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MAY 2022

Living

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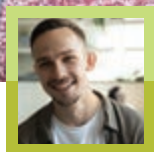
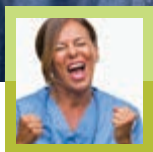
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# WELCOME

## HOW DO you carry the load?

Nasal congestion. Runny nose. Sneezing. Drowsiness. Itchy eyes.

If you suffer with these symptoms, or if you have seen any of the seemingly thousands of TV commercials for products that claim to lessen them, you know by now that I am referring to allergies.

I realize some of you who are reading this have dealt with allergies all your lives. I also realize some of you only began to be faced with these in your adult years. Either way, most of us recognize allergies are more common today than in generations past. But why?

Is it something in the air we breathe? The soil our foods come from? The water we consume?

Or do we just whine about these things more than our grandparents did?

Or maybe, just maybe, all that advertising really works in convincing us that we need to do something about allergies. Americans have spent more than \$8 billion per year to deal with how our bodies respond to foreign substances. Yes, \$8 billion.

If you can relate, you are not alone. According to the Allergy & Asthma Network, one in five Americans have been officially diagnosed with allergies, about 4 million work days are missed per year because of them, and more than 50% of allergy sufferers say this impacts their daily quality of life.

More than likely, I am preaching to the choir. But what do we do about it?

Football player, coach and analyst Lou Holtz said, "It's not the load that breaks you; it's how you carry it." With that in mind, we dedicate this month's cover to the stories of local residents and what they are doing to lessen the impact of allergies on their daily lives.

Thanks for reading. ■



**SHANE GOODMAN**

Publisher

515-953-4822, ext. 305

shane@dmcityview.com



Read more of Shane Goodman's columns each weekday morning by subscribing to The Daily Umbrella email newsletter for free at [www.thedailyumbrella.com](http://www.thedailyumbrella.com).



**Tammy Pearson**

Editor

515-953-4822 ext. 302

tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com

**Andrea Hodapp**

Advertising Account Executive

515-883-0523

andrea@iowalivingmagazines.com



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## FEATURE

The Holl children,  
Charlotte, 8; Evelyn, 4; and  
Axel, 6, all have allergies.  
Photo by Todd Rullestad

# Dealing with ALLERGIES

**Residents share  
their coping  
strategies**

**By Ashley Rullestad**

While many of us are enjoying warmer temperatures, refreshing breezes and spring outdoor activities, others are suffering. Coughing, sneezing, itchy eyes, runny nose, scratchy throat. Yep, it is allergy season, and the one in five of us allergic to pollen is battling the annual onslaught. Others must take care not to eat certain foods for fear of getting hives or rashes — or worse. While allergies are an inconvenience to many, they are life-threatening to others. More serious symptoms can include low blood pressure, problems breathing, and anaphylactic shock. For those suffering from allergies, the world is a bit more daunting, and they have to keep their eyes open for potential triggers.





## FEATURE

### Food allergies can lead to exclusion

Katie and Jed Holl's three children — Charlotte, 8; Axel, 6; Evelyn, 4 — are all allergy sufferers.

"Our oldest daughter was diagnosed at 6 months old for food allergies after having a reaction while at daycare to formula," Katie says. "There were signs and symptoms beforehand, but, as new parents, we weren't aware that those signs could be linked to food allergies."

Prior to her diagnosis, Katie and Jed suspected something else. However, Charlotte tested positive for allergies to milk, egg, peanut and tree nuts, as well as some environmental triggers. She was also later diagnosed with asthma, which can exacerbate reactions.

Because of the history with Charlotte, the Holls also had the other two children tested prior to introducing table foods. They, too, have multiple food allergies and some environmental allergies. Axel is allergic to peanuts and tree nuts, and Evelyn is allergic to eggs, peanuts and tree nuts.

With food allergies, people can have a reaction to the allergen if they ingest, come in contact with, or inhale particles of it. The Holls have only experienced reactions through ingesting allergens.

Unfortunately, managing food allergies can be a full-time job. Every meal time can become a source of anxiety over whether the food is safe.

"We've had some situations where they have ingested some of their allergen, even in small amounts, and gone into anaphylaxis, a life-threatening allergic reaction."

The Holls do their best to ensure the kids don't miss out on activities if food is involved, but it can be challenging without communication



Jed and Katie Holl have to take care to help their children — Charlotte, 8; Evelyn, 4; and Axel, 6 — avoid allergens. Photo by Todd Rullestad



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## 5 most common allergies

From Northeast Allergy, [neaii.com/5-most-common-allergies](http://neaii.com/5-most-common-allergies)

**1. Pollen:** Tens of millions of Americans suffer from pollen allergies. Every spring and summer, thousands of tiny pollen grains are dispersed in the air and can end up in your nose and throat, resulting in an allergic reaction.

**2. Peanuts:** A peanut allergy is the most common food allergy in children and the second-most common food allergy in adults. Differing from tree nuts in that they grow underground and are a kind of legume, peanuts can cause severe reactions in affected individuals.

**3. Tree nuts:** Tree nut allergies are another common food allergy in both children and adults, and fewer than 10% will outgrow it. Some types of tree nuts include walnuts, almonds, hazelnuts, pecans, cashews and pistachio.

**4. Shellfish:** Another common lifelong food allergy is a shellfish allergy. This allergic reaction is prompted by certain proteins in marine animals, including crustaceans (shrimp, prawns, crab, lobster) and mollusks/bivalves (clams, mussels, oysters, scallops, octopus, squid, snail).


**5. Animal dander:** Animal dander is composed of microscopic flecks of skin shed by cats, dogs, rodents, birds and other animals with fur or feathers. Though animal dander is the prominent cause of pet allergies, proteins found in the saliva, urine and feces of certain pets can also cause allergic reactions. Since animal dander easily sticks to belongings, pet allergies can be triggered even when animals are not present. ■

ahead of time about what is being served. From school birthdays and holiday celebrations to sports, activities and more, food is often involved and poses a real threat to those with allergies.

“What many people don’t realize is how often exclusion can happen. It weighs on them. I make it a priority to volunteer for school parties and events so that I can ensure safe foods for our children and others as well, considering one in 13 children have a diagnosed food allergy.”

The Holl kids have annual checkups to check for changes in their allergies and to review treatment options such as food challenges or oral immunotherapy. Axel was able to eliminate milk and egg from his initial list of allergies through these treatments, and Charlotte is undergoing oral immunotherapy for her dairy allergy. Otherwise, they avoid their allergens and make sure to carry two EpiPens — auto-injectable devices that deliver the drug epinephrine in case of emergency.


Those who know people with allergies need to be educated about the seriousness of reactions.




# Activate Their Brain this Summer!


After a long winter indoors (and an even longer pandemic), children need to get out and about for good mental health. Here are a few places children can exercise their brain in central Iowa:

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Science Center of Central Iowa</li> <li>2. Living History Farms</li> <li>3. Jester Park Nature Center</li> <li>4. Kuehn Conservation Area</li> <li>5. Blank Park Zoo</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Brenton Arboretum</li> <li>7. Big Creek Beach</li> <li>8. Ledges State Park</li> <li>9. State Historical Building</li> <li>10. The Iowa Children's Museum</li> </ol>
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## FEATURE

"Because of our experiences and my passion for educating and advocating for children with food allergies, I decided to write and publish a children's book collection about food allergies to educate those without and empower those living with food allergies. The first book will be available this summer."

### Life changing

Sarah Matula also has two daughters with food allergies — Nora, 3, and Wila, 1. Nora has a mild egg allergy, but Wila is allergic to dairy, eggs, all nuts, dogs and cats.

"Since my baby's diagnosis at 5 months old, it has completely changed our lives," Matula says.

Matula was concerned when Nora's allergies presented as a rash. A friend recommended they see an allergist. After completing a back panel, which uses a skin prick test to check for common allergens, Matula

realized Nora is allergic to eggs.

Wila has often had a rash since birth, so Matula suspected allergies for her as well.

"When we finally got into the allergist, her skin was so bad they didn't have enough clear skin to test everything. They tested the major ones, and then, after some time, we did a blood draw test."

Since the kids are still too young to treat their allergies, they must avoid foods that trigger reactions and carry the smaller dosage of EpiPen called Auvi-q.

The family does have three small dogs, which has posed some challenges with Wila's allergies. The dogs have been in the family for some time, and the other kids are attached to them. Instead of giving up the dogs, the Matulas adopted a strict cleaning schedule and special dog-free areas where Wila can be free to move around on the ground.

"It impacts every aspect of our



Nora, 3, and Wila, 1, Matula both have allergies. The family must go to great lengths to protect them.

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## FEATURE

lives now. I breastfeed, so I had to adapt my eating, and our grocery bill is huge because all of her food is pricey.”

The Matulas have put off vacations because they are concerned about finding safe food options for Sarah and Wila while traveling. Holidays are difficult working around special meals and special diets. They spend hours cleaning weekly to make sure Wila has clean, safe places to play, and she has to travel with a medical bag.

“Every single thing people don’t think about, I have to think about a million times.”

The scariest moment was when Wila had an exposure that sent her to the hospital.

“Having another exposure is terrifying to me. I’m not sure what we are going to do when it comes time for school.”

### Seasonal allergies vary in seriousness

Jessica Grange has had seasonal allergies for most of her life. She was officially diagnosed by an allergist about a year and a half ago. Like millions of people who suffer from seasonal allergies, the main trigger is going outside and being exposed to pollen.

Grange knew she suffered when the pollen

count was high, and, after seeing an allergist, she learned she’s allergic to hay, grass, trees and mold — as well as Guinea pigs, cats, dogs and horses.

For a lot of people, taking over-the-counter allergy medications like antihistamines, decongestants, nasal sprays, or combination medications, is enough to help them. Grange’s father and grandmother both have allergies, which they were able to manage with over-the-counter medication. Her allergies have been more severe and have gotten worse over time.

Though she doesn’t usually miss out on things, Grange must make sure she takes her medication. She also has allergy-induced asthma so she occasionally misses out on bike rides and other activities with family.

Grange’s advice for those who suffer is to see an allergist and find out exactly what they are allergic to.

“I put it off for so many years due to fear of the testing, but I’m so glad I decided to do it. I do weekly allergy shots, which includes three shots each week. I also take over-the-counter allergy pills day and night. I have a better quality of life now that I know what I’m allergic to and am being more aggressive in my treatment.” ■



Jessica Grange was sure she was allergic to pollen, but, after testing, found she had multiple environmental allergies.

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## APRIL showers bring May opportunities

Every spring, there are certain traditions that our family holds dear. On Good Friday, we prep our garden for the annual planting of potatoes and onions. On Mother's Day, we break ground for the rest of the garden, including my not-so-famous tall tomatoes. We plan the new plants for the landscaping of the yard. This fresh start every year brings a new level of excitement for us.



The applications have been made, the FAFSA has been completed, and the offer letters have been sent. A new and exciting chapter is about to begin for many 17- and 18-year-olds: college. A new chapter of understanding for empty nesters is also about to begin: planning for retirement.

Revisit your long-term goals. As a parent, I have found that sometimes certain things get put on the back burner out of necessity. Life itself can consume you with time management challenges, and we will often lose sight of the goals and plans that are outside of the immediate future. Often, having an organized plan can help you to keep on task — not to mention someone or something to hold you accountable to those plans.

Review your contributions to all savings plans. For those of you with an employer-based 401(k) savings plan, you know that saving for the future happens on auto-pilot every payday. However, could you raise your contributions? Maybe you are not contributing enough to capture the entire company match. What about ROTH 401(k) alternatives? Or maybe you are looking to establish additional savings plans outside of your employer plan.

Readdress any new or changed insurance needs. As you and your family mature, both in age and financial worth, there are instrumental times when you should reevaluate your insurance. It may be more life insurance to carry you to retirement. Or maybe it is a conversation about long-term care and whether it makes sense to consider a plan for this need.

Rekindle the excitement of enjoying the golden years. This may sound kind of cheesy. However, as a 43-year-old who has worked as a financial advisor for nearly 20 years, I like to think that, though I am a little way away from retirement, I have experienced it thousands of times through the words and expressions of our clients. I will often ask our clients to "paint me a picture." I had a great teacher tell me once that dreamers make the most amazing things, but they need direction. This is where we can help.

As a financial educator, I understand that sometimes there may be too much information in these areas, and sometimes you need to "go back to school." Throughout the year, we will be hosting complimentary financial education seminars at places of higher learning around the state. Our next event is May 24 and 26 at the FFA Enrichment Center on the Ankeny DMACC campus. Call our office to reserve your seat. Hope to see you there. ■

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.



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Disability income insurance can help provide a monthly benefit to be used to pay for basic needs like groceries, utilities and mortgage in the event of an illness or injury that causes extended leave from a job. Most people do not know where to start with disability insurance, so let's start with the basic terminology.

First, let's talk about how much money is needed monthly. What are your basic expenses? Disability insurance will not replace your income at 100%. There is incentive to get back to work, so often the benefit purchased is from 50% to 70% of your full income.

Next, think about how long you can go without a paycheck. This means savings. Most financial advocates indicate that having three months of emergency funds is prudent. Do you have that available to you? If not, do you have 30 days or two months? This would be the elimination period. Often, it is not cost effective for disability insurance to begin the first day of an injury or illness, so how long could you go to assist with affordability of premiums?

Finally, how long do we need the disability insurance to pay? This is called the benefit period. I feel this is the most unknown. An average disability lasts approximately 31 months. So what length of time works for you? Could you find another income stream if something were to happen and go beyond your choice of benefit period? Start the conversation with five years. However, there is benefit to full social security benefit age. Obviously, there will be an expense difference in premiums depending on the length of benefit period.

Other aspects to think about are called riders. Waiver of premium could be important. This means, if someone begins using the benefit, the insurance company will "pay" the premiums so the coverage will continue. Another rider is return of premium. For a small increase, you can actually have a clause in the policy that states, if the benefit is not used for 10 years (periods of time differ), then all premiums paid in are returned.

Take these statistics into consideration when thinking about personal disability insurance:

- One in four of today's 20-year-olds will become disabled before they retire.
  - One in eight workers will become disabled for five years or more during their lifetime.
  - Almost all disabilities (90%) are caused by illness, not accidents.
- Your employer may also offer disability coverage. This is helpful, too, but you cannot take it with you. ■

Information provided by Janis Van Ahn, Health Insurance Advisor LLC, 5870 Merle Hay Road, Suite A, Johnston, 515-225-9994, [jvanahn@health-insadvisor.com](mailto:jvanahn@health-insadvisor.com). Statistics provided by [www.tmaait.org/blog/10-important-statistics-in-honor-of-disability-insurance-awareness-month](http://www.tmaait.org/blog/10-important-statistics-in-honor-of-disability-insurance-awareness-month).

### WHAT DOES DISABILITY INSURANCE PROTECT?

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## HVAC

By Kendel Richlen

# PREPARE your AC now for the heat

It doesn't feel like it some days, but the warmer weather is coming. The question is, when it does arrive, will your HVAC system be ready for the heat? After your system has been sitting idle for months, upkeep is needed beforehand to get it running efficiently. So, before flipping the switch on your AC, there are a few maintenance items you should add to your checklist which are easy to complete for any homeowner.



Through the fall and winter, the build-up of leaves, sticks, dirt and other debris is left behind and should be cleared out. The trees and shrubs will soon bloom, and it's important to allow for a minimum of 1-2 feet of clearance around your equipment. This clearance will maximize airflow and ensure that your system performs at its best.

Inspecting your indoor unit is just as important as the outdoor unit. Have you changed your filter recently? Some filters need to be replaced monthly, while others can go longer between replacements. It's important to check with the manufacturer and follow the suggestions. Replacing your filter can increase the efficiency of your system by as much as 5%, so this alone is a great reason to stay on top of it.

Registers play a key part in cooling your home. Make sure that furniture, rugs and curtains that were moved over the holidays aren't covering your vents. Blocking your registers can restrict airflow and lead to your home conditioning at an uneven temperature.

If you have a programmable thermostat, it's a great time to set up a new schedule as the weather changes. Programmable thermostats are great investments to consider if you don't already have one. They provide optimal comfort and save energy and money.

Now you're ready to test your AC unit. You can test your AC system by simply turning it on and running it for a few minutes to make sure cool air circulates throughout your home. Testing now will help you stay comfortable and hopefully prevent you from being stuck with no AC when you need it the most.

After completing all of the above steps without any issues, your system should be ready to combat the heat. If you experience any issues, get in touch with your local heating and cooling company now, as opposed to in the midst of the warm season. Bring on the heat. ■

Information provided by Kendel Richlen, Owner, 72 Degrees Comfort Company, 811 S.W. Ordinance Road, Ankeny, 515-200-2728.





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## HOSPICE CARE: a lot of living at any stage of life

As individuals and organizations, we spend a lot of time talking about the importance of living well. When it comes to conversations about end-of-life care, though, the conversation tends to take a turn. It may seem counterintuitive to think about “living” in conjunction with services offered at the end of a person’s life — but the keyword there is “life.”

Even during hospice care, a person is living. And any time is the appropriate time to start a conversation about how you or someone you love can live with a life-altering illness — and about the fact that hospice services care can help ensure quality of life.

Options for hospice services are nearly as varied as the individuals who seek them. They range from home care to services in a freestanding hospice center to in-between, hybrid models. The type of care you and your loved one select is truly an individual choice.

But no matter the type of services you’re considering, you should always ask any provider on your list: “How can you help me or my loved one continue to live through this stage of life?”

Ideally, hospice services should be initiated when a person is still healthy. Virtually anyone with a life-limiting illness can qualify for hospice care, enabling a patient to live life in comfort for the days, weeks, months or longer that remain in his or her life. If a person chooses home hospice services, the frequency of visits is determined by the individual and their care team and can change according to the person’s condition.

Overall, hospice services should be about options to help a person live their best life as long as they’re able, and that’s how Susan Y. of Des Moines describes her mother’s experience.

“When my mom’s doctor first suggested that we look into hospice, we were upset and offended and didn’t want to talk about it,” she recalls. “To us, admitting that Mom was ready for hospice meant she was going to die tomorrow. We didn’t have any idea what it really meant and how it could actually improve her life.”

A nurse on Susan’s mother’s care team talked the family into at least considering the idea, and the family talked through a number of options. They ended up choosing a home hospice service, and, to their surprise, Susan and her siblings — and especially their mom — grew to love the hospice team. In fact, Susan credits them with keeping her mother alive for a longer period of time than she likely would have lived without them.

“Mom lived six months to the day after they first came to the house, which is about four months longer than the doctor predicted she had left,” Susan says. “They helped manage her pain so that, on good days, she could go out into her vegetable garden and talk to the neighbors and even go to the store. They provided a nice break for us, and she felt very comfortable with them.”

If you’re considering hospice services for a loved one, do your research. Consider the logistics of where the care is provided, by whom, and the specifics of services. Then, ask the provider about their philosophy of “living” in the end stages of life. If the answer isn’t what you were hoping for, keep looking for a provider who meets your expectations. ■

Ward Phillips is Senior Director of Sales for WesleyLife, which offers a broad network of health- and well-being-focused communities and services, including home hospice care, for older adults. Celebrating its 75th anniversary this year and its 15th as a hospice provider, WesleyLife is a Level 4 partner of We Honor Veterans, a national program that empowers hospice providers to meet the unique needs of military veterans and their families at the end of life. Call Ward at 515-669-2205 to learn more.



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## A SERIOUS CANDIDATE FOR SERIOUS TIMES

Mike Franken is a western Iowan who helped put himself through school working at meat-packing plants. He refers to his bootstrap childhood as the youngest of a family of nine where everyone worked: his father ran a machine repair shop, his mother was a teacher and the family seamstress. Mike obtained a Navy scholarship in 1978 and graduated in engineering from the University of Nebraska. He rose from ensign to admiral during his navy career, where he solved a wide variety of problems around the globe.

Mike wants all Americans to have the high-quality care that military members have because he knows the system works for the good of the people. He understands the critical difference that social security can make in people's lives. The power of a strong public education made it possible for him to achieve his many goals, and he wants to use his position as a US Senator to ensure that we can increase the quality of education to all our children.

We live in serious times. Mike Franken is the candidate for the US Senate we need now. Check out our website – [www.frankenforiowa.com](http://www.frankenforiowa.com) – and join the campaign that brings people together to solve problems.



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## RECIPE

# A DELIGHTFUL picnic starts with a stellar sandwich

*(Family Features)* Heading outdoors for a fresh, homemade meal is an alluring activity when warm weather and sunshine provide a perfect opportunity for dining on the patio. Or, if some time away from the house is calling your name, packing a lunch and taking off for the park can be an ideal getaway without getting too far from home.

Next time the sun's rays call your name, invite friends and family for a delicious picnic loaded with warm-weather flavors. Just lay out your favorite blanket on the grass or don an outdoor table with a classic checkered tablecloth, then share recipes that make al fresco meals truly memorable.

No picnic is complete without sandwiches loaded with all your favorite toppings, and these picnic-wiches with Greek artichoke beet salad provide the freshness that outdoor meals are made of.

To find more picnic-worthy appetizers, meals, sides and more, visit [readsalads.com](http://readsalads.com) and [auntnellies.com](http://auntnellies.com). ■

## Picnic-wiches with Greek artichoke beet salad

Servings: 6

- 1 jar (16 ounces) Aunt Nellie's Sliced Pickled Beets
- 1 jar (about 6 ounces) marinated artichoke hearts
- 1/2 cup pitted kalamata or ripe olives, sliced
- 3 tablespoons sliced green onions
- freshly ground black pepper, to taste (optional)
- 6 romaine lettuce leaves
- 1 pound thinly sliced deli turkey
- 6 ciabatta or sandwich rolls, sliced horizontally
- 1/3 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 1/4 cup pine nuts, toasted

### DIRECTIONS

- Drain beets and artichoke hearts, reserving 1/4 cup liquid from each. Coarsely chop beets and artichoke hearts. In medium bowl, combine beets, artichokes, olives and green onions; set aside.
- In small bowl, whisk reserved beet and artichoke liquids. Pour over beet mixture; toss gently to coat. Season with black pepper, to taste, if desired.
- Layer lettuce and turkey on bottom halves of rolls. Top with relish, as desired; feta cheese; and pine nuts. Top with remaining halves of rolls. Wrap tightly; chill up to 4 hours. Serve with remaining relish.



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# THIS MONTH at your library

May is chock full of amazing events happening at Johnston Public Library (JPL). A Star Wars celebration, Kites on the Green, crafting and reading — there's a little something for everyone. Read on for details.

## Family events

Mark your calendars for **Star Wars Day** on May 4 at JPL. Drop in any time between 5:30 and 7:30 p.m. to play the virtual reality game Beat Saber, make a Star Wars craft, enjoy a glass of Yoda soda, test your knowledge in a trivia battle, and hang out with fellow fans as we celebrate all things Star Wars. Star Wars attire is encouraged. All ages are welcome and registration is appreciated.

Next, come to the green space outside the library for the ninth annual **Kites on the Green Festival** on Saturday, May 7 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Visitors can enjoy giant show kite displays, kite fighting, free kite building, bol racing, live music, an inflatable obstacle course, sidewalk chalk and more. This is an event not to be missed.

## Adult events

Searching for employment is a job in itself; it can be exhausting and overwhelming. It's OK to ask for help. Free **Drop-In Job Help** is available every Wednesday from 10 a.m. to noon with a trained job coach from Goodwill of Central Iowa. Mike Johnston will be at JPL Wednesday mornings to assist with job searches, filling out job applications, writing or updating resumes and cover letters, and interview coaching. Job help is free and does not require an appointment.

Feeling crafty? Get your craft on with us at the **JPL Craft Workshop** for Adults on Saturday, May 14 at 10:30 a.m. Join Lori Elrick and Riddhi Seth to explore a new trending craft project every couple of months. In May, Lori and Riddhi will guide you, in-person, through trendy and beautiful paper flowers. If you prefer to assemble the project on your own at home, the paper flower kit is pre-packed with instructions for grab-and-go pickups. Register for this free workshop and indicate if you like to attend in-person or grab-and-go; supplies are limited, so there is only one garland kit per registration. Adults, leave the kids at home for this one; this crafting time is just for you.

## Summer Reading for everyone

Join JPL from May 28 to July 31 for a summer filled with fun. The Summer Reading Program is for everyone: there is no age limit, no cost and no library card required. Participants can win prizes by reading or by participating in a variety of activities. The Summer Reading Program is designed to be taken home and completed at your own pace. Logs for all ages will be available for pick up on Saturday, May 28. For more information about the Summer Reading Program, visit [johnstonlibrary.com/summerreading](http://johnstonlibrary.com/summerreading). ■



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## CONTACT US! CITY HALL

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Fax: (515) 278-2033

### MAYOR

Paula Dierenfeld  
(515) 490-8023  
PaulaSDierenfeld@gmail.com

### CITY COUNCIL

Bryan Burkhardt  
(515) 554-9095  
bburkhardt@cityofjohnston.com

Tom Cope  
(515) 975-4590  
tomwcope@msn.com

Jim Evans  
jaae64a@gmail.com

Rhonda Martin  
(515) 326-2675  
rmartin@cityofjohnston.com

Suresh Reddy  
(515) 650-9619  
sreddy@cityofjohnston.com

### JOHNSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

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### JOHNSTON POLICE & FIRE

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### JOHNSTON PUBLIC WORKS

6400 NW Beaver Drive  
(515) 278-0822  
FAX: (515) 727-8092

### JOHNSTON PARKS DEPARTMENT

6300 Pioneer Parkway  
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### CROWN POINT COMMUNITY CENTER AND SENIOR DINING CENTER

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## CONSTRUCTION AND CLOSURES FOR MERLE HAY ROAD

The development and reconstruction of Merle Hay Road near Johnston Drive will be worth it when the project is complete. The city wanted to ensure motorists know about closures and traffic shifts that will soon occur. The closure and single lanes are critical to ensure crews can safely install sanitary sewer across Merle Hay Road.

The northbound lanes will be closed down during the first part of May. The southbound lanes will serve as traffic flow – one flowing north and one flowing south. Around mid-May, the traffic will be completely closed over a weekend to install the sanitary sewer across the roadway. The closure is expected to close down at 9 p.m. on a Friday evening and reopen by 5 a.m. on Monday. A traffic shift will occur after the sanitary sewer is installed across the roadway. Traffic will then be one lane in each direction in the northbound lanes.

Signage of the closures and lane shifts will be displayed on electronic message boards, and shared on our website and social media channels.

Traffic is anticipated to be interrupted for the remainder of the construction season, but when the improvements are complete, it will ensure the safety of motorists as the Gateway District expands.

Detour routes can be found by visiting our projects page on the city website at [www.cityofjohnston.com/projects](http://www.cityofjohnston.com/projects), or scan the QR code.



## APPLY TO SERVE ON A BOARD OR COMMISSION

Many terms are expiring on June 30, 2022, for citizens serving on city boards and commissions. Learn about each of these boards and commissions and how you could make a difference by serving.

- **Board of Adjustment** - Two openings, five-year term
- **Library Board** - Two openings, six-year term
- **Park Advisory Board** - Three openings, three-year term
- **Planning & Zoning Commission** - One opening, five-year term
- **Tree Board** - Three openings, three-year term
- **Senior Citizens Advisory Board** - Nine openings, three-year term

If you are interested in serving, visit [www.cityofjohnston.com/boardsandcommissions](http://www.cityofjohnston.com/boardsandcommissions) and fill out an application or contact City Hall at 515-278-2344.

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



## CITY NEWSLETTER MAY 2022

### FARMERS MARKET OPENS TUESDAY, MAY 31 AT 3:30 PM

The Johnston Farmers Market is almost here! The first market of 2022 will happen on Tuesday, May 31, from 3:30 to 6:30 p.m. The Farmers Market will be held every Tuesday afternoon in the Town Center parking lot. Come check out our brand-new vendors and a wide selection of locally-grown produce, beautiful art, household items, garden accessories and delicious baked goods! Johnston Town Center is located at 6209 Merle Hay Rd.



### CITY HALL, LIBRARY CLOSED FOR MEMORIAL DAY

City Hall and the Johnston Public Library will be closed on Monday, May 30, for the Memorial Day holiday. We will reopen on Tuesday, May 31. Trash and recycling will be delayed one day.

### MAYOR'S BIKE RIDE SATURDAY, MAY 14

Join Mayor Paula Dierenfeld for the Mayor's Bike Ride, a fun ride on Johnston's trails on Saturday, May 14. Interested participants can begin gathering at 11:30 a.m. in the parking lot just east of City Hall. Bicycle riders will depart around noon.

The ride begins at City Hall, located at 6221 Merle Hay Road and will end at the large shelter at Terra Park. Free lunch will be served from Hy-Vee for those participating in the ride.



### SENIOR ACTIVITIES AT CROWN POINT

Senior activities are back in full swing at Crown Point Community Center, 6300 Pioneer Pkwy. The weekly activities include:

**Monday: Movie Mondays** at approximately 12:30 p.m. Stay after lunch and enjoy a film with friends on the big screen.

**Tuesday: Yoga** with Janis Ware at 9:30 a.m. Please register by emailing Nate at [nosmundson@cityofjohnston.com](mailto:nosmundson@cityofjohnston.com) space is limited. Trivia/Musical Trivia at approximately 12:30 p.m.

**Wednesday (Starting May 18):** Nature Wellness Walking in Beaver Creek Natural Resource Area at 9:30 a.m. Attendees will meet at the Terra Park Shelter and walk for around 30-45 minutes, while enjoying nature and each other.

**Thursday: Tai Chi** with Kristin Sherman at 9:30 a.m. This is a *registration-only* program. Please register by emailing Nate at [nosmundson@cityofjohnston.com](mailto:nosmundson@cityofjohnston.com). Space is limited.

**Friday: Bingo** at approximately 12:30 p.m.



### FAMILY-FUN EVENT AT TOWN CENTER ON JUNE 4, HOSTED BY VENUWORKS

A family-fun event will be held at the Johnston Town Center on Saturday, June 4, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. More information on this event can be found by visiting [www.johnstontowncenter.com](http://www.johnstontowncenter.com). The event is hosted by VenuWorks, the Johnston Town Center events company.

**For more information about the city, please call 515.278.2344**



## 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)



### Kites on the Green

Saturday, May 7, 10 a.m. -5 p.m.  
Johnston Commons

A day of family fun is offered at Kites on the Green. Make kites, fly kites and watch kites. Giant show kites will be flying, and kite battles will be raging. Other fun includes an inflatable obstacle course, food, live music and Bol racing. Be sure to stop in for a tour of the 1902 Simpson House Museum and visit with police and firefighters and enjoy Rain Campaign activities, both west of the library. For more information, visit [cityofjohnston.com/kitesonthegreen](http://cityofjohnston.com/kitesonthegreen).

### At The Yard

A number of events are planned at The Yard at Johnston Town Center:

- Movie Night, May 20, 8:30 p.m. Join Johnston High School students and watch the movie "Tangled."
- Splash Pad opens May 28 at 10 a.m.
- Family Fest, June 4, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Various activities will be held around The Yard. Enjoy the splash pad, inflatables, yard games, face painting and more.

### Kiwanis breakfast speakers

Tuesdays, 7 a.m.  
Crown Point

The Johnston Kiwanis holds breakfast meetings at 7 a.m. on Tuesdays at Crown Point. Upcoming speakers are:

- May 10, Dr. Teri Wahlig, CEO of ChildServe
- May 17, Children's Cancer Connection
- May 24, Ben Godar, Varsity Theater

### Mayor's Annual Bike Ride

Saturday, May 14, 11:30 a.m.  
Meet in parking lot east of City Hall, 6221 Merle Hay Road

Join Mayor Paula Dierenfeld for the Mayor's Bike Ride, a fun ride on Johnston's trails. Bicycle riders will depart around noon. The ride begins at City Hall and will end at the large shelter at Terra Park. Free lunch will be served for those participating in the ride.

### Camp Dodge Summer Concert Series

Various dates

Camp Dodge Pool Complex

Camp Dodge is again offering its free summer concerts at the Camp Dodge Pool Complex. Concerts start at 7 p.m. Concessions will be available, and lawn chairs, coolers and picnic baskets are welcome.

- May 24, Brother Trucker (Roots/Americana/Alternative Country)
- May 31, The Sons of Gladys Kravitz (Classic Rock). Collegiate Team Colors Night.
- June 7, Red Dirt Renegades (Outlaw Country/Southern Rock/Roots Rock)
- June 14, No concert. Enjoy Johnston Green Days.
- June 21, Danika Portz (Original and Radio Pop Hits)
- June 28, Sidewinders, IANG's 34th Army Band (Pop and Classic Rock). Wear flag colors for Military Heritage Night.
- July 5, Richard Arndt and The Brew (Rock/Blues/Bottle Tonk). Army Warrant Officer Corps' 100th birthday.
- July 12, Abby Normal (Classic 1980s Rock)
- July 19, Tony Valdez (Latin/Rock/Funk and more)



### Johnston Farmers Market

Tuesdays, May 31 to Oct. 11, 3:30-6:30 p.m.  
Johnston Town Center parking lot, corner of Merle Hay Road and N.W. 62nd Ave.

Fresh produce, live music, baked goods, crafts and food trucks make shopping at the farmers market an entertaining experience. The market is sponsored by the Johnston Lions Club.

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## NEWS BRIEFS

### KEELING honored as Best-In-State Wealth Advisor

Richard Keeling, CFP, CRPC, APMA, a private wealth advisor with Ameriprise Financial in Johnston, was named to the list of Best-in-State Wealth Advisors published by Forbes magazine. The list recognizes financial advisors who have demonstrated high levels of ethical standards, professionalism and success in the business. The rankings are based on data provided by thousands of the nation's most productive advisors.



Keeling was chosen based on assets under management, industry experience, compliance record and best practices. Keeling is part of Keeling Wealth Advisors, a private wealth advisory practice of Ameriprise Financial Services, LLC. Keeling graduated from Iowa State University with a degree in Business. Keeling has 20 years of experience with Ameriprise Financial.

### WESLEYLIFE marks 75-years

In honor of World Heritage Day, WesleyLife, Iowa's most comprehensive non-profit provider of health and well-being services, has announced plans to mark its 75-year anniversary in July with a celebration designed to honor its heritage while illustrating the many ways the organization is changing the perceptions of aging in Iowa and beyond.


"As we head toward this milestone, WesleyLife is honored to touch the lives of more individuals than ever before with services designed to make the second half of life the best half," said Rob Kretzinger, the organization's president and CEO.

"We're in a phase of unprecedented growth and development that corresponds with our opportunity and responsibility to create second-to-none experiences for those we currently serve and those we might be fortunate enough to serve in the future. The fact that this period corresponds with our 75th anniversary makes this an especially meaningful time to celebrate."

WesleyLife was founded in 1947 at the site of its current Des Moines campus, Wesley Acres, as a home for retired ministers and their spouses. With Kretzinger as CEO since 2003, WesleyLife has evolved to an industry-leading provider of health and well-being services with a network that includes 12 communities as well as home-based services. The organization serves more than 14,000 people and employs more than 1,800.

Current development projects include: a \$25 million redevelopment at Wesley Acres; a new Meals on Wheels campus near Drake University that will provide increased capacity for meal production (from 1,000 to 3,000 hot, healthy meals a day); a new community in eastern Iowa, Fieldstone of DeWitt.; and an addition of two households to The Cottages, a campus of Hearthstone in Pella, which will open later this year to retain care capacity that was lost in Marion County when the community's Jefferson Place campus was damaged in a water-main break and later closed.

WesleyLife will celebrate its Diamond Jubilee on Thursday, July 7, at Horizon Events Center in Clive with a luncheon followed by a full afternoon of programming: a keynote speaker and activities including a story wall, history labyrinth, a "future vision" phone booth and more. ■




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# NEIGHBORHOOD cements family in town

Small home, big love

"It was work that brought us to Johnston, but it is the community and neighborhood that has made it hard to ever leave," Erin Spencer says.

She and her husband, Stuart, have lived in town for the past 14 years and have remained in the same home since arriving — something they were not expecting to do.

"To be quite honest, we thought it would just be our starter home," Spencer says. "It was a project that needed some work. Being young and eager, we felt like it was a good fit for us. We fixed it to our liking and started engaging with our neighbors — one of our greatest gifts with this home."

The Spencers' house sits on a dead-end road surrounded by commercial real estate. While they've had some turnover in neighbors over the years, Spencer says they've remained a strong, close-knit neighborhood. Some of the original homeowners still reside there.

"My favorite time of year is the spring when, after a long winter of hibernation, we start to see one another again," she says. "On the first warm day of the year, kids are out playing, neighbors are out doing yard work and catching up. It's my favorite time of the year, but it's also not unusual to see neighbors in the winter helping to clean one another out from the snow. We all pitch in and do what we can."



Erin Spencer appreciates how the neighbors and neighborhood kids enjoy getting together.

Even though the Spencers have triplet sons now and their house is on the smaller side, they don't have any plans of moving because of how much they love their neighborhood.

They also appreciate that the area they live in provides a country-like feel, even though they live in a large town.

"We love that it isn't unusual to have a lot of wildlife in our neck of the woods," Spencer says. "Having the commercial real estate surrounding us, we haven't been overly developed, and there's still a lot of tree lines that allow for the wildlife."

Additionally, the Spencer family enjoys the

work the City of Johnson has done to connect bike trails and provide numerous park spaces.

"Everything is close, and the trails really help us to navigate it well," she says.

Ultimately, though, it all comes back to their neighborhood — a close-knit community within a community.

"I enjoy the kids all interacting and watching out for one another," Spencer says. "We have started a yearly neighborhood block party that brings us all together — all different life stages, all different family make-ups, all coming together and having a great time." ■

## NEWS BRIEFS

### JOHNSTON awarded tree grant

MidAmerican Energy Company presented a \$2,000 grant to Johnston as part of the company's Trees Please! energy efficiency program.

"Trees are an essential part of our community," said John Schmitz, Parks and Recreation director. "Over the past few summers, we have lost many trees because of storms. This grant will help add new trees to our parks and open spaces for residents enjoy."

The funding will support Johnston's plan to continue the reforestation efforts due to tree loss associated with storms and the emerald ash borer. ■

### CHILDREN'S Cancer Connection hires marketing and communications director

Statewide non-profit Children's Cancer Connection announced Summer Evans has been hired as its new marketing and communications director. Evans will work to strengthen the Children's Cancer Connection brand, increase organizational awareness, and tell the stories of Children's Cancer Connection and its benefactors. She will oversee overall communications strategy, social media, website management, promotional materials, media relations and other functions.

"Children's Cancer Connection provided key resources and meaningful fellowship to my family in the 90s when my younger sister Haley fought and won her battle against leukemia," Evans said. "I am incredibly grateful for the support back then,

and I am thrilled to have the opportunity to now champion this unique and important mission for others facing childhood cancer diagnoses."

Evans most recently served as marketing and communications director for the City of Waukee. Previously, she worked as marketing manager for Des Moines Performing Arts, as communications specialist at an education association, and as a TV news reporter. She holds a bachelor's degree in journalism and mass communication from Iowa State University. ■



## MEET LaRae Doll

Making sure students get healthy meals



LaRae Doll enjoys her role as director of Nutrition and Food Services and finds it rewarding to know that children are receiving nutritious food at school.

Originally from central North Dakota, LaRae Doll attended school at the University of North Dakota and the University of Minnesota before becoming a registered dietetic technician/school nutrition specialist. She moved to Iowa when her husband's career brought them here. Doll began to look for work, and her passion for nutrition and children led her to wonder about the school food service industry.

"I wanted to learn more, so I called the local school district and asked questions about their child nutrition program. Two months later, I was hired to help manage the food service operation at that district," she says.

Doll discovered the joy of serving children healthy meals and became passionate about the school nutrition business. This led her to the Johnston Community School District, which hired her as the director of Nutrition and Food Services almost 20 years ago. She continues to hold that post.

"What I have loved most about Johnston Community School District is the way our mission supports and revolves around the students we serve. Providing nutritious meals is an essential part of the school day, which helps to support the health and learning of students," Doll says.

Doll's duties include visiting various Johnston schools, menu planning, food and equipment purchasing, and the hiring and training of nutrition staff. She says the process for planning healthy school meals starts with making sure each meal meets the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. In order to qualify for federal reimbursements, each meal must provide students with the right balance of fruits, vegetables, low-fat or fat-free milk, whole grains and lean protein.

In addition, Doll helped with the federal child nutrition waivers granted for the 2020-2021 and the 2021-2022 school years due to the pandemic. These waivers allowed schools to provide free breakfast and lunch meals for all students regardless of need.

"These waivers have been so wonderful for families and students as they have ensured every student has access to safe and consistent healthy meals at school," says Doll. "It has been an honor to serve in this role and contribute to the health and well-being of children by providing access to healthy meals." ■

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# DON'T DRIVE investments till the wheels fall off

The first car I bought was a Chevy Cavalier to get to my first real job after college as a financial advisor. After putting 200,000 miles on it in just nine years, I had to decide if I wanted to invest more money into this car or update my vehicle. Whether it's your car, clothes or kitchen, we all have to update things when they no longer get the job done. The concept is the same with retirement.



Your retirement investments will become your retirement income, which may require an investment update. Don't wait until you need a new transmission. I recommend making an investment update five to 10 years before retirement so you can implement investment and tax-saving strategies.

I think of this update in three steps: organize, assess and align. People often talk about their "junk drawer" of investments. It's all the things you've accumulated over the last 30 or 40 years: 401(k)s, IRAs, life insurance, brokerage accounts and more. We can help people track down, organize and consolidate these accounts.

Next, we help you take an assessment of your investments. This

includes looking at how much you are paying in fees and understanding how much risk you are taking. In your 20s, 30s and 40s, you have time to recover from a market swing. If you are getting ready to retire, and the stock market goes down 30%, you probably don't want your portfolio to do the same thing. We can show you, in numbers, how a downturn in the market will impact your portfolio.

Aligning your investments with your retirement goals is the third step. If you aren't comfortable with the risk you are taking, we talk about what changes you can make to your portfolio. Then we show you how these investments will become your retirement income. Your written retirement plan includes where you will draw the money from and in what order. These decisions are connected with other factors like your tax plan, inflation, your Social Security benefit and Medicare.

You should feel good about an investment update, just like when I ditched the Cavalier and started making the 60-mile drive to work in a better vehicle. Updating your investments will give you confidence so you can cruise into retirement. ■

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

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## WHAT IS a stroke?

Stroke is the fifth-leading cause of death and the leading cause of disability in the United States.

A stroke begins when an artery becomes blocked or bursts, disrupting blood flow to or within an area of the brain. This interrupts your brain's supply of oxygen. Two million brain cells are lost for each minute blood flow is delayed to the brain.



### Risks

Strokes are generally caused by risk factors that are ignored over time. The following risk factors can be controlled with the help of your physician.

- High blood pressure is one of the leading risk factors for stroke. Have your blood pressure checked regularly.
- High cholesterol puts you at risk for heart disease and stroke. Your combined HDL ("good") and LDL ("bad") cholesterol should be

below 200.

- Atrial fibrillation (AFib) is the most common type of irregular heartbeat (arrhythmia), which can cause a clot and increase the risk of stroke if it travels to the brain.
  - Sleep apnea can be linked to AFib and is associated with increased stroke risks.
  - Diabetes: Approximately 20% of people with diabetes have a stroke. Maintain a blood sugar less than 100.
  - Smoking damages blood vessel walls, increasing your blood pressure, which can lead to a stroke.
  - Alcohol: Drink no more than one glass of wine or beer per day.
  - Obesity: Eat a diet low in sodium and fat. Moderate physical activity is recommended 30 minutes a day at least five days per week.
- There are some risks you can't control, such as family history of stroke and age. If an immediate family member has a history of circulatory problems or stroke, you are at an increased risk. People age 50 and older are at a higher risk for stroke.

### BE FAST

A stroke can happen at any time. Use BE FAST to see if someone is having a stroke.

(B)ALANCE: Is the person experiencing dizziness or having trouble with balance or coordination?

(E)YES: Is the person experiencing blurred or double vision or a sudden loss of vision in one or both eyes?

(F)ACE: Ask the person to smile. Check to see if one side of the face droops.

(A)RMS: Ask the person to raise both arms. See if one arm drifts downward.

(S)PEECH: Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence. Check to see if words are slurred and if the sentence is repeated correctly.

(T)IME: Time when the symptoms started, and call 911 immediately.

If a person shows any of these symptoms, get him or her to the hospital. ■

Information provided by Terri Hamm, RN, MA BEHP, stroke coordinator at MercyOne Des Moines Medical Center, 1111 Sixth Ave., Des Moines, [MercyOne.org/desmoinesneuro](http://MercyOne.org/desmoinesneuro)

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## HEALTH By Dr. Amy Petersen

### WELL-CHILD visits promote health and wellness

As the school year winds down, it is time to start preparing for the next school year. This includes scheduling your child's back-to-school physical or annual well-child visit. With the COVID-19 pandemic, many children may have missed their once-a-year opportunity to visit with their pediatrician. Over a year, lots can change in a child or teen's life, making it important that these routine visits are not interrupted.



During an annual exam, your pediatrician not only completes a thorough physical exam, but evaluates and addresses any emotional, developmental or social concerns. This visit also opens discussion of nutrition and exercise, provides vision and depression screening, and additionally addresses any other concerns. A yearly visit ensures that your child is up to date with the recommended vaccinations, an important part of preventing and protecting against serious diseases. A sports physical, required by most high schools, can be done concurrently with your child's physical, allowing your provider to address specific exercise-related issues, injuries, or questions about training.

Yearly well-child visits allow your family and pediatrician to work together, forming a relationship of trust and respect, to ensure your child is growing and developing as expected. Get ahead of the game and schedule your child's annual well-child visit now. ■

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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## HEALTH By Dr. Mallori Phillips

### SETTING up a clear future

Imagine waking up exhausted, squinting to see what time it is, but being unable to focus on the alarm clock. Picture yourself navigating the location of your nightstand to find your glasses in order to focus on the numbers glaring from the clock. Yes, really. Many people experience this daily. Have you heard of myopia? Myopia is the medical term used to describe near-sightedness, which can typically be corrected with contact lenses or glasses. If you have been diagnosed with myopia, you might be concerned about your children inheriting this condition and feeling similar frustrations with their morning routines.



During a child's formative years, the eye elongates, and, in turn, the eye becomes more myopic. Research has been conducted how to prevent children from succumbing to the fate of becoming near-sighted. A new treatment program, known as MiSight, uses contact lenses in pediatric patients to slow the progression of myopia. If we successfully slow (or even halt) the development of myopia, there is a strong chance our children will continue to be able to read the alarm clock well into adulthood without the help of glasses or contact lenses. Now, if we only had a solution for the snooze button. ■

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

## FAQs about beef

May is National Beef Month, and we know beef tastes great, but did you know that beef can be good for you, too? Check out some answers to the most pressing questions we receive when it comes to beef and your health.

**Q: Can beef be enjoyed regularly as part of a healthy, balanced diet?**

**A:** Absolutely. A 3-ounce serving of beef — about the size of an iPhone — provides more than 10 essential nutrients including protein, iron, zinc and vitamins B12 and B6. One serving of beef contains about half of your Daily Value for protein in around 170 calories on average (and just 150 calories for a serving of lean beef).

**Q: How much beef should I eat at a meal to meet my daily protein requirements?**

**A:** Beef is a great protein option and source of essential nutrients to enjoy any day and for any meal. Dietary guidelines recommend adults eat 5.5 ounces of protein foods, so incorporating beef into various meals will help you meet the recommended dietary guidelines.

**Q: What benefits do the 10 essential nutrients in beef provide to the human body?**

**A:** High-quality protein, like that found in beef, plays an increasingly important role in muscle maintenance, weight management, and the prevention of chronic diseases. Research also shows the iron, zinc and B vitamins found in beef play an essential role in developing and maintaining cognitive ability in children and adults.

**Q: What nutritional benefits does beef offer me that other proteins don't?**

**A:** Beef is a nutritional powerhouse in a smaller package than other protein foods. Apart from being a great source of protein, it would take 8 ounces of cooked chicken breast to eat the same amount of iron as in just 3 ounces of beef, and nearly seven times the amount of chicken to get the same amount of zinc in a serving of beef.

**Q: Is grass-finished beef more nutritious than grain-finished beef?**

**A:** While grass-finished beef tends to be a little leaner, both grass-finished and grain-finished beef are natural sources of more than 10 essential nutrients including protein, iron and zinc. All cattle, whether grass- or grain-finished, spend the majority of their lives eating grass on pastures and provide delicious and nutritious beef.

**Q: Can eating beef help improve cholesterol levels?**

**A:** Yes. Research shows that a heart-healthy diet and lifestyle that includes lean beef, even daily, improved cholesterol levels. About half the fatty acids found in beef are called monounsaturated fatty acids, the same kind found in olive oil, and, as part of a heart-healthy diet, can reduce cholesterol levels.

**Q: Can eating beef cause cancer?**

**A:** Cancer is a complex disease, and most scientists agree that many factors, including lifestyle and environmental conditions, must be taken into consideration, making it unrealistic to isolate a single food as a cause of cancer. In fact, despite all the investment made in cancer research, there is no single food, including beef, that has been proven to cause or cure cancer. ■

Information provided by Caitlyn Ferin, LD, RD, corporate dietitian, Fareway, 6005 Merle Hay Road, Johnston, 515-252-9962. Q and A, adapted from BeefItsWhatsForDinner.com



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## REAL ESTATE

By Robbin Zaver

### TRENDS: what homebuyers are looking for

After a long two years of working out of your home, home schooling, limited traveling and all around being at home 24/7, design-savvy buyers know what is most desirable and most needed in their perfect home. A number of trends and styles have quickly skyrocketed to the top of must-haves in today's real estate market.



- **Modularity.** Now, more than ever, buyers are seeking spaces that can move, flex and effortlessly transform: great rooms divided by screens to create privacy, extra bedrooms turned into offices, areas that function as work spaces during the day and entertaining spaces in the evening. The flex spaces don't always have to be within the main home. You can get creative with under-utilized outdoor spaces, even turning an outdoor shed into an office, home school or fitness area. The need for having both comfort and function is key.

- **Openness.** Fluidity and continuity are a crucial part to the flexibility that buyers are looking for now. They need the home to be both functional and versatile, but, above all, they want their spaces to feel connected and borderless. After being home so long, they no longer want to feel as though they are stuck in a box. They want a seamless transition between the interior and exterior areas. Glass doors and window coverings are two ways to create the illusion of a larger space, but there are a number of ways to achieve a sense of openness in your home. Buyers respond well to high ceilings and floor-to-ceiling windows. These give the feeling of space when you can't increase the square footage. The kitchen remains the heart of the home, so many buyers are still looking at how it connects to other rooms and the functionality of it with the rest of the home. The open concept should extend beyond the interior spaces, and continuity with the outdoors is critical in relation to the kitchen and living room. Color can also affect the openness of a home. It's much more important than people even realize. Dark rooms tend to feel claustrophobic, so let the light in.

- **Sanctuary.** Finally, buyers are searching for a retreat within their home. They want areas that bring them joy, escape and relaxation. They want an environment that soothes them after a day of endless Zoom calls and home schooling. Sometimes it can be as simple as a gorgeous view. Comfort has become paramount as we spend more and more time in our home. Quality is still something that resonates with the buyer, along with design, but, in design, less is usually more. For some buyers, it's a separate spa. For others, it's an ensuite bathroom done in neutral colors with organic materials. However you slice it, buyers know what they want, and they no longer want, but expect, these elements in their homes. ■

Information provided by Robbin Zaver, Realtor, RE/MAX Precision, 913-209-7539, [robbin@precisiondsm.com](mailto:robbin@precisiondsm.com).

## BEFORE YOU GO

By Jan Shawver

### WHAT will be your epitaph?

Decoration Day (now known as Memorial Day) was first observed in 1868 to honor those who had died in the Civil War. After WWII, the day was adjusted to honor the deceased in all wars and became a national holiday in 1971. Today, we often observe not only the death of our veterans, but of all loved ones who have died.



Have you ever walked through a cemetery and read the words on the memorials/tombstones?

In designing your future memorial/headstone, think of what you want others to know about you 100 years from now, when they will only know you through what is conveyed on that memorial.

Some epitaphs are sentimental: "Loving parents and grandparents," "Always in our hearts," or "Gone, but not forgotten."

Some reflect religious beliefs: "At home with God," "For God so loved the world," or "Everlasting life through Christ."

Still others are humorous: "I told you I was sick," "I'd rather be golfing," or "Sorry I can't get up."

Whatever you decide for your lasting memorial, choose your words carefully. Those words offer the world a glimpse into what was important to you.

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.

## HEALTH

By Lance Andersen

### THE IMPORTANCE of mind-body connectedness

Mindfulness is a popular term these days, but what does it really mean? The Oxford dictionary defines mindfulness as: "a mental state achieved by focusing one's awareness on the present moment, while calmly acknowledging and accepting one's feelings, thoughts and bodily sensations." At the heart of meditative practice is the concept of non-doing, which presents the paradox of getting something worthy by not trying. But the outcome is there, if only we can convince ourselves of the virtues of bringing mindfulness into our lives by giving it a try.



I might not be able to convince you here and now of the amazing benefits of meditation and yoga. But if you were to read "Full Catastrophe Living," by Jon Kabat-Zinn, PhD, you might become convinced. In splendid detail, Dr. Kabat-Zinn shares many of the recent scientific findings that confirm our brains are much more powerful than we give them credit, and our mind state can deeply influence our personal chemistry, biology and health. I hope you contemplate the idea of bringing gentle, loving, non-striving and non-doing into your routines, which just might positively influence health throughout the lifespan. ■

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

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# SENIORS and the benefits of spending time outdoors

Spring has finally arrived, and summer is quickly approaching. When you're finally able to go outside, especially after the winter we had, there's no other feeling quite like it. Being outside does more than just lift your spirits; it also provides a boost to your physical and mental well-being. And, for our seniors, this simple pastime could even be life saving.

New studies show older people who leave their homes daily live longer than those who remain indoors, regardless of their health. Staying inside has negative effects on the physical health of the senior and also on their psychological health. Those who stay inside are more prone to develop depression, anxiety and other mental illnesses. Those who like to get outdoors and run, bike or even walk have



a reduced risk of developing mental health problems regardless of their current health conditions.

Along with preventing mental health problems, here are some other benefits seniors can reap from spending more time outdoors:

- **It can improve your short-term memory.** Our brains need breaks, too. Spending time outdoors can provide some space for your brain to restore. When you focus on what is around you, your brain can see what is, instead of the "what ifs" that can potentially lead to anxiety or depression.

- **It can have a de-stressing effect.** Spending time outdoors can lower your blood pressure and pulse rate and reduce the amount of cortisol, which is your stress hormone. So, getting outside is a great way for seniors to feel more active, which boosts their overall mood.

- **Boosts your immunity.** Studies have shown that spending time outdoors can boost your white cell count, which can last for days.

- **It can provide healthier sleep.** Who doesn't like a good night's rest? Spending time outside can help regulate your circadian rhythms and can improve your ability to not only fall asleep but also to stay asleep. Studies state this is because of the exposure to sunlight.

- **Lower overall risk of early death.** Studies have shown people with greater exposure to greenness and sunlight have a lower mortality rate. The biggest improvements have been shown in the reduced risk of death from cancer, lung diseases, heart diseases and kidney disease.

Spending time outdoors is a necessary and proven way to improve your overall mental and physical health, so you can see why it is a good idea to make going outside a part of your daily routine, especially for our seniors. ■

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



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# ESTATES and taxes

Are you worried about your family paying extra taxes when you die? There is some good news that can affect your estate planning.

Every estate is liable for a few different kinds of tax. Whether it is Federal estate taxes, income taxes, inheritance tax, or capital gains tax, your heirs may be writing checks to the government. Iowa is one of six states that still implements inheritance tax. But that is changing as Iowa phases out its inheritance tax law.

In general, inheritance isn't taxed as income; you won't pay income tax on a bequest. But when you inherit money or property from someone, you potentially owe tax to the State of Iowa. Inheritance tax is owed on all assets



passing to an individual. Some beneficiaries are exempt: a spouse, children, stepchildren, grandchildren and parents all have a 100% exemption from inheritance tax.

Other beneficiaries have no exemption. Siblings, sons- or daughters-in-law, nieces and nephews, and friends all owe inheritance tax. The tax rate can be as much as 15%. For this reason, some clients avoid leaving money to a family member because of the tax implications.

New legislation changes this by phasing out the inheritance tax. For deaths occurring in 2021, the tax rate is reduced by 20%. The rate will continue to be reduced by 20% each subsequent year until Jan. 1, 2025 when the exclusion will be 100%. No inheritance tax will be owed for individuals dying after Jan. 1, 2025, regardless of the relationship of the beneficiary.

This change to the law presents an estate-

planning opportunity for many clients. Clients can include a sibling or beloved son-in-law or daughter-in-law in their will or trust without worrying that the State of Iowa will take some of the inheritance. Nieces and nephews are now viable beneficiaries, without the risk of having tax imposed.

Your legacy to your loved ones can now be more inclusive. Many clients are now looking at their options for revising and updating their estate planning documents. If you have a last will and testament or a revocable trust and would like to include new beneficiaries, make sure you contact an attorney who specializes in estate planning and who understands the new tax laws. ■

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).

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## CHAMBER By Samantha Winebrenner

# EVENTS and celebrations ahead

April showers bring May flowers... and graduations, weddings, summer vacations, camps and much more. As we continue to prepare and wait for the warmer weather to grace us, life goes on. Many of us are filling up our calendars with lots of events and celebrations. As you are scheduling your days, be sure to look at our chamber calendar of events. Each month, one of our members hosts a Breakfast Before Business, a Business After Hours and a Chamber Luncheon with guest speakers covering a variety of topics. We always welcome nonmembers to visit one of these events so you can meet and speak with current members, learn more about the chamber and how we can benefit you and your business overall.



With wishes of summer approaching, we are planning one of our biggest celebrations for the Johnston community — our annual Johnston Green Days festival. This three-day festival will take place June 16-19, and activities include a business expo, live music and entertainment, beer garden, carnival, parade, a car show, our Smokin' Heroes event and many more activities as well as educational opportunities provided by our local organizations. In addition — and exclusive to this year's theme, "Discovering the Undiscovered" — there will be a city-wide scavenger hunt. The festival is free to attend and open to the public. Our business expo, Jammin' in Johnston, kicks off our celebration on Thursday evening and is open to chamber members and nonmembers. If you are interested in participating, go to our website, [johnstongreendays.org](http://johnstongreendays.org), where you can register for a booth as well as to be in the parade or even volunteer with friends and family.

Along with planning celebrations, we are also happy to join our members in recognizing their own growth and triumphs. In the recent months, we have had many great events and celebrations welcoming new businesses and supporting current ones. We would like to welcome the following new members: Clarity Chiropractic, Family Heritage, Iowa Clinic Johnston Physical Therapy, Pat Ward Photography, Iowa Business Growth Co., QB Studios Custom Apparel, and The Yard at Johnston Town Center. If you are looking for services, be sure to check out these new members as well as all our members in our business directory. And, as you continue planning and scheduling your calendars, whether you are a business or a resident, be sure to check out your local communities' events and celebrations, and don't forget to shop local.

### Upcoming events

- May 10: Breakfast Before Business hosted by Bishop Drumm Retirement Center, 7:30 a.m.
- May 26: Chamber Luncheon at Hilton Garden Inn with a speaker from the City of Johnston, 11:30 a.m.
- June 2: Business After Hours hosted by Winwood Apartments, 5 p.m. ■

Information provided by Samantha Winebrenner, Johnston Chamber Executive Director, [samantha@johnstonchamber.com](mailto:samantha@johnstonchamber.com), 515-276-9064. For more information about the Johnston Chamber, visit our website at [www.johnstonchamber.com](http://www.johnstonchamber.com).



# RIBBON Cutting

Johnston Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting for Clarity Chiropractic, 5525 Merle Hay Road, Johnston, on April 14.



Johnston Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting for Clarity Chiropractic, 5525 Merle Hay Road, Johnston, on April 14.



Jay Mathes and Raquel Ball



Samantha Winebrenner and Brenda Ballard



Ivy Porterfield, holding a donation jar for Forever Home Dog Rescue.



Allison Porterfield and Connie Ridgway



Scott Kundel and Amy Wise



Brian Hilgenberg, Mark Rheinschmidt and Paula Bierle



Sharon Vickery and Lisa Hanrahan



Megan West, Allison Porterfield, Walker Porterfield, Shane Goodman and Carlee Glenn



## OUT & ABOUT



Paula Bierle and Marla Bundy at the Johnston Chamber of Commerce's Business After Hours at Charter Bank on April 7.



Brenda Ballard and Jolene Goodman at the Johnston Chamber of Commerce's Business After Hours at Charter Bank on April 7.



Danielle Witzenburg and Brooke Ruddy at the Johnston Chamber of Commerce's Business After Hours at Charter Bank on April 7.



Allison Porterfield and Walker Porterfield at the Johnston Chamber of Commerce's Business After Hours at Charter Bank on April 7.



Scott Wendl and Pat Ward at the Johnston Chamber of Commerce's April Luncheon with Ray Cole held at Stoney Creek Inn on March 24.



Kent Farver and Amber Dakan at the Johnston Chamber of Commerce's April Luncheon with Ray Cole held at Stoney Creek Inn on March 24.



Gary Walljasper and Dan Fitzgerald at the Johnston Chamber of Commerce and Johnston Rotary joint breakfast at Hyperion Field Club on April 12.



Wayne Johnson and Deb Bishop at the Johnston Chamber of Commerce and Johnston Rotary joint breakfast at Hyperion Field Club on April 12.



Andrea Hodapp, Ray Cole and Samantha Winebrenner at the Johnston Chamber of Commerce's April Luncheon with Ray Cole held at Stoney Creek Inn on March 24.



Jim Miles, Scott Cooley and Doyle Sanders at the Johnston Chamber of Commerce and Johnston Rotary joint breakfast at Hyperion Field Club on April 12.



Brenda Ballard and Brian Hilgenberg at the Johnston Chamber of Commerce and Johnston Rotary joint breakfast at Hyperion Field Club on April 12.



Nicholas Hanstad, Jason Wiegert and Joe Thatcher at the Johnston Chamber of Commerce and Johnston Rotary joint breakfast at Hyperion Field Club on April 12.





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