



SCAN TO WATCH VIDEO EDITION



Front window of the Painted Cowgirl, 123 E. Broadway (photo posted on social media by business owner).

History-minded entrepreneur finds downtown building perfect location for new business

Painted Cowgirl boutique opens on Broadway

Last month, a Mt. Vernon area resident opened a new business in downtown Johnston City. The Painted Cowgirl, a women's and children's boutique now occupies a historic building at 123 E. Broadway (corner of Broadway and Washington Ave.). It was the style of the old building, owned and previously renovated by the Mitchell family, that drew owner Gwen Grass-Hoils to Johnston City. Her friend and employee Crystal (Norris) Beal, a resident of Johnston City, mentioned the property was for rent. Grass-Hoils checked social media and was impressed by photos of the building's windows. When she talked to owner Jeanie Mitchell, she decided, "It was a done deal. Everything went according to plan." March 15 was a "soft launch"; the grand opening will be later this month.

Grass-Hoils and her husband own a farm and a demolition business in the unincorporated community of Texico, near Mt. Vernon. Yet demolition is what Gwen sought to prevent when Texico's 123-year-old bank building, post office, and train station were up for auction and potential tear-down by another local resident. She attended the auction and bought all three buildings with the intent of preserving them.

The family moved to southern Illinois about 10 years ago when Gwen opened The Painted Cowgirl Market, a vendor market and antique store in Mt. Vernon. The name was conceived from her Oklahoma heritage and her penchant for recycling and painting old furniture. Originally from Oologah, Oklahoma, near the birthplace of renowned humorist Will Rogers, Gwen has researched her family's history and discovered her great, great grandfather was the Cherokee chief for whom the town is named. The word *oologah* means "dark clouds" in that native American language. She also discovered a southern Illinois connection in her genealogy. One of her ancestors was a doctor in Jefferson County.

Gross-Hoils not only loves old buildings, she says, "I've fallen in love with this town and the way the community comes together." Her boutique offers new clothing of all styles, from preemie baby clothes to women's plus sizes.

Community wide yard sale to benefit library reading program

BY MARGIE SANDERS
If you would like to be a part of something big, plan to participate in Johnston City's Annual Community Yard Sale, Saturday, May 3. The Johnston City Public Library hosts the event and provides sale-goers a free map outlining all participating sale locations. Cost for inclusion on the map is \$5 with registration and fee payable until April 30 at the library during regular operating hours. Most yard sales will extend from 7am-2pm. The library will also hold a Big Book and Yard Sale at the Scout Cabin on that day. All proceeds from the library sale go toward its summer reading program. Join 25-30 other individuals or groups who want to be a part of something big. For more information contact the library,

Exit 59 work may begin in '28 State plans to replace Stiritz I-57 overpass –Mayor

Johnston City Mayor Doug Dobbins has announced the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) plans to replace the I-57 overpass linking Illinois Rt. 37 to the Village of Stiritz. "I believe the state will let bids for the project this summer and begin work in the fall," Dobbins said.

The mayor said the project will require closing I-57 for approximately four days. The overpass is several miles north of Johnston City.

Dobbins said IDOT also plans to make improvements to the I-57 interchange at Johnston City starting about 2028.

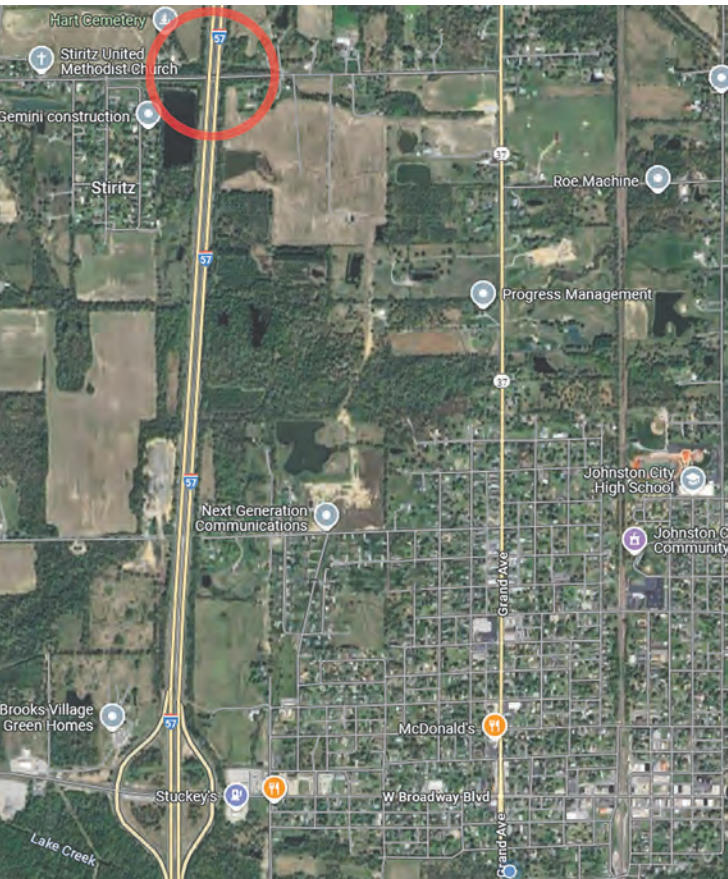
City sponsors Easter Egg hunt, spring cleanup

BY TIM HASTINGS
Johnston City will celebrate spring with a children's Easter Egg Hunt and three citywide cleanup days, sponsored by city government.

The Easter Egg Hunt will be held at Arrowhead Park. Saturday, April 19, beginning at 1:00 pm. Separate hunts are planned for the following age groups: 0-3; 4-6; and 7-9. A hunt will also be provided for children with special needs.

A grand prize will be awarded in each group, and the Easter Bunny will pose for photos with attendees.

The city will accept larger-than-usual items curbside during designated spring cleanup days, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, May 12-14. Citizens should take unwanted items to the curb for pickup on their regular trash service day. The city will not accept paint or electronics.



Johnston City's Interstate exchange. The Stiritz overpass is highlighted (photo Google Maps)



Lake Creek Lodge presented checks of \$1,725 each to JC Kids' Lunch Bunch and the JC Public Library. Librarian Cindy Pulsford (L) and Lunch Bunch Program Director Marta Phillips (R) are pictured here with lodge members (L-R) Doug Hancock, Jimmy Sherrod, Mike Overturf, Levi Loyd, Dustin Rees, Brian Lindsey, and A.J. Farkas.

Lodge donates \$3,450 to local summer programs

March 13, Lake Creek Lodge #729 AF&AM presented checks of \$1,725 each to JC Kids' Lunch Bunch and the JC Public Library for their summer programs. Last fall, the lodge sponsored a "Coins for Kids" drive at the four-way stop on the west side of town. That effort yielded collections of \$1,950, to be equally divided between the two organizations (\$975 a piece). However, the Grand Lodge in Springfield contributed another \$750 to each program for the final totals.

Lake Creek Lodge #729 is celebrating its 150th anniversary this year with a special event at a later date.

The lodge, located on the corner of Washington and 5th Street, is used for many local events, and is available for a rental fee. Call 618-889-3784 for more details.

Farmers Market opens with new time, vendors

Opening day for the Johnston City Farmers Market will be April 11, according to market organizer Janet Thornton. She anticipates a larger crowd and cooler summer temperatures with the market's new schedule

(7:00 to 11:00 am). Vendors already scheduled for opening day include: Jerry Eldridge (landscaping plants); R & J Honey; Trox's Crafts & Veggies; Primitive Creations, Inc; Fisher's Garden; Jelly JAMboree Emporium; Eagle Point Emporium; Neitzel Family Farm LLC;

and Ken Forsythe (wooden furniture/birdhouses). For information about the market or becoming a vendor, see Facebook (Johnston City, IL Farmers Market). The market is located at 116 E. Broadway and operates Friday mornings from April through October.

Opportunities to Celebrate Easter in Local Churches

- FIRST CHRISTIAN

 - Easter: Breakfast, 9:30 am; Worship Service, 10:30 am
 - Easter Egg Hunt (for all ages) following service (open to community).

UNITED PENTECOSTAL

 - Easter Services, 10 am

FAMILY WORSHIP CENTER

 - Good Friday (4/18), Worship and Communion, 6:30 pm.
 - Easter Resurrection Service, 10:30 am
- UNITED METHODIST

 - 4/16 Seder Dinner, FUMC Johnston City, 7 pm
 - Maundy Thursday, (4/17): Stiritz UMC, 7 pm
 - Good Friday, FUMC, 7 pm.
 - Easter Sunrise Service, FUMC, 7 am; Worship Service, 9 am.

WASHINGTON AVE. BAPTIST

 - Easter: Sunday School, 9:30 am; Worship Service 10:30 am

ST. PAUL'S CATHOLIC

 - Palm Sunday (4/13): Mass, 9 am
 - Easter: Mass, 9 am
- JCITY CHURCH (FREE WILL BAPTIST)

 - 4/6: Movie night, "War Room," 6 pm
 - 4/13: JCMA Palm Sunday Community Service (Gaylon Stewart, speaker), 6 pm
 - Easter: Coffee/refreshments, 9 am; Sunday School, 9:30 am; Worship Service, 10:30 am

For more information about these services, please contact the host church. See church directory for addresses and phone numbers.

Easter Inspiration

The Garden Experience

BY RICK DITCH

Four times a year the seasons change, and these changes happen every year. It sure seems that spring earns the heavy lifting when it comes to excitement and motivation. Think about all the topics we hear in the conversations around us when someone is really "amped up" concerning this time of year: Spring break, spring training, golf, March Madness, yard and gardens, fishing, time change, and the list goes on, including the joy of Easter.

Let's focus on garden-ing for a few minutes. The difference between a jungle, a briar patch, weeds, or a bramble and a garden is simply intention or purpose. Gardens will always have living things with a planned purpose. In the Holy Scriptures, we find at least three significant uses of a garden setting: The Garden of Eden; The Garden of Gethsemane; and the garden tomb belonging to Joseph of Arimathea, where the body of Jesus was placed. The location where Christ's mortal body was entombed was known well to His followers, right down to the last foot of space in that garden. But when they returned to finish the embalming, the tomb was empty, opened by the powerful force of a resurrected Savior. The intention and purpose of this garden event remains clear. God was fulfilling His promise to His creation, providing a way for humans to live with Him forever, victori-ous over mortality. He is offering us eternal life.

We can celebrate the Resurrection by putting this garden experience ahead of all the other enticements and shunning the siren calls of spring long enough to respond to God's invitation of grace, sufficient to bring us safely home to Him. Our senses will be naturally heightened by the newness of life all around us in fresh leaves and sprouts, blooms and blossoms, all bringing to our remembrance the promise of eternal life.

Peace to you. Happy Easter.

Rick Ditch has been active in our community nearly all his life and is a member of the Methodist Church.



- Family Worship Center**
400 W. 13th St.
Johnston City, IL.
(618) 952-1280
Pastors Brad & Kelly Dexter

First Baptist Church
401 E. 7th St.
Johnston City, IL 62951
(618) 983-6455
Larry Stevens, pastor

***First Christian Church**
505 E. Broadway Blvd.
Johnston City, IL 62951
618-983-6474
Adam King, pastor

***First United Methodist Church**
400 W. Broadway
Johnston City, IL 62951
618-983-5150
Sherry Cisneros, pastor

***Heritage Fellowship**
(Church of God of Prophecy)
308 W. 12th St.
Johnston City, IL 62951
Pastors Gaylon & Dawn Stewart

***JCity Church**
(Free Will Baptist)
609 Monroe
Johnston City, IL 62951
618-983-5254
Dr. Randy Carney, pastor
- Johnston City United Pentecostal Church**
1101 W. 10th
Johnston City, IL 62951
618-983-5938
Brandon Abernathy, pastor

***St. Paul's Catholic Church**
1103 Washington Ave.
Johnston City, IL 62951
618-983-5073
Father Brian Barker

***Stiritz United Methodist Church**
Sherry Cisneros, pastor

***Washington Ave. Baptist Church**
9th and Washington
Johnston City, IL 62951
Barry Robertson, pastor
618-694-2995

Other Ministries

***JC Kids' Lunch Bunch**
c/o JCity Church (see above)

***JCity Center for Hope and Renewal**
504 E. Broadway Blvd.
Johnston City, IL 62951
618-952-1272

***Manna Mission**
306 E. Broadway Blvd.
Johnston City, IL 62951
618-983-6262

*Active members of Johnston City Ministerial Alliance

Johnston City Ministerial Alliance
Community Service

Palm Sunday

Guest Speaker, Gaylon Stewart
PASTOR OF HERITAGE FELLOWSHIP

APRIL 13 6:00 PM

JCity Church, 609 Monroe (Broadway & Monroe)

Christ & Community First

JCity Church
FREE WILL BAPTIST

Broadway & Monroe (609 Monroe)
618-983-5254 | jcitychurch.com
Randy Carney, pastor

Sunday School 9:30 | Morning Worship 10:30 | Wed. Night 7:00

JCMA
JOHNSTON CITY MINISTERIAL ALLIANCE

The churches of Johnston City working together to serve our community as the "hands and feet of Jesus."

Helping residents of the Johnston City School District
Call 618-952-1272 for information

Coulson's

HEATING & COOLING

Since 1961

983-8133

Heating & Air Conditioning
Amana



COMMUNITY
CALENDAR

April Events

APRIL 1 - ELECTION DAY
Business Leaders Meet-N-Greet, Andresen's, 9 am

APRIL 1 & 8 Kids' Art Class, JCity Center (CANCELED)

APRIL 2
Rotary Blood Drive, Scout Cabin, 10 am-3 pm

APRIL 5
Lions Club Fish Fry, Masonic Hall, 11 am-2 pm

APRIL 8
City Council, Scout Cabin, 5 pm

APRIL 11
Farmers Market opens, 7-11 am

APRIL 13 - PALM SUNDAY
Community Service, JCity Church, 6 pm

APRIL 14
Lions, Andresen's, 9 am

APRIL 15 - TAX DAY
NEW! K-2nd Grade Kids' Art Class, JCity Center, 4:00-5:15 pm

APRIL 16
Rotary, Indigo Realty, 4 pm

APRIL 17
Commodity Dist./Food Pantry, First United Methodist, 9:30 am - 12:30 pm
Early School Dismissal
School Board Mtg., 6 PM

APRIL 18 - No School

APRIL 20 - EASTER

APRIL 21 - No School
JC Planning Commission Meeting, Scout Cabin, 5 pm

APRIL 22
City Council, Scout Cabin, 5:00 pm
Kids' Art Class, JCity Center, 4:00-5:15 pm

APRIL 29
Kids' Art Class, JCity Center, 4:00-5:15 pm

May Events

MAY 1
School Spring Concert

MAY 2
Half day of school

MAY 3
Community Yard Sale

MAY 6
Business Leaders Meet-N-Greet, Andresen's, 9 am
Kids' Art Class, JCity Center, 4:00-5:15 pm
Lions, JCity Church, 6 pm

MAY 7
Rotary, Andresen's, Noon

MAY 12-14
Citywide Cleanup Days

MAY 13
City Council, Scout Cabin, 5 pm
K-2nd Grade Kids' Art Class, JCity Center, 4:00-5:15 pm

MAY 15
School Board Mtg., 6 pm

MAY 16
School early dismissal
JCHS Graduation

MAY 17
Commodity Dist./Food Pantry, First United Methodist, 9:30 am - 12:30 pm

MAY 19
JC Planning Commission Meeting, Scout Cabin, 5 pm

MAY 20
School early dismissal
8th Grade Promotion

MAY 21
Rotary, Indigo Realty, 4 pm

MAY 21-23, 27
School early dismissal

MAY 26
MEMORIAL DAY
Commemorative program at War Memorial, 9 am

No school

MAY 27
City Council, Scout Cabin, 5 pm

Weekly Events

THURSDAYS
Food pantry/clothes closet
First Christian 3:30-5:30 pm

FRIDAYS
farmers Market, 7-11 am (begins April 17)

SATURDAYS
Community Meal (drive-thru), JCity Church, 5:30-6:00 pm

Library's Puzzle Race Winners



The Johnston City Public Library sponsored a puzzle race, March 20, at the Masonic Hall. The winning team consisted of Cheyenne Jackson, Erin Jones, Monica Herzog, Lisa Daily, and Jamy King.

Drive Your Tractor to School Day at JCHS



Check out these rides for "Drive Your Tractor to School Day." (JCHS Photo)

Students celebrate National Ag Week

A handful of JCHS students traded in their cars or trucks for a tractor to help celebrate National Ag Week, March 21-27. The event raises awareness about the importance of agriculture and farming, and showcases the machinery and equipment used in the industry.

JCHS also hosted an Ag Awareness Night for FFA chapters in the surrounding area. Around 74 students attended and heard speakers Nicole Cressey, Nathan Schatte, Brad Price, Jeremiah Bright, and the Neitzel Family Farm talk about the agriculture industry. Section 24 FFA officers organized the program. Five JCHS students, first year FFA members, competed in the Green-hand Quizbowl.

The JCHS local chapter expressed plans to make next year's National Ag Week celebration even bigger and better.

MORE SCHOOL NEWS ON PP. 4-5

CARING COUNSELING MINISTRIES

11TH ANNUAL
GOLF SCRAMBLE

PARTNERING WITH
JCITY CENTER FOR HOPE AND RENEWAL
& TAKE ACTION TODAY

June 20, 2025

• Check in 9 AM • Tee Time 10 AM

Hickory Ridge Golf Course
Carbondale, Illinois

Support three Southern Illinois nonprofits by:

- Becoming a corporate sponsor
- Sponsoring a hole
- Donating silent auction items
- Sponsoring (or playing on) a team

To sign up, visit
<https://tinyurl.com/48audk29>
or scan QR code



JCity Arrow News. Published monthly by JCity Center for Hope and Renewal, Inc.
504 E. Broadway Blvd., Johnston City, IL 62951, 618-952-1272, jcitycenter@gmail.com, www.jcity.center

CREATIVE DIRECTOR Keith Fletcher
MANAGING EDITOR Sarah Fletcher
REPORTERS Tim Hastings, Doug Hancock, Margie Sanders
PODCAST CO-HOST Doug Hancock
SPONSOR RELATIONS Margie Sanders
DISTRIBUTION TEAM Phil Crosby, Doug Hancock
Don & Brenda McChesney
STUDENT REPORTER/VIDEO EDITOR Ben Johnson

BOARD MEMBERS
Keith Fletcher, chairman
Mike Tyson, secretary
Brenda McChesney, treasurer
Cris Corzine-McCloskey
Randy McIntosh
Marta Phillips

To submit news items, story ideas, events, employment/volunteer opportunities, donations, please call 618-952-1272 or email jcitycenter@gmail.com. All items for publication must pertain to events, individuals, or jobs located within Johnston City, Illinois.

Unless otherwise noted, all content in JCity Arrow News (podcast & print edition) is
Copyright © 2024 of JCity Center for Hope and Renewal, Inc. All rights reserved.

JC Manna Mission
THRIFT STORE
306 E. Broadway Blvd., Johnston City, IL 62951
618-983-6262
Mon. & Wed.: 9:30-4:00 • Tues.: 9:30-5:30
& First Sat. Monthly: 9:30-12:30

Paul E Lawrence, Agent

305 E Broadway PO Box 118
Johnston City, IL 62951
Bus: 618-983-6953
paul.lawrence.by9j@statefarm.com



futiva[®]
Providing High Speed Internet Service

futiva.biz

618-736-2901

JCHS CNA program preps students for healthcare careers

BY BROOKE SCHLYER,
JOHNSTON CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

At a young age, Erin West took note of the hard work nurses put into every shift. At the time, West sat next to her dad’s hospital bed as he battled Stage 3 Lymphoma Cancer. West remembers nursing staff gently breaking the bad news to her family and taking care of him during his appointments.

“When you’re younger and you watch TV shows, you think the doctor does everything,” she recalls. “This kind of gave me a new appreciation for nurses.”

After successful treatment, nurses also shared the good news of her dad’s cancer remission, a stage he’s still enjoying today.

“It literally felt like they wanted nothing but the best for us,” she looks back. “It just really made me kind of want to make that same difference in somebody else’s life.”

Now, West is on her way to becoming a nurse and making that difference for future patients in our community. The 17-year-old senior is part of the high school’s Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program.

In 2014, JCHS teacher Mrs. Brenda Mummert, having an extensive background in healthcare, created the hands-on program and became its instructor. Mummert believes the drive to help others like West is something her students must have when enrolling in the elective.

“First and foremost, I tell the kids, somewhere in your DNA you have to care about people,” Mummert says. “You’ve got to have some compassion for people.”

Other requirements are outstanding attendance, being on time for classes, good behavior, and passing core classes like Math, Science, English, and History.

Sophomore year students learn the foundations of healthcare: history of medicine, Medicaid/Medicare, health insurance, healthcare funding, ethics, and CPR certification.

Other components include personality inventories (so students can learn more about their strengths and weaknesses) and guest speakers to share about their experience in healthcare.

“I have amazing people in the community [who] come in,” Mummert explains. “They bring things for students to do and talk about—surgical technology, respiratory therapy, physical therapy, pharmacy—anything you can imagine.”

Junior year students get the chance to job shadow



CNA students at JCHS (Brooke Schlyer photo)

in areas such as physical therapy, surgery, obstetrics, and more, to narrow down which branch of medicine suits them best. Students also gain Emergency Medical Responder certification.

“They’re licensed as an emergency medical responder,” Mummert says. “So, they learn basic first responder skills, they take a test, and they are licensed. I’m very proud of that.”

The senior level marks the capstone of the class: The CNA program. In the first semester, students must take and pass the state CNA test. In the second semester, students have the option of work-study either as a pharmacy technician or phlebotomist.

West will soon start working toward her pharmacy tech certification at Deaconess Illinois Medical Center—a path inspired by another family member.

“My middle sister did the same (CNA) program with Mrs. Mummert,” she says. “My sister also did pharmacy tech and I kind of saw how much it helped her in nursing school. One of the most infamous classes in nursing school is pharmacology, and she said it was really nice to be able to work with a pharmacist and be right up close to it before ever starting nursing school.”

West and fellow CNA student Taylor Woolard will both have to juggle work-study along with softball and working part-time at Blondie’s Bakery.

“I would say the biggest challenge is just balancing my time and studying for the CNA class,” Woolard acknowledges. “And, you know, being up early to go to the hospital isn’t the easiest thing, but I know that it’s gonna benefit me.”

Woolard has already started her work-study at Deaconess in Marion, opting for phlebotomy over pharmacy technician. The

18-year-old senior begins her day at the hospital, two hours before school starts, and spends four hours on-site.

“Honestly, I just wasn’t that interested in the drugs and stuff like that,” Woolard explains. “I thought sticking people was cool.”

The two girls are best friends and have high hopes of completing the nursing program at Rend Lake College, then getting a job in southern Illinois, helping fill the need for healthcare workers.

“I’d like to stay local just because I have everything here and my family’s here,” Woolard explains. “I’d like to work either in the ER or in a labor and delivery unit.”

A recent CNA pinning ceremony, February 28, 2025, recognized the hard work and accomplishments of individuals like Woolard and West, and offered family and friends opportunity to support students enrolled in the CNA program.

OPINION

Referee on Sunday

BY JIMMY DEAN
Back in July, I received an email from a basketball assigner about refereeing a Christmas Holiday Tournament in Mascoutah. Having called at the tournament the year before, I didn’t think much about the dates of December 27 and December 29.

Later in the year, when I was putting my schedule together for the upcoming season, I noticed the 29th fell on a Sunday. I called the assigner thinking they had made a mistake and the date should be Saturday. The answer I received was “No, the IHSA okayed games being played on Sunday. That is the correct date.”

I realize that a lot of baseball and softball games are played in the summer on Sunday. Though not sanctioned by the IHSA, summer tournaments are a norm, as witnessed by the packed West Frankfort Park next to the First Christian Church where we attend.

The point of me bringing this up and writing about it is this: Where do you draw the line?

One retired coach said, “Kids need a day or two off. Whether for going to church, or just to rest, they need rest like everyone.”

One minister whose daughter is an up-and-coming athlete told me his daughter will not play on Sunday unless it’s in the afternoon. “We told the coaches if she was going to play on weekends, she was not going to play on Sunday mornings.”

Parents and coaches both say you have to play on weekends if you’re going

to get better and get that college scholarship and maybe go further. Playing against better competition will for sure make you a better player, but where do you draw the line?



Jimmy Dean is a freelance writer and former mayor of Johnston City. can be reached at atjrdean@mchsi.com.

Not only is playing on the “Sabbath” something parents have to deal with, but there’s also the cost of hotels, gas, meals, etc., as added-in factors to AAU basketball, volleyball, baseball and other sports.

I got caught up in this one summer when I took my son to the University of Southern Indiana’s baseball games for eight straight Sundays. We were not looking to get him a scholarship, but just to let him compete at something he loved.

The game at Mascoutah? I accepted this and refereed. I did attend church that morning (good thing we have early service) and hightailed it to Mascoutah. However, if the same date next year falls on a Sunday, I plan to turn it down.

No way am I pointing a finger at parents who take their kids to these weekend events. What I am saying is, I don’t think the IHSA should allow events to be played on Sunday.

My name is on the top of this column, and it is only my opinion, but I would like to get some other thoughts on the subject. My email is listed above. Thanks for reading.

Students volunteer at local food giveaway

BY BROOKE SCHLYER,
JOHNSTON CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

JCHS National Honor Society students numbered among volunteers in the March commodity distribution and food giveaway at the First United Methodist Church. Heather Miller, Full-Service Community School Coordinator at JCHS, joined the group. She noted that this is the second month in a row that students have offered a helping hand.

Junior Sophie Walker has participated both times. “I just really love helping everybody and like to put that joy into people,” says the 16-year-old student. “It really opens my eyes to how grateful I am and should

be about everything that I have.”

Several church members and regular volunteers expressed thankfulness for students giving their time, especially on commodity days, when nearly all the food goes home with local neighbors. The next commodity distribution date is set for April 17, with volunteers welcomed.



One of many food carts carried by volunteers at the food distribution March 20 (Brooke Schlyer photo)

ARROW NEWS

Never miss an issue, subscribe to the online edition of the Arrow here.



jcity.center/subscribe



MURMAN & WILSON
FUNERAL HOME
KYLE SAVANT • RAYMOND SAVANT • ERIK SAVANT
618.983.6542
211 W. BROADWAY JOHNSTON CITY • MURMANANDWILSON.COM



ARK
INSURANCE GROUP, INC.
Home Auto Life Health
Office: (618) 983-8000 Fax: (618) 983-8001
1109 Grand Ave.
Johnston City, IL 62951
arkinsurance@ark4me.com



Washington Avenue Baptist Church
9th and Washington
Johnston City, IL 62951
Barry Robertson, pastor
618-694-2995



**Johnston City
West Frankfort
Zeigler
Thompsonville
Herrin**




Banterra®
PROUDLY SERVING OUR COMMUNITIES SINCE 1975
908 GRAND AVE. | JOHNSTON CITY | 618-983-6925
BANTERRA.BANK | 866-226-8377 | MEMBER FDIC

Band teacher takes note of student progress

BY BROOKE SCHLYER,
JOHNSTON CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

For a handful of students at Washington Middle School first block is band. Students start class by warming up their instruments, including 8th grader Scarlet Corey, who joined to spend more time with her older sibling.

“My big brother was playing in 5th grade,” the student reflects. “I’m like, Oh, I can play with him, too.”

Corey decided to honor her dad by choosing to play the trumpet like he did when he was in band class. Meanwhile, fellow 8th-grade student Jasmine Morgret selected the flute as her instrument. She’s also following in her family’s footsteps.

“My older sister started playing the flute for band class in 4th grade,” Morgret explains. “My mom also played in the band in high school.”

These musicians are getting ready for the Spring Concert. They’re putting hours of work into practice so they can be ready to perform. Morgret’s biggest challenge is hitting high notes on the flute, but Corey believes low notes on the trumpet are difficult.

“There’s a certain position of your lips you have to do,” she says. “It’s hard to explain, but it depends on how your lips are; you got to make it tight.”

Right now, the band is rehearsing several songs, including “Union March,” “Thunder March,” “Cantina Band,” “Paint It Black,” and “The Avengers.” Students have their favorite songs for different reasons.

“One of our newer songs that we’re learning is ‘Cantina Band,’” Morgret quips. “It’s from *Star Wars*, and I like the melody of it. It’s really nice, and it just flows. It’s really cool.”

Dr. Michael Smith, one of the middle school music teachers, came out of retirement in 2022 to help rebuild the district’s music program. He believes that playing these songs would have been more of a challenge just a few years ago.

“It’s a lot more than single notes and ‘Mary Had a Little Lamb,’” he says. “The

progress these students have made is really great.”

The school district and school board members have invested in the music program, providing instruments at a low-cost rental fee for students.

“At least 60% of the students in band class would not be playing if it were not for the generosity of the school board and the school district here,” Dr. Smith explains. “Supplying instruments at a much-reduced cost for those students has really helped the program grow.”

The school district also hired a full-time music teacher, Ms. Alexis Lignons, who began in fall 2023. She instructs classes at Lincoln Elementary School, Washington Middle School, and Johnston City High School.

With support from the district, as well as guidance from Dr. Smith and Ms. Lignons, students are going into 5th-grade band more prepared. Now, these young musicians know basic rhythms, how to read sheet music, and correct finger placement.

However, Dr. Smith believes music goes beyond playing an instrument. It makes students well-rounded people by learning about other school subjects.

“There’s nothing more engaging or hands-on,” he says. “They’re applying math, English, history and art—all at the same time.”

He is also teaching band students values like hard work, dedication, teamwork, and friendship—something band members feel when they walk through the door. Both Corey and Morgret say their favorite part of the class is being able to play music with their friends.

For Dr. Smith, though, this class means something more. “I just showed up to help out, and now we’ve become a family. Now, it’s more than that.”

The Spring Concert to be held at the high school has a tentative date of May 1, 7:00 pm. Performances will include Lincoln Elementary students on the Recorder, WMS/JCHS band, and WMS/JCHS choir.



Education
HIGH SCHOOL/MIDDLE SCHOOL IN SCHOOL SUSPENSION SUPERVISOR
LINCOLN SCHOOL PARAPROFESSIONAL
Use links on jcindians.org to applications for these positions. Return application and proof of certification to Mrs. Kathy Clark, Superintendent, Johnston City C.U.S.D. #1, 1113 Grand Ave., Johnston City, IL 62951.
PART-TIME MUSIC TEACHER (117 days). Send letter of interest, resume, certification, reference letters to Johnston City C.U.S.D. #1, Attn: Kathy Clark, 1113 Grand Avenue, Johnston City, IL 62951, or kkclark@jcindians.org.

Coaching Positions
HIGH SCHOOL: Assistant Volleyball Coach, Assistant Boys' Basketball Coach, Bowling Coach, Cross Country Coach, Dance Coach. Send a letter of interest to Mrs. Lindsey Bush, IHSA Athletic Director, Johnston City High School, 1500 Jefferson Avenue, Johnston City, IL 62951.

MIDDLE SCHOOL: Cross Country Coach, Volunteer Dance Coach. Please send a letter of interest to Mr. William Brayfield, SIJH-SAA Athletic Director, Washington Middle School, 100 E. 12th Street, Johnston City, IL 62951.

Transportation
The Johnston City C.U.S.D. #1 is accepting applications for the following positions:
SUBSTITUTE BUS DRIVER, SUBSTITUTE BUS MONITOR Please click on the link on jcindians.org for an application for these positions and return the application to Mrs. Rebecca Vancil, Director of Transportation, Johnston City C.U.S.D. #1, 1113 Grand Ave., Johnston City, IL 62951.

Food Services
OPAA! is now hiring Kitchen Staff and Substitute Kitchen Staff. Please see jcindians.org for more information and to apply for these positions.



Washington Middle School

More compositions from Mrs. Colson’s students

A Cold Day

BY CONNOR KOONTZ
The air outside was cold and thin—rain was approaching. A distant aroma of nature surrounded the area. Few sounds could be heard then. Occasional bird chirps and clicks; maybe a leaf rustle or two.

Bang!
A basketball suddenly collided with the ground, sending several children into its game. Rapid back-and-forth movements occurred as the ball passed from team to team.

I stood there watching them. A small visual static filled my vision—it did no harm to me. It’s always there. Nothing bad, just something with my eyes.

Another group had a volleyball. It was old and cracked, each telling a story. A droplet of water sped through the air and onto the blacktop. If it weren’t for the sound of joyful children, maybe its silent sound could be heard.

I walked over to this

group and was kindly offered to join.
Many rapid hits of the cold, hard ball later preluded the end of the outside time. Everybody walked inside as the rain picked up, glad the people were gone.
Goodbye.
The rain whispered.
Goodbye.

The Easter Lily

BY CHARLOTTE LINDSEY
The Easter lily is a graceful white, trumpet-shaped flower with petals that curl outwards. The stems and leaves are a rich evergreen color, contrasting with the ivory petals of the bloom to create an elegant ensemble. The bright yellow stamens poke out from the center of the funnel shape, inviting pollinators. The base of the flower is a light green as it fades out from the stem, surrounded by rich feather-shaped leaves that curl and bend. As well as the flowers’ graceful appearance, it also has a rich history.

The Easter lily originated from the Ryoku Islands in Japan, which is also where the main production of the flower began. They were introduced to Great Britain in 1819, becoming a staple of the flower market. As for the Americas, they were only introduced in 1880. Once WWII began, the production of the flowers greatly slowed, as costs to produce them were now focused on supporting the war effort. Overall, though, they symbolize purity and grace.

I think of the Easter lily as a beautiful, difficult to care for, but still very pretty flower. They are very nice looking, and I love them for that, but otherwise I just don’t care that much. I don’t want them completely exterminated like I want the prairie rose to be, but I’m not super passionate about them like I am for the hoya flower. They’re flowers that happen to coexist on the same planet with me. They are real and exist. I’m okay with that.



Dr. Michael Smith rehearses with Washington Middle School band students.

Scholar Bowl

(CONT. FROM P. 6)

Braden Stanley, and Sophie Walker; and Seniors: Chase McReynolds and Olivia Giron. This year’s team added to the power-player reputation that the JCHS Scholar Bowl team has earned over the years, gaining its fourth straight Black Diamond Conference title, fifth straight regional title, and third straight sectional title.

Multi-branch Mathematics Teacher and Scholar Bowl Coach Trevor Stanley collected his 200th career win during the event when Johnston City defeated St. Teresa. Stanley lauded the level of commitment and dedication of students as team practices begin in early October with up to 70 matches scheduled per season, most of these in Saturday tournaments.

“I’m proud of them because I know how hard they work,” Stanley commended. “At least with sports, you’re doing something completely different whenever you go out on the field or court. It’s a break from school. These kids voluntarily spend hours and hours doing more school after school.”
Junior Max Saavedra’s favorite content area is world history. “We’re not just nerds who are just answering questions,” the 17-year-old explains. “We put a lot of time and effort into this. We don’t just know facts, we know in-depth.”

This was Saavedra’s third time competing at the IHSA state tournament, with strategy and hope for a fourth in 2026. “I think the best way to go about it is reserved confidence,” he says.

“If you get too nervous, you don’t buzz in. If you get too confident, you buzz in and get it wrong.”

For McReynolds, the trip marked the closing chapter in his IHSA Scholar Bowl career.

“Getting to compete and getting to show that we can compete with the schools that are private and charge tuition, even though we’re rural” has proven a worthwhile accomplishment and a boost for the community.

Golf Bags (FROM P. 6)

provided for ourselves, so I’d say we’re all very grateful for them,” Josie adds.

Samantha Davis with Moreland/Bishop McDonald’s stopped by to see the players with their new golf bags.

“Our mission is to empower the people and communities that we serve,” Samantha explains. “This includes local students who are the future generation of our towns and communities. We hope these new golf bags will give these local players a boost of confidence out on the golf course.”



Junior League players practice at Arrowhead Park Ball Field (corner of E. 13th St. and Peterson Ave. in Johnston City). Almost 250 children will participate in the league this summer.

Junior League raises funds to improve field, plans opening day celebration

The Johnston City Junior Baseball League (JCJBL) will host a Pasta Bar Dinner, April 12, 4:30-6:30 pm at Washington School. Tickets are \$12 each or 5 tickets for \$50. The dinner is open to everyone, and carryouts will be available. Following the meal, a trivia night begins at 7:00. Groups who would like to play in the trivia contest may purchase a table for \$150. Teams may include up to eight people, and the purchase of a table includes tickets to the pasta dinner.

This fundraiser replaces the candy bar sale of previous years. Organizers are asking each ball team to enter at least one trivia team. Other groups not associated with a JCJBL team may also register and compete in the trivia event.

The league is seeking team sponsors and funds to renovate the Arrowhead Park Ball Field to meet the needs of players, families, and spectators, including making the facility more handicap accessible. "We want to continue to see this community grow and make JC's ballpark one of the best in the area," said Lindsey Miner, vice president of the JCJBL Board. "As a non-profit, we struggle to maintain our current facilities, let alone upgrade anything." The league relies solely on sponsors and the community to fund the program.

An additional fundraiser will correspond with the citywide yard sale, May 3. JCJBL plans to offer yard sale spaces in the parking lot at the ball field in exchange for a donation to the league. Opening day is May 10 and will include a parade and ceremony at the park, celebrating the 51st season of the local league. According to Miner, "We will be starting some new traditions that day along with our traditional parade and JC [intramural] games." The concession stand will be open with a full menu.

For more information, to register for the 2025 season, or to make a donation email jcjbleague@gmail.com or message the organization through its Facebook page.

SCAN FOR LATEST MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS SCHEDULES

<https://jcindians.bigteams.com/main/calendar>





PASTA BAR DINNER

You choose your Pasta, top with your favorite sauce, and garnish with yummy toppings.

April 12th
4:30 PM - 6:30 PM
Washington Middle School
Johnston City

\$12 a ticket or a Family of 5 eats for \$50

Includes: Pasta Dinner, Roll, and Drink



TWO EVENTS - ONE NIGHT

All proceeds go to the Johnston City Little League

TRIVIA NIGHT

???
\$150 per Table
Up to 8 players per table
Includes meal tickets to Pasta Dinner

Ask your child's Little League coach about joining their team or enter your own team

???
April 12th 2025
Trivia Starts at 7:00 PM

Please email jcjbleague@gmail.com to sign up



900 W BROADWAY BLVD
JOHNSTON CITY, IL 62951
618-952-5200
CONTACT@INDIGOREALTY.NET
[HTTPS://INDIGOREALTY.NET](https://indigorealty.net)



JCHS only public school to advance to finals Scholar Bowl competes in IHSA State Tournament

BY BROOKE SCHLYER,
JOHNSTON CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Johnston City High School's Scholar Bowl team competed March 22, in the Illinois High School Association's (IHSA) State Tournament in Normal, Illinois. The only public school advancing to the finals, Johnston City made a good showing at the round-robin event, defeating Decatur St. Teresa, while falling to both Niles (Northridge Prep) and Edwardsville (Metro-East Lutheran).

During the season, team members practiced before and after school for each match. The week before the tournament, team members devoted additional time reviewing topics like math, science, history, literature, and fine arts.

Senior Chase McReynolds, the team's captain, joined Scholar Bowl in middle school and continued participation throughout high school. "We have practiced every single day after school for two hours,"

the 18-year-old said of the pre-tournament week. "It does take a lot of time, but in the end, it's worth it."

Although the team did not bring home the prize, McReynolds led the 13-member team to a strong finish. Team members included Freshmen: Elijah Abbott, Jack Carnine, Kate Carnine, and Faith Husky; Sophomore: Ariyanna White; Juniors: Erica Hinkle, Cooper James, Max Saavedra, Logan Smith,

CONTINUED ON P.5



Golf team sporting new bags thanks to McDonald's

BY BROOKE SCHLYER,
JOHNSTON CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
JCHS Boys and Girls Golf teams are swinging in style after a grant from a local business enabled the teams to purchase 20 new golf bags proudly displaying the school name, mascot, and logo. Johnston City's Moreland/Bishop McDonald's gifted the grant as part of the company's fundraising efforts.

A handful of golf team players posed with a few of the new golf bags, including Junior Josie Welch and Sophomore Luke Davis.

"Everybody else always had matching everything, so now I think we'll look more like a team," Luke says.

"We all just had to use our own golf bags that we

CONTINUED ON P.5

JCHS 2024-25 golf team with a few of the 20 customized golf bags donated by Moreland/Bishop McDonald's, a locally owned and operated family business with 21 restaurants in southern Illinois, including the McDonald's located at 9th and Grand in Johnston City.



\$12 PER PERSON
fish, hushuppies, sides, dessert & drink

FREE CHILDREN'S EYE SCREENING (6 mos. - 6 yrs.)
No purchase necessary

Enjoy Every Crunchy Bite

MASONIC HALL, 501 WASHINGTON, JOHNSTON CITY

JOHNSTON CITY LIONS CLUB

FISH FRY

FUNDRAISER

SAT. APRIL 5
11:00AM-2:00PM
OR UNTIL WE RUN OUT

Proceeds to benefit Lions Club charities

Dine-in or Carry Out



Legence Bank

Member FDIC

LEGENCEBANK.COM