birthday."

Johanik tried quitting multiple times. She'd get about two weeks in and end up buying more.

"I stopped smoking when I got pregnant with all three of my children, but, after they were born, I started back up again because I was always around it."

Since she's had her children, she's been trying to kick the habit, but it's only been the last five years since she met her current husband that it has been somewhat easier to shove away the cravings. She has been able to hold out longer between relapses, but stressful events or stress at work "trigger old habits" and cause her to buy a pack.

Johanik has tried multiple methods to quit. She tried the patch, without much success. She tried hypnosis, which worked for about a month. She even tried doing substitutions, such as sugar free spearmint gum, and that worked for about four to six weeks.

She even tried switching to vaping, and that did not work at all.

"It made the craving much worse as the liquid is laced with nicotine. Lowest I was ever able to find on that was a 3% nicotine level, which was equivalent for me to smoking two cigarettes at one time."

As of right now, though, Johanik has been cigarette free since Jan. 1 after slowly weaning herself off starting in November.

Her advice is to not beat yourself up if

you aren't perfect the first time.

"Everyone has slip ups and off days. It's what makes us humans," she says.

"Having a good support system and those to help keep you accountable and understanding helps a bunch. But stay strong and work through it. For January, I did a check mark on my oldest son's violin white board, so every time he wrote down his practice time, he could see my checkmark. That helped me stay accountable and reminded me of my 'why.'"

### Quitting for the kids

Eric Stanton had his first cigarette when he was 12. He was rabbit hunting with his 19-year-old brother who offered him one. He accepted. The rest is history.

Stanton tried to quit several times but was unsuccessful. He found himself sneaking a smoke here or there. He tried nicotine gum and patches, but they didn't work for long. He says he was trying to quit for the wrong reasons.

Finally, he found a reason that provided sufficient motivation.

"I wanted to quit because I wanted to be here for my five children as long as I could be, as I lost my mom at 22. It was important to me to stop. I had to want to quit more than I wanted to smoke, and that's when it was successful."

Stanton admits quitting is hard, especially when you've been smoking your entire adult life. It's also hard to see others around you continue to light up, especially when they are people you used to smoke around. His advice is to try to substitute something else during those times you're most likely to want a cigarette. For him, that substitution was something we could all use more of anyway.

"I would share that, if you're trying to quit, it's unbelievably hard. The easiest way that I found was through another activity that's easily done really anywhere: exercise."

Of course, he also had some positive peer pressure from family and friends that helped, too.

"My family and kids hated me smoking because of the smell. And, the older they got, they realized it was bad for me. So, they were happy when I quit." ■



Eric Stanton was able to quit smoking when he found the right motivation: to be around as long as possible for his children.

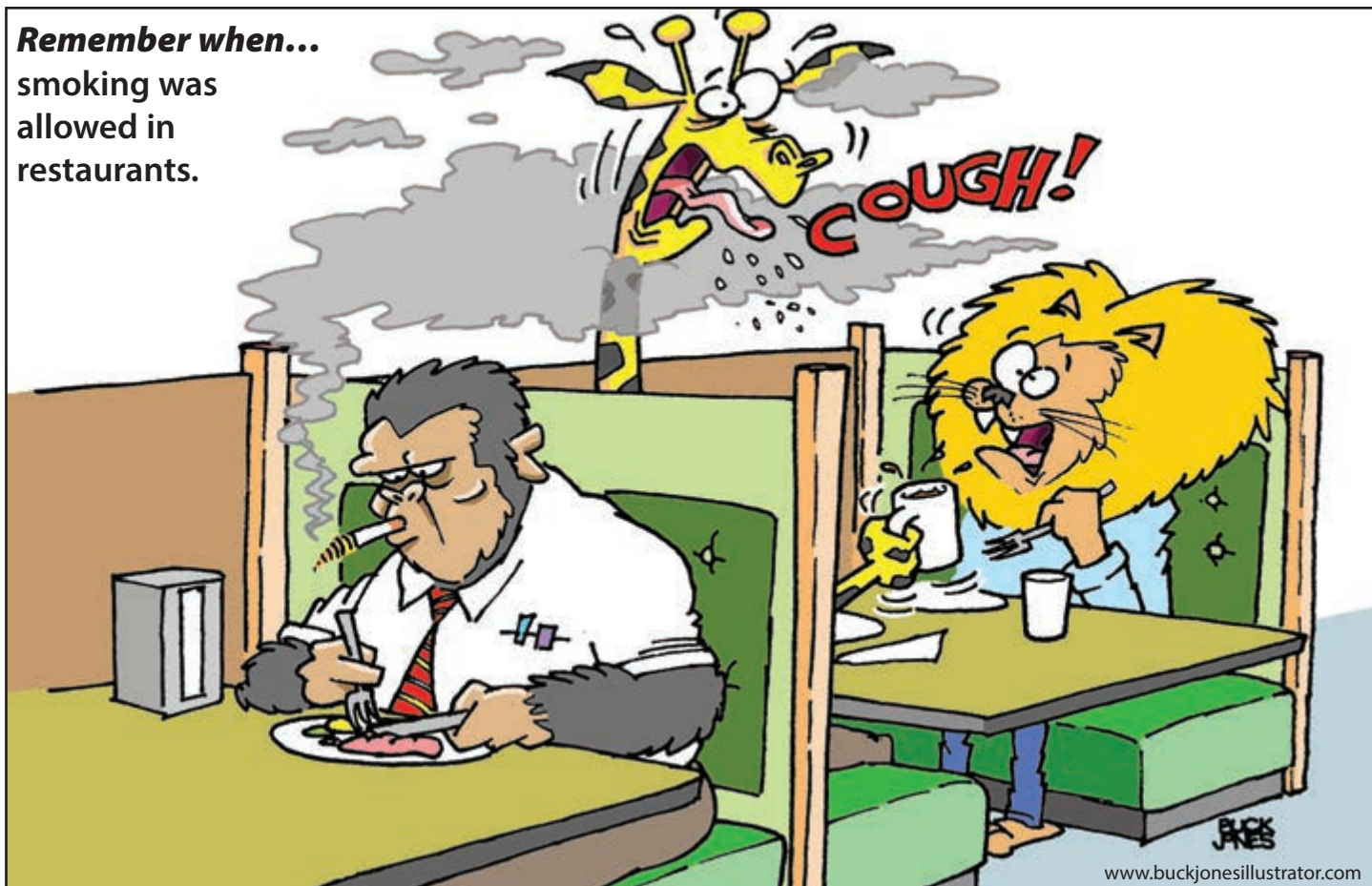
### Tips for quitting

*From quitassist.com*

- Get support and encouragement from others. Research shows those who do are more successful. Tell friends and family you are quitting and enlist their help. Get expert help from a doctor, health professional, or free counseling and advice from 1-800-QUIT-NOW.
- Learn new skills and behaviors. Plan ways to distract yourself when you feel an urge to smoke. Keep your hands busy. Look for activities that don't involve smoking.
- Get medication and use it correctly if needed. For some people, they can greatly help your chances of quitting for good. Talk to your doctor about this option.
- Be prepared for relapse or difficult situations. Find new ways to handle stress. If you do slip up, don't beat yourself up — learn from it. Monitor your triggers and avoid them. Take care of yourself to manage your weight and mood. Keep reminding yourself of all the benefits of quitting. ■



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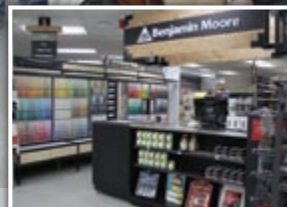
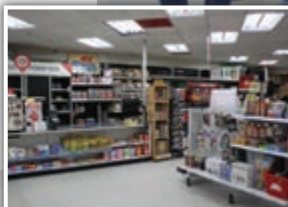
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## New Look, Same Place and Faces

I know what you're thinking, "Things were so easy to find. What did you do this for?" Well, we've been asked that a lot the last several months. Over the past 20 years Johnston Ace has seen a couple expansions, but never a full-store remodel from the product up to the top shelves... It was time for a new look.

Our new layout gives you, our valued customer, better product choices, and improved services. A few new highlights include; expanded housewares, larger Pet accessory selection along with our Birding department, and a more visible Backyard BBQ & Outdoor Power area.

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## RECIPE

# HAVE A healthier happy hour

*(Family Features)* Add a healthy twist to happy hour at home with a nutritious snack that goes perfectly with your favorite beverages. When gathering family and friends for a weekend toast or just winding down after work, these Prune, Mozzarella and Basil Skewers make for a nutritious and delicious addition to the party.

Rich and smooth with an ability to enhance various flavors, California Prunes are a versatile ingredient that allows you to expand your menu. In this recipe, prunes help form a palate-pleasing snack that delightfully combines sweet, salty and savory flavors.

In addition to their versatility, prunes provide important nutrients for your bones, including vitamin K and copper. When they are served with mozzarella – a good source of calcium – you get a perfect power pairing that supports your bone health and satisfies your snack cravings.

Visit [CaliforniaPrunes.org](http://CaliforniaPrunes.org) to find more recipe ideas from morning to night. ■

## Prune, Mozzarella and Basil Skewers

Prep time: 5 minutes  
Servings: 5

- 5 pieces prosciutto, halved lengthwise (optional)
- 10 California Prunes
- 10 basil leaves
- 10 cherry-size mozzarella balls

### Directions

- If using prosciutto, fold each half in half lengthwise so width of prune is wider than width of prosciutto. Starting at one end of prosciutto, wrap one prune; repeat with remaining prosciutto. Set aside.
- Wrap one basil leaf around each mozzarella ball then thread onto skewer. Thread one prune or prosciutto-wrapped prune onto each skewer.



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March 22<sup>nd</sup> • 6pm

or

March 24<sup>th</sup> • 6pm

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## CHOICES and decisions for more than 310,000

Every day, more than 10,000 seniors in America cross into the crazy world of Medicare qualification. That means more than 300,000 men and women will qualify for a version of health insurance that looks a little different, challenges their routines, and, for many, creates a borage of junk mail and spam calls. So many choices and decisions. Most of us will spend 40 years going to work, punching the clock, raising a family, and saving for a future time that will feel very different. Retirement. Scary or exciting? Here are a few tips:



• **Breathe.** This period is life changing, but so many worry about the same things. The greatest concern, as reported by an AARP survey, is possibly running out of money. The second concern people have is about taxes in retirement. These are not small concerns, but they can be understood and resolved.

• **Educate yourself.** Professionally, I need to take several hours of continuing education each year. Considering this, I have found that the greatest educators are those who work in the field of practice. (Think about it.) Your dentist looks at teeth all day; shouldn't his information and advice be valuable when understanding your oral health?

• **Sometimes you zig, sometimes you zag.** In retirement, most seek to resume a "salary-like income." When the stock market crashed in 2008, people drawing from their retirement savings didn't take a 38% pay cut for the 18 months it took to recover. Sometimes you need a plan A, B, and a plan C.

• **Reference your past to plan for the future.** I am reminded of the cartoon Charlie Brown and how Lucy would hold the football for Chuck to kick it. Charlie misses the ball every time as Lucy snags it away from him. Where is the lesson? Many of us get in a routine. This is not a bad thing. However, when this routine is made of stone and not mud, we lack the flexibility to be able to adapt. The good Lord gave us a brain — so we can learn from our mistakes, adjust, try again, and never give up. Don't lose sight of that gift.

As a financial advisor of nearly two decades, I have always found excitement in watching the "Ah-Ha!" moment that I see in my clients' eyes ... and now my children's. This keeps me alive. We continue this mission every day, meeting with our clients to discuss their "Retirement Puzzle." In the efforts of education, we invite any who would like to cross off a couple of these above bullet points to our next educational event. Don't hesitate to reach out to schedule your seat in March at DMACC. Blessings. ■

Information provided by Daniel Rundahl, Financial Advisor, Rundahl Financial Consultants, 6165 N.W. 86th St., Johnston, drundahl@rundahlfinancial.com, 515-727-1701, www.rundahlfinancialconsultants.com.



### How We Can Be Here For You

Between the pandemic and market volatility, you're sure to be facing a lot of stress. We're here for you - ready to listen, support and navigate this together. We have several ways to keep in touch. Give us a call.



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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](mailto:tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com)



### March Pizza Madness

March 16

Papa Murphy's, the 4641  
86th location only

Buy a pizza and Papa Murphy's will donate 10% of profits to the Johnston Partnership for a Healthy Community. This is a Lions Club project.



### 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.

### Free Pints for Pints blood drive

Saturday, April 2, from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.  
City Hall, 6221 Merle Hay Road

The Johnston Rotary Community Blood Drive is April 2. Schedule an appointment online at [www.lifeservebloodcenter.org](http://www.lifeservebloodcenter.org) or call 800-287-4903.

Hospital blood supplies have dwindled, so the Johnston Rotary Club and the Johnston Hy-Vee store have teamed up to provide "Pints for Pints." All who donate a pint of blood will receive a free pint of Hy-Vee Chinese food as a thank you.

Donating blood is safe, simple, and it saves lives. It takes just one hour to make a lifesaving blood donation, which will impact the lives of up to three different hospital patients.

LifeServe Blood Center is the sole provider of blood and blood products to more than 120 hospitals located across Iowa, Nebraska and South Dakota.

### Lunch & Learn: Native Landscaping and Volunteer Opportunities

Online

Wednesday, March 9, noon to 1 p.m.

This virtual Lunch & Learn hosted by Polk County Conservation, will be Wednesday, March 9, noon to 1 p.m. Rain gardens, pollinator gardens, bioswales and other native plantings in Polk County parks provide a wide variety of benefits for wildlife, water quality, education and even social connections. This event will dive into the world of native plants in our parks to form a better understanding of their importance for conservation and how you, your business or community group can make a positive impact in PCC gardens and in your own landscaping this growing season. Registration is required by noon on March 8 for this free event for all ages. Partners for the event are Iowa Stormwater Education Partnership (ISWEP) and The Rain Campaign. For more information, contact [ConservationVolunteers@polkcountyiowa.gov](mailto:ConservationVolunteers@polkcountyiowa.gov).

### Lenten Fish Fries

Various dates

St. Mary of Nazareth Parish Hall,  
4600 Meredith Drive, Des Moines

The Knights of Columbus invite all to their Lenten Fish Fries. Serving will be in person on March 4, March 11, March 25 and April 1 from 5-6:30 p.m. Carry out only will be on March 18 and April 8 from 5-6:30 p.m. Cost for adults is \$13. Cost for children younger than 12 is \$5. For more information, call 515-276-4042.



### Easter Egg Hunt

Sunday, April 10

Johnston Town Center

The Johnston Town Center will be hosting an Easter Egg Hunt on Sunday, April 10. The Easter Egg Hunt will begin at 1 p.m. sharp. It goes quickly, so be on time or you might miss out. Bring your own Easter basket for your little ones to put their eggs in. Age groups will be 0-2, 3-5 and 6-10. The start times will be staggered by a few minutes, with the 0-2 group going first. To learn more about upcoming events at the Johnston Town Center, visit [www.johnstontowncenter.com](http://www.johnstontowncenter.com).

### Fundraising for Dragon Scholarship Fund underway Until Saturday, March 6 Online

The Dragon Scholarship Fund Virtual Auction is open for viewing. Bidding continues until Saturday, March 6. Registration is free and 100% of the proceeds from the auction will be used to fund scholarships for Johnston graduating seniors.

Established in 1987, DSF is a 501(3)(c) organization and has provided almost \$2 million in scholarships to graduating seniors.

You can set up your account now by going online to <https://dragonsf2022.ggo.bid/bidding/package-browse> and clicking the "Get Started" button.



### 'Amongst the Stars'

April 2, 5-7 p.m.

Metro Ice Sport Facility,  
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The Iowa Figure Skating Academy presents its spring show, "Amongst the Stars." Enjoy the talents of local ice skaters.



## EVENTS IN THE AREA

Be sure to check for cancellations



### 'The Magic Flute'

March 5-6

Des Moines Civic Center, 221 Walnut St., Des Moines

Des Moines Metro Opera's 50th season begins with a family-friendly production of "The Magic Flute" by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart at the Des Moines Civic Center.

### DMACC West's ciLive!

March 9-10, virtual and open to the public

In its 13th year, this year's theme for DMACC West's ciLive! (Celebrate! Innovation) is "Go Boldly" and focuses on innovation, imagination and inspiration through storytelling. It features 12 well-known thought leaders, entertainers and entrepreneurs. The event is free. Speakers include Dr. Talithia Williams, host of "NOVA Wonders" on PBS, and actor John de Lancie, of "Star Trek, Breaking Bad." A concert by country musician and songwriter George Ducas concludes the series on March 10 at 1:30 p.m. For more information about ciWeek, visit: <https://dmacc.edu/ciweek/Pages/welcome.aspx>.

### Jurassic Quest

Friday and Saturday, March 11-12, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.;

Sunday, March 13, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Iowa Events Center, 730 Third St., Des Moines

Tickets are available online at <https://www.jurassicquest.com/events/des-moines-ia> and cost \$22 for kids and adults and \$19 for seniors. Ticket for unlimited rides for kids is \$36, which includes entry. General admission includes live shows, arts and crafts activities, dinosaur and marine exhibits. Tickets for individual and premium activities will be available on-site (from \$6). Off peak hours are weekdays (all day) and weekends after 3 p.m. Free entry for children younger than 2.



### St. Patrick's Day parade

Thursday, March 17, noon

Downtown Des Moines

The Friendly Sons of St. Patrick are staging their annual parade in downtown Des Moines, beginning at noon, starting at 15th Street and Grand Avenue, heading east to Eighth Street. New this year is a Block Party at 13th and Grand, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Your \$5 admission gets you access to watch the parade, food trucks, live music, a beer tent and more. More information is available at [www.friendlysonsiowa.com](http://www.friendlysonsiowa.com).



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## PREPARE your AC for spring

Spring is almost here, and warmer weather is on the way. But, before we can celebrate, follow our HVAC spring checklist below to ensure your system operates safely and efficiently all season long.

Throughout the fall and winter, leaves, sticks, dirt and other debris inevitably build up around your HVAC unit. Make sure to clean any build-up around your system, leaving 1-2 feet of clearance. Cleaning around your AC unit will maximize airflow and ensure that your system performs at its best.

While the spring weather has you in deep cleaning mode, don't forget about your air vents. Be sure that each vent is open so air can circulate evenly throughout your home. You should also make sure that furniture, rugs and curtains aren't blocking your vents. To clean your vents, remove the grills and soak them in warm water and soap. While the grills are off, vacuum any particles, dust or pet hair accumulated during the winter. To finish, dry off the grills, replace them, and — ta-da! Your vents are as good as new.

If you have a programmable thermostat, it's a great idea to set up a new schedule as the weather changes. Programmable thermostats provide optimal comfort and save energy and money, so, if you don't have one, don't delay installation any longer.

It's time to change your filters. It's recommended to change your filters every 30-90 days, depending on use or the kind of filter you have. Replacing your filters is the easiest way to prevent damaged equipment and maintain energy efficiency. Make a note to check, clean, or replace your filters at the beginning of each season.

Your AC has been sitting dormant for months; you need to make sure it's ready to take on the warmer weather ahead. If it's warm enough to test your system, it is always a good idea to make sure that it works before you really need it every day. You can test your AC system by turning it on and running it for a few minutes to make sure cool air circulates throughout your home.

If you notice anything unusual about your HVAC system or feel like your AC is not working as well as last year, contact a professional. Hopefully, this spring cleaning checklist prepares you for the warm weather ahead. ■

Information provided by Sam Yeager, Assistant Service Manager, 72 Degrees Comfort Company, 811 S.W. Ordinance Road, Ankeny, 515-200-2728.



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## HOME HEALTH

By Ward Phillips

# ADULT day services: caring for the caregiver

Serving those who care for their loved ones is every bit as important as serving the loved ones themselves. After all, studies show that individuals who devote most of their time to caring for a family member who needs round-the-clock support can experience detrimental, even debilitating, effects to their physical, emotional and mental health.



Higher levels of stress, anxiety, depression and other mental-health effects are common among family members who care for an older relative or friend. That's why programs like adult day centers are doubly beneficial, in that they offer respite to the caregiver while also providing an enriching and safe experience for the loved one.

Many participants in adult day centers have been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease or other dementias, making at-home caregiving doubly challenging for their loved ones. When you have a dementia diagnosis, you have all the challenges of a life-altering physical illness combined with worry over someone who might become disoriented, wander, or pose a safety risk to themselves; plus, you may be having to adjust to a partner or parent who behaves dramatically differently toward you because of their disease.

That kind of unrelenting stress can take a tremendous toll. Mental-health professionals compare it to when someone experiences a major life event like a death, a job loss, or bankruptcy. That's why care for the caregiver is so critical.

It's also not uncommon for caregivers to feel they can "do it all" and be reluctant to ask for help. I was talking with a woman whose husband has dementia to the point that he's disoriented much of the time, and yet she felt as though she should be able to handle the situation and care for him at home. I let her know that I truly understood what she was going through, and she was so surprised to know anyone would relate to her situation that she started to sob, and she kept telling me that, for the first time, she felt validated for the way that she was feeling. She — and all caregivers — absolutely need to be validated. What they do is incredibly challenging.

In an effort to ease some of the strain and assist caregivers with coping strategies, adult day centers also offer services such as support groups and other programming for caregivers and families. It can bring caregivers so much comfort to sit and talk with others who know how hopeless they can feel, as simply knowing you are not alone can be very powerful.

If you're a caregiver who could use some assistance — or know someone in need of help — an adult day center in your area could bring you and your family tremendous relief. Please don't be afraid to ask for help — you need and deserve it. ■

Ward Phillips is Senior Director of Sales for WesleyLife, which offers a broad network of health- and well-being-focused communities and services for older adults. Celebrating its 75th anniversary this year, WesleyLife offers award-winning adult day services in Des Moines and Newton. Call 515-271-6701 to learn more.



## ROTARY events upcoming

### Johnston Rotary Club offers free pints

Hospital blood supplies have dwindled, so the Johnston Rotary Club and the Johnston Hy-Vee store have teamed up to provide "Pints for Pints." All who donate a pint of blood at City Hall on April 2 will receive a free pint of Hy-Vee Chinese food as a thank you.

Donating blood is safe, simple, and it saves lives. It takes just one hour to make a lifesaving blood donation, which will impact the lives of up to three different hospital patients. "Give a Pint, Receive a Pint!"

Give your lifesaving gift at the following blood drive:

Johnston Rotary Community Blood Drive, Saturday, April 2, from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at City Hall, 6221 Merle Hay Road. Schedule a blood donation appointment online at [www.lifeservebloodcenter.org](http://www.lifeservebloodcenter.org) or call 800-287-4903.

LifeServe Blood Center is the sole provider of blood and blood products to more than 120 hospitals located across Iowa, Nebraska and South Dakota. LifeServe is committed to saving lives by providing premier service to volunteer blood donors and access to a safe, quality blood supply for hospitals and patients. Your donation with LifeServe will help save your neighbor, a friend, family member or a stranger on the street. You make a difference in your community.



### Johnston Rotary Charity Golf Tournament

Johnston Rotary is launching a new golf event to raise funds for our wonderful community groups: ChildServe, Ellipsis and Brenton Arboretum.

This event will be held Monday, June 13, at the historic Hyperion Golf Club in Johnston, designed by famed golf architect Tom Bendelow. Hyperion recently celebrated 100 years and has been upgraded with brand new green surfaces, tee areas and bunkers.

This event will be competitive with prizes for the flight winners. We welcome all golfers, but if you have people in your company who like competition, this is an event for them.

Sponsors will be recognized at the event with a variety of opportunities based on your sponsorship level, with banners, tee box signs, golfer gift bag items and recognition at the reception following the event.

We are also very pleased to share that we have an agreement with Tesla. There will be multiple Teslas at the event for your golfers to see and sit inside. Also, our major sponsors will have a time window prior to the event for exclusive test drives of the Teslas.

We aim to make this a signature event for the Johnston Rotary Club and begin a new annual charitable event that will serve these three vital entities into the future. We would love for you to be a foundation partner in this endeavor. Please find additional information at <https://www.jtowngolfchamp.com/>. ■

More information about the Johnston Rotary Club can be found at [www.johnstonrotary.com](http://www.johnstonrotary.com) or contact Mike Schoville, [schovillemike@gmail.com](mailto:schovillemike@gmail.com).

## Johnston Rotary Club UPCOMING SPEAKERS

**March 8 - Scott Siepker**

Iowa Nice Guy

**March 15 - Teresa Krueger**

Director Wesley Life

**March 22 - Sen. Brad Zaun**

Senator Zaun updates us on the Iowa Legislative Session

**March 1 - Tyler Tompkins**

Property as Investment Tool

**April 5 - Assoc. Professor Peter Evans**

Iowa State 3D Home Project

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## INSURANCE

By Janis Van Ahn

## GET the right travel insurance

Getting out of Iowa to escape the frigid temps? What kind of travel insurance should you have? Check out the information below and give your agent a call to schedule an appointment.

Traveling during a pandemic makes obtaining travel insurance coverage more important than ever. It can be overwhelming and even frustrating trying to find the right coverage. Travel insurance is coverage for non-refundable trip expenses due to cancellation, delay and interruption; baggage delay or loss; and medical expenses and medical evacuation.

Insurance language and the endless number of articles on the Internet can be confusing and misleading. Don't be afraid to reach out to a qualified, licensed agent who can provide guidance and answer all your questions. This will reduce the possibility of surprises and lessen potential financial and health risks.

A good place to start is by finding out what coverage you may already have through your current credit card rewards program or through the travel agency you used to book the trip. If you find those to be inadequate, it's time to start shopping around.

What should you look for in a policy? With COVID top of mind these days, it's important to understand what you might need. Travel insurance policies in large part offer good medical coverage; however, not all cover COVID-19 related illness. Typically, it is recommended to secure a minimum of 100k in emergency medical and medical evacuation coverage for anything associated with COVID-19 medical care and evacuation expenses.

Another option to consider is an annual travel policy. If you are taking several shorter trips throughout the year, in or out of the U.S., this might work for you. Keep in mind that, as you insure each individual trip, it can cost more but can also offer you more extensive coverage.

Keep in mind that many travel plans limit the coverage to ten days after your originally scheduled return date. Since many areas now require proof of a negative COVID test within three days of travel, if you should test positive and must quarantine abroad for longer than that, you may find the plan's coverage will terminate before you can get home.

Prior to 2020, a traveler's main concern centered around trip cancellations, protection for lost/missing baggage, and rental car coverage. In today's world, it is important to note that some insurance companies have tightened their policy language to include or exclude pandemics, specifically COVID-19.

Lastly, always do your research. How long does the travel insurance cover you before and after you travel? What are the requirements at your destination? Does the country you are traveling to require a certain amount of coverage? What are the COVID guidelines? Remember to always bring your documentation with you and carry it with your passport.

Preparation is key to a safe and successful journey. ■

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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PaulaSDierenfeld@gmail.com

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## VOLUNTEER FOR KITES ON THE GREEN ON MAY 7

The ninth annual Kites on the Green event will be held Saturday, May 7, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Johnston Commons, the green space near the Johnston Public Library. This annual event allows families to come together while socially distanced to fly kites and enjoy the beautiful weather.

Volunteers are needed for multiple shifts on May 7. Volunteers may be asked to help kids/families build kites, assist with special activities, or help with cleanup. Sign up to volunteer by visiting [cityofjohnston.com/KOTGVolunteer](http://cityofjohnston.com/KOTGVolunteer).



## CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS WILL SOON BEGIN

As construction season begins, please ensure you stay updated on the projects that may affect your commute. The projects are available by visiting [cityofjohnston.com/projects](http://cityofjohnston.com/projects).

A few major road projects include the reconstruction of the Merle Hay Road and Johnston Drive intersection and a loop road to the west, which will serve Ignit.

This summer, residents in Green Meadows can expect to see the pedestrian sidewalk ramps being updated.



## JOHNSTON TOWN CENTER ICE RINK IS OPEN THROUGH MARCH 20

The Johnston Town Center ice rink will be open through Sunday, March 20. On Monday, March 21, the ice rink will close down to allow time to disassemble the ice rink and get ready for splash pad season. The splash pad is expected to be open on Memorial Day weekend.

## DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS MARCH 13

Daylight saving time begins again on Sunday, March 13, 2022. Spring forward an hour at 2 a.m. local time.

This is also a good reminder to check your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors to ensure they are working properly. For safety tips, visit [cityofjohnston.com/fire](http://cityofjohnston.com/fire).



## STATEWIDE TORNADO DRILL IS ON MARCH 23

We encourage you to participate in the Iowa Statewide Tornado Drill on Wednesday, March 23, at 10 a.m. The Johnston Outdoor Warning Sirens will sound during this drill.

For more information about the city, please visit [www.cityofjohnston.com](http://www.cityofjohnston.com)





## CITY NEWSLETTER

### MARCH 2022

## A RESIDENTIAL TREE SALE IS HAPPENING IN APRIL

The City of Johnston is selling trees to residents at the reduced price of \$30 per tree. A pre-sale of trees begins on Tuesday, April 12, at 8 a.m. Trees can be purchased online. Trees will be available for pickup at Crown Point Community Center, located at 6300 Pioneer Parkway, on Saturday, May 7, from 8 to 10 a.m. Five trees for sale include Kentucky Coffee, Bur Oak, Prairie Fire Crabapple, White Pine and Centennial Blush Magnolia.

Property owners are allowed to purchase one tree and are encouraged to purchase their tree during the sale, as the supply is limited. Residents who have pre-ordered a tree will be required to show their receipt as proof of payment. Any trees not picked up during the allotted time will be considered a donation to the City's tree-planting program.

This year's sale is made possible thanks to the Lions Club and Johnston Farmers Market.



Bur Oak



Prairie Fire Crabapple



Kentucky Coffee



Centennial Blush  
Magnolia



White Pine

## JOHNSTON COMMONS PARK IS ADDING A PLAYGROUND AND SHELTER

In our 2020 community survey, 62.8 percent of respondents said they were satisfied with the quality of city parks. Elected officials are always looking for ways to increase this percentage to ensure city parks are inclusive for everyone in our community.

This month, Johnston Commons Park will begin to look a little different with new amenities. The area will be wheelchair accessible with a playground, shelter and restroom. Residents can expect to see work begin in mid-March on the rubber playground tiles. These tiles act as an impact-absorbing cushion for sudden slips and falls. They provide a soft play surface and are designed to prevent ground erosion under swings. Once the mats are installed, the playground structure will begin taking shape. Additional information can be found by visiting [cityofjohnston.com/projects](https://cityofjohnston.com/projects).

## GATEWAY DISTRICT TO PROVIDE ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Over the past decade, the Johnston City Council has carefully crafted and invested in a vision for revitalizing the 123-acre area just north of I-80/35 along Merle Hay Road, known as Johnston's Gateway District.


On February 22nd, the Johnston City Council approved the site plan for the expansive Ignit Sports and Fitness complex on the west side of Merle Hay Road and the development agreement for Bombers Golf and Hotel on the east side of Merle Hay Road.

City leaders are excited about the opportunities to revitalize the magical mile into a place everyone can enjoy. Learn more by visiting [cityofjohnston.com](https://cityofjohnston.com).


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## ROTARY SPEAKERS

### RANKIN talks about conservation projects at Rotary Club

Kami Rankin, deputy director of Polk County Conservation, spoke to the Johnston Rotary Club Feb. 15 about many of the Polk County Conservation projects that are "Leading You Outdoors." Rankin has been with Polk County Conservation for 23 years. She spoke about Iowa Confluence Water Trails with 150 miles of creeks and rivers being the largest conservation project in the state. Once completed, it is projected to generate \$100 million in revenues in the first five years.



Kami Rankin, deputy director of Polk County Conservation, and Rotary Club President Elect Mike Wunn.

She provided updates on the biking trails, including the Neal Smith addition; the Polk City to High Trestle Trail; the Grimes, Granger, and Johnston options to Jester Park, and others in the area. She also reviewed the Chichaqua Bottoms Master Plan, which include more than 9,000 acres and prairie and wetlands; the Sleepy Hollow Event Center plans; the Johnston Trestle Trail rebuild over Beaver Creek (expected to be completed this fall); progress at Easter Lake Park; and the Copper Creek Mountain Bike Trails. ■

### GROVE speaks about managing workplace stress

The Johnston Rotary Club speaker on Feb. 8 was David Grove, PhD, owner and manager of Compass Clinical Associates of Urbandale. The firm employs approximately 50 people. Management recognized early on the signs of workforce pressures caused by the threat from COVID-19 both at work as well as at employees' homes. By recognizing common warning signs of stress, management was able to identify changes in mental health in the



David Grove, PhD, owner and manager of Compass Clinical Associates of Urbandale, spoke to the Johnston Rotary Club about workplace stress.

workplace due to the pandemic that started in 2019. Symptoms of anxiety and depression were recognized and measured. One-on-one employee communication allowed the firm to make managing stress a priority. They made resilience their priority and defined "being resilient" as the process of being able to adapt well and bounce back quickly in times of stress. More information can be found at: <https://www.compassclinicalassociates.com/>. ■



## MEET Melissa Grinstead

Helping teachers help English language learners



Melissa Grinstead enjoys working with the school district's English language learners and learning about their languages and cultures.

A graduate of Johnston High School, Melissa Grinstead received an undergraduate degree in Elementary Education and a minor in Spanish from the University of Iowa. As part of her Spanish education, she studied abroad in Costa Rica. That experience led her to want to teach second language learners.

Today, Grinstead is a K-12 ELL instructional coach for the Johnston Community School District. She says she chose to return to her alma mater as a teacher because she had such a wonderful experience as a learner in the district, and she wanted to do her part to provide that for future students.

"Johnston is a great district to work in. I have been lucky to work with amazing colleagues and students throughout my 17 years in the district. I love the diverse groups of learners that I get to work with from all over the world," Grinstead says.

One of the unique aspects of being an ELL instructor is that there really is no "typical day," she says. As part of her role, she gets to help welcome new students from all around the world throughout the school year. She also gets to work to support them as they learn English and content simultaneously.

In addition, she says the primary role of being an ELL instructional coach is not only supporting students with language acquisition but also partnering with core content teachers to provide support in helping students access content. With English learners in the district speaking around 70 different languages, she gets to learn new words and phrases from her students every day — as well as learn about many different cultures from all around the world.

"My job is always fun and interesting as I get the opportunity to visit each of our eight buildings to support English learners and their teachers. I love working together with colleagues to explore new and different ways that we can make content accessible to our students who are English learners," Grinstead says.

When not teaching, Grinstead likes to read and spend time with her family. She also has a passion for animal rescue. ■



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# STOCK market volatility

Choose opportunity over fear

We've already experienced some big stock market swings this year. In early January, the S&P hit a record high. By the end of the month, there was a 10% drop from recent highs and then a sharp turn back up again.

The same month, the Dow Jones was down more than 1,000 points in one day. CNN's "Fear and Greed Index" fell solidly into "fear mode." Many predict the volatility will remain, pointing to inflation, the pandemic, interest rates, and geopolitical concerns as part of the cause.

If retirement is 20 or 30 years away, this volatility is just a blip in your retirement savings journey. It can be a good thing if you regularly contribute to your retirement accounts



and enjoy buying in at the low points of those market swings. For those of you who are 5 to 10 years away from retirement, this could make you sweat if you don't have market volatility built into your retirement plan.

Since the fourth quarter of 2021, we've been talking with the individuals and families that we work with about the possibility of market volatility. I view stock market volatility as an opportunity more than anything. A customized retirement plan should have some special "plays" (to steal a sports reference) that you can run when market volatility hits. One example is dollar-cost averaging. This is taking money from safer investments in your portfolio and buying into the market at a lower rate. Another "play" could be the Roth conversion. This involves transferring funds from a traditional IRA or 401(k) into a Roth account. You will pay income tax on the amount rolled over in the year you make the conversion, but you

never pay taxes on the money again, allowing you to ride the market volatility back up and do so in a tax-free account.

You want a retirement plan constructed in a way that you don't have to worry about the market or the headlines. A customized retirement plan will help you avoid making emotional decisions with your retirement savings. The plan will help you understand how much risk you are taking with your money and how your portfolio will be impacted when the market swings. Then you can stay out of "fear mode" and focus more on getting to retirement or enjoying retirement. That's a lot more fun than staying glued to the TV or news websites when market volatility hits. ■

Information provided by Loren Merkle, CFP®, Merkle Retirement Planning, 1860 S.E. Princeton Drive, Grimes, IA 50111, 515-278-1006.

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## WHAT YOU NEED to know about colorectal cancer

Did you know colon cancer is the third most diagnosed cancer in men and women according to the American Cancer Society? Colorectal cancer is one of the most preventable forms of cancer, is easily treatable and, when found early, the survival rate is high.



### Colon screening

Early detection through screening is crucial. Colorectal cancer is found in the large intestine, made up of the colon and rectum. Most colorectal cancers start as growth polyps on the inner lining of the large intestine. Screening helps find precancerous polyps that can be removed before they turn cancerous.

A colonoscopy is the best screening exam

available to detect colorectal cancer. During the screening, a doctor examines the lining of your entire colon to check for polyps or tumors, and, if polyps are found, they can be removed.

Dr. Shankar Raman, director of MercyOne's nationally accredited rectal cancer program, reminds, "Colon cancer is preventable by screening. While there are numerous screening options, the best one is that which gets done. Colonoscopy picks up even the tiniest of lesions and can remove polyps which could grow into cancer. Remember, screening starts at age 45."

If you're 45 and older, maintaining a regular colon screening every ten years is critical. Colon cancer deaths among those 55 and younger are increasing according to the American Cancer Society.

### Symptoms

Colorectal cancer develops with few, if any,

symptoms. That's why colon screening is important and should not be pushed off. Always talk with your primary physician if you notice any concerning changes with your body.

Symptoms include:

- Change in bowel consistency
- Constipation and/or diarrhea
- Fatigue
- Nausea
- Persistent abdominal/ pelvic discomfort
- Quick and unexplained weight loss
- Rectal bleeding/blood in stool

Don't delay care. Make an appointment with your primary care provider if you have any symptoms that worry you. ■

Information provided by Shankar Raman, MD, colorectal surgeon, MercyOne Richard Deming Cancer Center, 411 Laurel St., Suite C100, Des Moines, 515-643-8206, [MercyOne.org/RDCC](http://MercyOne.org/RDCC)

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## HEALTH

By Paul Guerdet

### THINKING about yourself

At a young age, we are taught that it's good to think about the needs of others. A lot of us are taught that we're "good people" if we think about others, and, as a therapist, I agree. The problem, however, is that we sometimes trick ourselves into thinking, if it's good to think about the needs of others, then it's bad or selfish to think about our own personal wants and needs.

When we choose to think about ourselves, it means we are making a conscious choice to see we are worthy of the same love, patience, kindness, and understanding we so freely give away. It doesn't mean that we are ignorant or callous to the needs of others; it means we recognize we have the same needs as our friends and family.

Self-care is not selfish. Going for a walk in the sun, enjoying ten minutes playing with a pet, or just choosing to wait with the laundry until tomorrow does not make a person selfish. It means we're realizing what we need and we're making a choice to do something kind for ourselves.

You are allowed to be kind to yourself, and you are allowed to give yourself what you need. After all, even a Ferrari occasionally needs a tune up. ■



Information provided by Paul Guerdet, LISW, SS Therapy and Consulting, Ltd, 4725 Merle Hay Road, Suite 205, Des Moines, IA 50322 and 2675 N. Ankeny Blvd., Suite 105, Ankeny, IA 50023, 515-528-8135, [www.sstherapyandconsulting.com](http://www.sstherapyandconsulting.com).

## HEALTH

By Dr. Amy Petersen

### CAR SEAT SAFETY: best practice recommendations

Car crashes are the leading cause of death for children 4 years and older. We all want to protect our children when riding in the car, but the recommendations by the AAP for car seats can be confusing.

All children should ride in a rear-facing car seat as long as possible until they reach the height or weight limit allowed by the car seat manufacturer. Most convertible car seats allow rear facing until 40 pounds. This provides optimal head and spine support. Once rear facing limits are outgrown, children should use a forward-facing car seat with five-point harness as long as possible. Most models allow until 65 pounds. If forward facing limits are outgrown, booster seats should be used to allow proper fitting of the lap and shoulder portion of the seat belt. Most children taller than 4 feet 9 inches will fit properly in a seat belt without a booster as long as the lap belt crosses the hips and pelvis and shoulder belt crosses the middle of the chest and shoulder. All children younger than 13 years old should ride in the back seat for optimal protection. Specific questions should always be directed to your pediatrician. ■



Information provided by Dr. Amy Petersen, Cornerstone Pediatrics & Family Allergy, 6800 Lake Drive, Suite 260, West Des Moines, [www.cornerstonepfa.com](http://www.cornerstonepfa.com).

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# HEALTHY food for a healthy immune system

A healthy immune system starts with healthy food. Research has found key nutrients that support the immune system, so you can play an active role in fighting and preventing illness and disease. Along with an overall balanced diet, these specific nutrients — and foods — can help boost your immune system.



• **Vitamin C:** Most people reach for vitamin C when they feel a cold coming on. Why? Vitamin C increases white blood cell production to help fight infection. You can find vitamin C in most citrus fruits such as grapefruits, oranges, lemons, limes, etc., as well as red peppers, broccoli, strawberries, kale and kiwi

• **Vitamin D:** Vitamin D supports overall immune function. You can find vitamin D in salmon, canned tuna (containing bones), egg yolks, mushrooms, and foods or beverages fortified with vitamin D, like milk, orange juice and cereals. In general, it's best to get most of your vitamins from food, but this vitamin may be the exception to that rule. Talk with your doctor to find out if you may benefit from a supplement.

• **Vitamin A:** Vitamin A is an infection fighter. It helps your body respond to toxins and viruses. You can get vitamin A in animal foods such as fish, meat and dairy or from plants in the form of carotenoids like beta carotene. Beta Carotene converts to vitamin A and can be found in colorful fruits and veggies such as carrots, spinach, kale, apricots, sweet potatoes, squash and cantaloupe.

• **Vitamin B6:** This vitamin plays an important role in red blood cell formation. Vitamin B6 is found in poultry, salmon, tuna, chickpeas, bananas, and fortified cereal. So, there really is something to chicken soup when you're sick. About 3 ounces of light turkey or chicken meat contain nearly 1/3 of your daily recommended amount of B-6.

• **Probiotics:** Probiotics promote a healthy digestive system to process other vitamins and minerals. Fermented foods are rich in probiotics. Think yogurt, kombucha, sauerkraut, pickles and kimchi. When choosing the best yogurt, look for the phrase "live and active cultures" printed on the label.

• **Zinc:** Zinc aids in the production of immune cells, known as T-cells, and white blood cells. You can find zinc in foods such as shellfish, poultry, red meat, beans and fortified cereals.

Variety is the key to proper nutrition. Eating just one of these foods won't be enough to help fight off the flu or other infections. During the various times of year when some of these items aren't "in season," keep in mind that buying canned or frozen is a good option and can be quite convenient. These foods can still boost your immune system. Manufacturers freeze or can fruits and veggies at peak ripeness, which means they'll pack a similar nutritional value as their fresh counterparts. ■

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



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## NEWS BRIEF

# SPiRiT of Chandy Scholarship offered

For the ninth year, Bank Iowa is offering graduating high school seniors in the Des Moines area an opportunity to apply for the Spirit of Chandy Scholarship. Bank Iowa annually awards up to 20 \$500 scholarships to commendable high school students across the state.

The scholarship is a tribute to Bank Iowa co-founder Harry Barr's daughter, Chandy Barr Clanton, who passed away in 2009 at the age of 36 while piloting her aerobatic plane during a training flight. Clanton was a successful businesswoman, competitive athlete, talented pilot and a beloved mother of two sons.

"Chandy's zest for life and her drive to be the very best is a great example for students, especially to high school seniors looking to take the next step in their education," said Bank Iowa President and CEO Jim Plagge. "Bank Iowa is honored to provide Iowa students with an opportunity to get to learn about Chandy through her work and passions, as well as support to students across the state."

The application deadline is March 25, and recipients will be announced in May. To apply for the scholarship, visit <https://www.bankiowa.bank/about-us/spirit-of-chandy-scholarship>. ■

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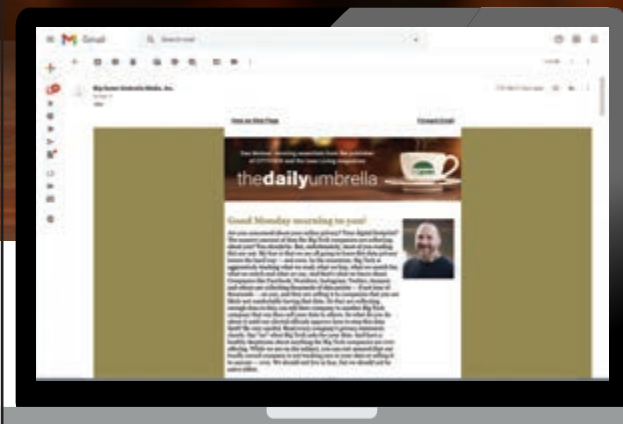
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## BEFORE YOU GO

By Jan Shawver

# PEOPLE to notify when someone dies

When a death occurs, there is a myriad of people who should be notified. Most people think first of notifying family and close friends — as well you should. But others who should be notified immediately include doctor(s), insurance agents (life, health, etc.); attorneys, financial advisors, clergy or other religious advisors; employers of family members who will be missing work, etc.

You can make this task easier by making a list of people who should be notified. Include names, phone numbers and relationship to the deceased. For example:

|                  |              |                  |
|------------------|--------------|------------------|
| Dr. Joe Smith    | 555-555-5555 | family physician |
| Rev. Craig Jones | 555-123-4567 | pastor           |
| Sue Daniels      | 555-321-6549 | insurance agent  |

When a death occurs, you may pull out the list and delegate someone to make some of the calls for you. You, as the spouse, POA or close family member, may have to make calls to insurance companies or other businesses which have security policies in place.

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. Mallori Phillips

# WANT a break from your reading glasses?

"Hey! Give my readers back!" I hear these words exchanged by my parents all too often. Neither one of them experienced vision issues until approximately 50 years old when reading up close became difficult. You might be familiar with this routine... your near vision isn't as clear as it once was, so you stretch your arm out to regain focus. Eventually, your arms run out of length, and you apprehensively turn to the next solution: buying cheater readers. Dun, dun, dunnnn! Even though you notice a huge improvement with readers, you tend to easily lose them and end up buying over-the-counter readers in bulk.

When I offered to teach my parents how to use contact lenses, we quickly learned that they couldn't tolerate having something in their eyes. For many patients, that's the reason the newest eye drop on the market, Vuity, was so highly anticipated. Vuity works by constricting the pupil, which temporarily improves your vision up close. If you're tired of searching in couch cushions and in unknown crevices of your vehicles to find lost readers, visit with your local optometrist to determine if Vuity might be a good solution for you. ■

Information provided by Dr. Mallori Phillips, Total Family Eye Care, 515-986-1234, [www.totalfamilyeye.com](http://www.totalfamilyeye.com).



# TRAVEL for caregivers and seniors

March is upon us, and spring is coming. During the month of March, many individuals travel for spring break. There are some who can take their elderly loved ones with them; however, there are some who are unable to travel with them possibly due to health reasons. In this article, it will be explained the benefits of traveling for seniors and the alternatives for your loved ones if they cannot come along.



Here are the benefits of traveling for caregivers and seniors:

## 1. Traveling can prolong one's life.

Exploring new environments and meeting new people can help individuals stay both physically active and socially engaged, which has been proven to prolong one's life.

**2. Ensures peace of mind.** Everyone has or will experience stress in their lives; traveling

forces us to disconnect from the normal routine, helping us appreciate the people we have around us. Traveling can offer individuals a time to relax and reset their minds.

**3. Creates memories with family for a lifetime.** When you travel with your family members, you build stronger bonds with each other while making memories. While traveling, you can save these memories by taking photos, videos or writing in journals.

**4. Boosts happiness and satisfaction.** No matter one's age, traveling is an opportunity to step away from your usual daily tasks and enjoy the time with your loved ones. Seeing new places and meeting new people can help rewire one's brain, while boosting your mood and self-confidence.

Taking care of an elderly loved one can be draining, so going away can seem impossible. There are so many details and worries to think about while planning a trip. So, here are some ideas to consider when you are making your travel plans:

**1. Respite care.** Respite care is a program that offers short-term relief for primary caregivers. Depending on the location, it can be arranged for an afternoon or several days or even weeks. This type of care can be provided at one's home, in an assisted living community or at an adult day center.

**2. In-home care options.** You could ask a relative or sibling to stay with your loved one. This option is very popular because the individual can stay at home in familiar surroundings with someone they know and trust. You could hire a licensed home care aide to come in. Home care options can vary depending on the company, time spent in the home, and the care needed.

Traveling is good for your health, not only for the caregiver, but the elderly loved one, too. So, plan a trip and pack your bags. ■

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

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# WHAT IS an executor of an estate?

The executor is the person named in a Last Will and Testament who bears the responsibility of finalizing a deceased person's estate. If you have been nominated as an executor, there are certain critical things you need to do.



## Know your role

The executor's job is to carry out the decedent's wishes outlined in the will. There is a reason the will writer named you. Your job is to ensure the estate is distributed correctly and that the decedent's affairs are wrapped up. You want to do it efficiently and correctly, but you also want to honor the decedent's wishes.

## Get ready to rumble

You will need to communicate with many people: heirs, beneficiaries, family members who may think they are entitled to money, creditors and more. Brace yourself for potential conflict. You have to manage the emotions and expectations of heirs. Some may resent your authority. Some may question why you were named as executor. Some may just be desperate for money and not understand that the process takes time.

## Get organized

You should take immediate steps to safeguard property. Secure the residence and take valuables to a safe place. Get all of the information you can on assets: bank records, investment information, life insurance policies, etc. Because being an executor is such an involved job, you should keep records of all of your work. Make a spreadsheet of assets and liabilities, keep meticulous records, and make a checklist of action items.

## File the paperwork

Merely being named as the executor in a last will and testament isn't enough. You have to file the will with the probate court and obtain a court order and Letters of Appointment (Letters Testamentary) to be vested with the authority to act on behalf of the estate. Make sure you go through the proper legal channels to guarantee you have the power to carry out your role.

## Hire an attorney

The process of probate is not one that can be navigated alone. You need to have legal representation and advice to ensure that you follow the law. There are statutes regarding notification of heirs, timelines for disposing of property, and tax matters to handle. You don't have to do this job alone. Partner with an experienced probate attorney to help you. ■

Information provided by Ross Barnett, attorney for Abendroth Russell Barnett Law Firm, 2560 73rd St., Urbandale, 515-278-0623, [www.ARPCLaw.com](http://www.ARPCLaw.com).

## WHERE TO BEGIN?

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## REAL ESTATE

By Eric Quiner

## 2021 STATE of the market update

**Nationwide:** We all know the real estate residential housing market has been transformed ever since COVID-19 swept across the globe. Residential housing appreciation is at an all-time high, and active inventory levels are at all-time lows. According to the National Association of Realtors, the average home price pre-COVID was around \$275,000, and, today, the average is just over \$350,000 nationwide. That is a large jump in just two years. Supply chain issues for new construction, low-rate mortgages, combined with seller speculation both from the resale and new construction sectors, have constrained available inventory for buyers ever since.

**Locally:** Pre-COVID inventory levels for the spring market over the last decade have hovered in the 3,000s. That means approximately 3,000 total available homes are available from \$0-\$1 million-plus in locations from as far as Huxley, Indianola, Van Meter and Mitchellville. Single-family, multi-family, and new/resale markets all added up to around 3,000 available homes. This level of inventory provided steady appreciation and allowed most buyers to find what they were looking for.

Total homes sold in 2021 for the metro was 17,923, DMAAR MLS Via Les Sulgrove Simply Des Moines. This is an all-time high for the metro. A common misconception is that because “active” inventory is so low, that fewer sales occur. Less active inventory shortened days on the market, allowing for more transactions to come active and get absorbed by the market.

So what does that mean for the future of the market in 2022?

**Today:** Active inventory today in the metro is around 1,650 total homes. That's not a lot. This low supply should provide another fast-paced spring.

**Rates:** For the first time in a while, we will see rates increase. This may not affect how many sales occur, but it will affect how much buyers can buy. The average buyer's spending power will go down as rates rise.

What does this all mean? It is predicted that nationwide and locally, we will likely see the market surge in the spring and our first return to “normalcy” will start to occur this fall. A crash of some sort does not seem likely, but, to see our houses appreciate at almost 10% on an annualized basis may also fade for now as the cycle of the market normalizes. We all know that what goes up must come down. That is not what is in question as we speculate about the future of real estate. The rate at which the market comes down is the real question. I believe that the change we are all wondering about in the market will be gradual — not a crash, but a gentle roll into a new post-COVID market that still has a healthy level of supply and more conservative appreciation year over year.

For now, there are still plenty of reasons why selling will make sense for you and the rest of the market. Batten down the hatches as the spring market comes again. It will be hot, hot, hot. ■

Information provided by Eric Quiner, Realtor, RE/Max Precision, Johnston Office, 515-710-5468, [www.ericquiner.com](http://www.ericquiner.com).





# SETTLING down in Johnston

The Blackorby family, which has relocated several times, finds new residence in Johnston.

After moving around the United States and living internationally during her husband, Bill's, 17-year career with General Electric, Jeannine Blackorby looked forward to settling down and raising their son, Braden, without the constant pressure to relocate.

"While our relocation experiences were absolutely amazing, and we met and made friends with wonderful people across the globe, Braden started his sixth-grade year and had already attended five different schools in Alabama, China, Virginia and Georgia," Jeannine says.

In spring 2018, Bill started working for Pella-based Vermeer Corporation. The family initially planned to find a home in Pella but decided to search for a place in the Des Moines metro instead. They looked in numerous communities but ultimately chose a home in Johnston for several reasons, including the high-quality school system, close proximity to numerous amenities like shopping and restaurants, and the opportunity to explore several wrestling clubs in the area.

"At 11 years old, Braden was an aspiring youth wrestler who attended an elite wrestling club in Atlanta, Georgia, and wanted to fully immerse himself in the Iowa wrestling culture," Jeannine says. "Thus, if you asked Braden at the time why we moved to Iowa, he would say that we moved here for wrestling."

The Johnston home the Blackorbys purchased was built as one of the Des Moines area showcase homes in 2008. It's spacious with numerous upgrades throughout and backs up to several acres of timber that provides privacy in a semi-urban setting. The family especially enjoys the large basement.

"Whether we are entertaining family during the holidays or friends on the weekend, we often find ourselves migrating to the custom bar and billiards area with high ceilings



After years of frequently relocating, Bill and Jeannine Blackorby wanted to settle down as their son, Braden, entered sixth grade.

that overlooks our outdoor patio and fireplace," Jeannine says.

The home sits on a cul-de-sac in a small development with fewer than 20 homes.

"When we first moved into the neighborhood, we were welcomed openly by our 'Iowa Nice' neighbors," Jeannine says. "Several families brought baked goods and welcomed us with smiles and waves as we moved into the house. We also learned that there were three boys who were all Braden's age that lived in our neighborhood. We are fortunate."

She recalls a cool experience that happened during the height of the pandemic.

"With everyone stuck indoors, the neighborhood organized a responsible outdoor socially distanced event complete with a food truck and multiple fire pits in the middle of our cul-de-sac," she says. "That is the definition of community."

Since moving to Iowa, Jeannine has put her career as a registered nurse on hold to focus on

volunteering, planning household activities and being a mom. She has gotten involved with the Johnston Wrestling Club, served as treasurer of the Johnston PTO, and more.

Additionally, "During the pandemic, as schools struggled with staff attendance, I felt strongly about the benefits of on-site learning, so I obtained my Iowa nursing license so I could sub as a nurse in the Johnston-area schools," Jeannine says. "To this day, I have continued to fill in as needed for many of the hard-working school nurses in the Johnston school system."

Ultimately, while the Blackorby family has lived in a number of communities over the years, they've found Johnston to be one of their favorites.

"Johnston is a great place to raise a family," Jeannine says. "We have amazing friends and great access to education, healthcare and all the amenities you would expect for a mid-market metropolitan area around Des Moines, Iowa." ■

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## CHAMBER

By Allan Graham

# HIGHLIGHTS and a look ahead

With every day, the spring fever itch grows a little stronger. It hits each one of us in different ways, but most of them involve getting outside. Many have sports activities kicking off soon, maybe a trip to the golf course planned or are ready for some yard work. Regardless, we appreciate a winter that, so far, has been pretty mild and enjoy each of the warmer days we get in March.



Back to the business of the Johnston Chamber of Commerce. We recently held our annual dinner. It was a great event with very good attendance, so we want to say thanks to everyone who participated in the event. It gives us a chance to look back over the success of last year, celebrate the success of local citizens and engage with local people interested in the community. A lot of hard work went into the event, so thank you to Heather and Shar, who made the event happen. It was hosted by Shane Goodman of Big Green Umbrella Media, the outgoing president of the chamber. Shane spent countless hours leading the Chamber and did a great job. I want to thank him for his leadership and guidance.

### Some of the highlights for the year

The Chamber membership grew to 258 members and held 14 ribbon cutting events, 11 Breakfast Before Business events, 11 Business After Hours Events and 11 Chamber monthly luncheons.

The Chamber hosted Green Days, the annual Chamber golf tournament, the annual Educator Appreciation event and Jammin' in Johnston, a Business Expo, which last year was included as part of Green Days.

The annual dinner also allowed us to honor several local citizens. The 2021 Business of the Year was ShortE's BBQ. During a challenging couple of years, Brian Easter and the team at ShortE's have made the necessary adjustments and yet always kept a true community spirit. Our Citizen of the Year, Jim Sanders, city administrator, has given so much to Johnston in so many ways to help grow our community. The Ambassador of the Year was Sharon Vickery, Edward Jones Financial. Even though Sharon is newer to our chamber, it did not stop her from becoming very involved. She is a key participant in our ambassadors group. A special thank you to Hilton Garden Inn for the facility and dinner. With the annual banquet behind us, we now focus on some of our upcoming events for 2022:

- **Business After Hours:** Edencrest, March 3, at 5 p.m.
- **Breakfast Before Business:** CrossRoads Shooting Sports, March 8, at 7:30 a.m.
- **Chamber Luncheon:** March 24 at 11:30 a.m.

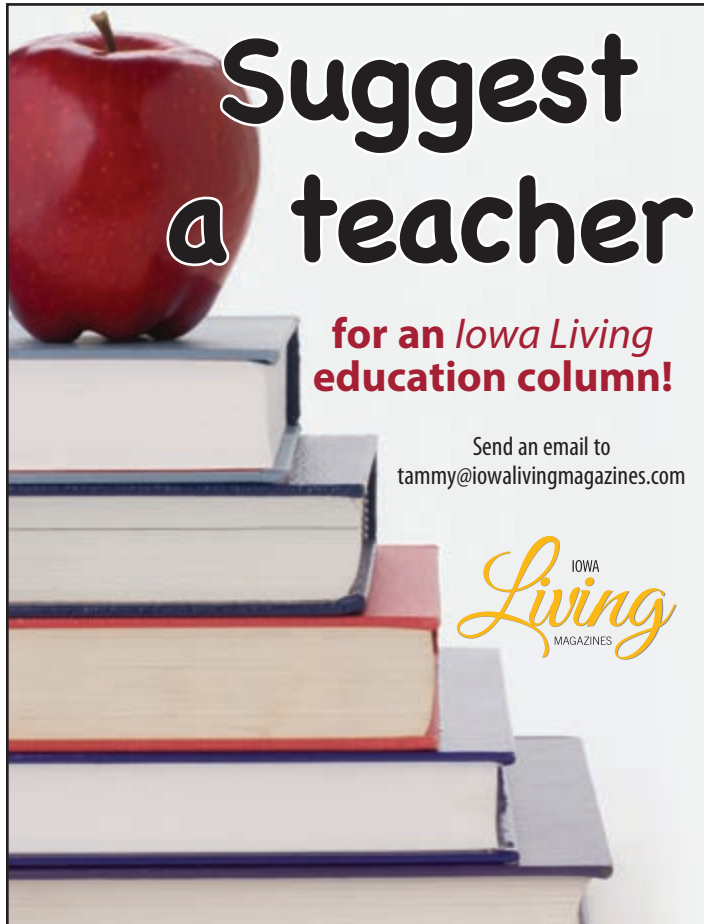
I want to thank you for your time, and I encourage you to get involved in the community. ■

For more information about the Johnston Chamber, visit our website at [www.johnstonchamber.com](http://www.johnstonchamber.com). Information provided by Allan Graham, WineStyles, 2022 Johnston Chamber President.

# Suggest a teacher

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# ANNUAL Dinner

The Johnston Chamber of Commerce held its Annual Dinner at Hilton Garden Inn on Feb. 10.



2022 Johnston Chamber President Allan Graham presents a plaque to 2021 Johnston Chamber President Shane Goodman.



Sharon Vickery, Ambassador of the Year, with 2021 Johnston Chamber President Shane Goodman.



Shorte's was presented the Business of the Year honor. From left, Chris Elyea, Josh Barnett, Shane Goodman, Bryan Easter and Morgan Scholl.



Citizen of the Year, Jim Sanders, with 2021 Johnston Chamber President Shane Goodman.



Redawn Sisler and Sharm Sisler



Carolyn Bradley and Paula Bierle



Brittany Scandridge, Brien Scandridge, Mark Rheinschmidt, Greg Grote, Mindy Morris and Matt Morris



Jenny Buchanan and Tony Betzer



Scott Kundel and Rose Kundel



Brian Hilgenberg and Lisa Hanrahan



Eric Herrmann, Megan Herrmann, Alyssa Tiffany and Michael Tiffany



## OUT & ABOUT



Nicole Rector, Sharm Sisler, Heather Goodwin and Aaron Rector at the farewell party for outgoing chamber executive director Heather Goodwin on Jan. 26.



Mayor Paula Dierenfeld, Heather Goodwin and Sharon Vickery at the farewell party for outgoing chamber executive director Heather Goodwin on Jan. 26.



Christine Osborne and Jamie Lewton at the Johnston Community School District update presented at the Johnston Chamber Luncheon held Jan. 27 at the Cozy Cafe.



Tim Gootee and Scott Kruthoff at the Johnston Community School District update presented at the Johnston Chamber Luncheon held Jan. 27 at the Cozy Cafe.



Brian Dresback and Kelli Vorrath at the Johnston Community School District update presented at the Johnston Chamber Luncheon held Jan. 27 at the Cozy Cafe.



Mary Ann Tayloe and Paula Bierle at the Johnston Chamber After Hours Feb. 3 at the Purple Poppy.



Carrie Summerton and Jay Mathes at the Johnston Chamber After Hours Feb. 3 at the Purple Poppy.



Jolene Goodman and Suzie Pearson at the Johnston Chamber After Hours Feb. 3 at the Purple Poppy.



Todd Richman and Mike Charley at the Johnston Chamber Breakfast Before Business Feb. 8 at Meadowview of Johnston.



Tracy Myers and Shar Pardubsky at the Johnston Chamber Breakfast Before Business Feb. 8 at Meadowview of Johnston.



Shelby Harrison and Jared Harrison at the Johnston Chamber Breakfast Before Business Feb. 8 at Meadowview of Johnston.





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OF JOHNSTON

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Call Carla to set up your private tour.

**515-534-0300**

## A few of the amenities Meadowview offers:

- Activities and arts and craft rooms
- Beauty Salon/Barber Shop
- Bistro/Bar
- Multiple lounge areas
- Fitness center
- Theater
- Private dining room
- Paved walking path and bike trail outdoors
- Large patio complete with fire pit
- Fireside lounge
- Heated, underground parking
- Meadowview's air filtration system in common areas has been upgraded with ionizers. Individual analysis shows this filtration system reduces air borne virus of the COVID-10 virus by more than ninety-eight percent within sixty minutes. This system was installed expressly to provide peace of mind.

## ASSISTED LIVING AND INDEPENDENT LIVING APARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS:

- 9 foot ceilings
- Washer and dryer in every unit
- Stainless steel appliances including dishwasher
- Quartz countertops
- Combination carpet/plank flooring
- Warm, modern colors
- Zero entry showers
- Safety grab bars

**Meadowview of Johnston is honored to bring a state of the art community to Johnston and the surrounding areas.**

- Independent Living | Assisted Living | Memory Care
- Conveniently located at **5555 Pioneer Parkway in Johnston**
- Situated on 5 acres with beautiful views and easy access to your favorite stores and restaurants



**Professionally managed by Cassia** serving communities in Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, Colorado, and Florida. In 2018, Augustana Care and Elim Care came together to form Cassia, resulting in one faith-based, nonprofit organization with over 200 combined years of experience. Looking to the future, Cassia will continue as an industry leader by providing healing, compassion and renewal through serving all by following One, in the Christian tradition.

Be one of the first to call Meadowview home! **Reserve your apartment today!**

**Contact Carla Ellerman for more information!**

515-534-0300 | [Carla.Ellerman@cassialife.org](mailto:Carla.Ellerman@cassialife.org)





# LUCK

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