



# ARROW NEWS

FREE JOHNSTON CITY'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

## Jefferson Elementary Unveils Major Renovations, Welcomes Students to Upgraded Campus

BY BROOKE SCHLYER,  
JOHNSTON CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Students and staff returned to Jefferson Elementary this fall to find a transformed school campus, thanks to a major renovation and expansion project completed over the summer.

"It's a much bigger school now," said second-grade teacher Samantha Moore. "You almost get lost in it trying to find all the new rooms, but everyone has a space now."

The project includes a brand-new second-grade wing, complete with dedicated classrooms and re-



Samantha Moore, second-grade teacher at Jefferson Elementary, in a new classroom added by recent renovations (School District Photo).

rooms. Moore said students were thrilled: "They felt like big kids because they have their own hallway now."

Additional upgrades include a renovated library/media center, expanded

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

SEE PAGE 2 FOR DETAILS

Jefferson Elementary Fall

# CARNIVAL

OCTOBER 30, 5-8 PM

## Runners to test their limits at Arrowhead Lake Oct. 11-12

BY TIM HASTINGS

A slate of runners, some with a goal of running 100 miles in 24 hours, will participate in the Arrowhead Endurance Run at Arrowhead Lake, Saturday, October 11—Sunday, October 12.



Run Director Micki Colson said the event allows runners of all levels to set a personal goal and push themselves to reach it. "We have many runners who complete their first half-marathon, marathon and ultra-marathon because they aren't fighting a traditional race cut off," Colson said. "We also have runners who are trying to get in as many miles as possible within the time limit to win. We have had several get in over 100 miles in the 24-hour period."

Runners may start at staggered times on Saturday: 24-hour relay, 7 am; 12-hour race at 7 am, 6-hour race at 8 am, 3-hour race at 9 am, and 12-hour night race at 7 pm. The 2.25-mile gravel trail circles the lake. Spectators are welcome; admission is free. Follow updates at <https://www.facebook.com/share/1VZ-PzXbL6U>.

## City Council bans Kratom sales, updates rules on junk cars

Members of the City Council recently voted to ban the sale of Kratom and its derivatives, joining other communities in the county.

During the Council's September 23 session, Police Chief J.D. Barter warned that the herbal product, imported largely from Southeast Asia, poses serious health risks. "Up to a third of users experience side effects like cardiac arrest, liver damage, or brain bleeding," he noted, adding that products are often contaminated with heavy metals due to poor quality control.

Kratom, made from the leaves of a tropical tree, is sold in smoke shops and online as a supplement. Supporters tout its use for pain relief and easing opioid withdrawal, but federal health officials warn of addiction risks and inconsistent safety standards.

Only one local business is known to sell Kratom, though all retailers will be

notified of the new ordinance.

At the same meeting, the Council approved an updated ordinance aimed at addressing abandoned and inoperable vehicles on private property.

The measure outlines new procedures for notifying vehicle owners before an impoundment takes place. Under the ordinance, property owners will now be granted a hearing with a local official before a vehicle is removed. It also specifies the number of days owners have to relocate their vehicles.

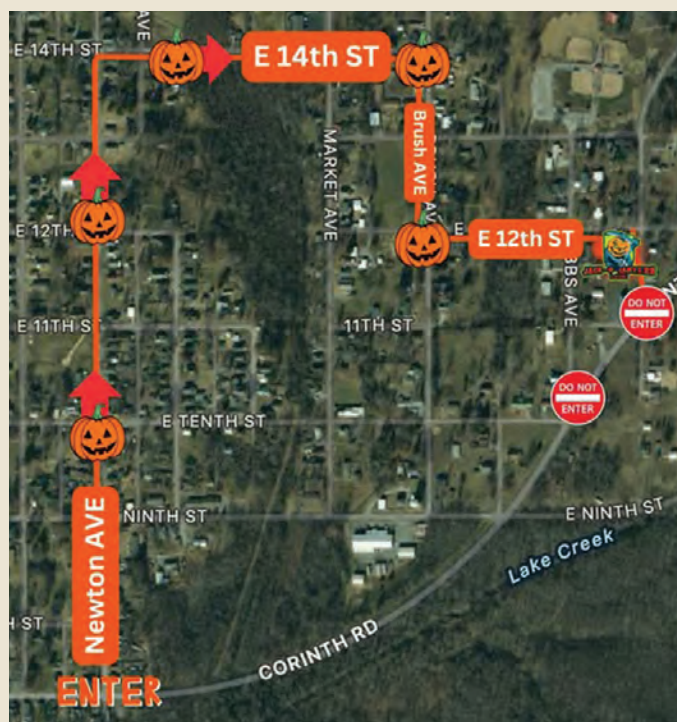
Vehicles moved into a permanent garage or other enclosed building will not be subject to towing. City officials emphasized that the ordinance, drafted by the city attorney, mirrors similar laws recently adopted in neighboring communities and ensures compliance with state law.



## Jack-O-Lantern Lane celebrates 5 years of fear

Jack-O-Lantern Lane, a free haunted drive-through adventure, promises its most terrifying season yet, with bigger and better features after a driver crashed through the display in early November 2024, prompting supporters to rally and raise funds toward restoration. Now in its fifth season, the Lane runs nightly through the month of October, and annually draws hundreds of Halloween enthusiasts.

This year's lineup features glowing pumpkins, spooky displays, and live actors on weekends who interact with cars for a fright-filled experience. Guests can choose their level of interaction, boosted by unlocking car doors or rolling down window. The route starts at 627 E. Broadway, with signs to manage traffic and ensure safety.



Hours: Sept. 27 - Oct. 31 (weather permitting)  
Sunday-Thursday: 6-10 p.m.  
Friday-Saturday: 6-11 p.m.  
Live Actors: Fridays & Saturdays, 7:30-9:30 p.m. (or until lines clear, no later than 11 p.m.)

## Bandy's offers A-Maze-ing family-friendly fun

Families as well as individuals and groups can enjoy fall festivities at Bandy's Pumpkin Patch daily through October 30. In its 39th year, the Johnston City venue offers a 10-acre corn maze, hayrides, children's play barn, and even a dedicated autism-friendly sensory area. Visitors may select and purchase pumpkins and gourds, enjoy a variety of concession items, and shop at a country store located on the premises.

The Bandy family welcomes school field trips and offers options for birthday parties, company parties, and private events for churches, community groups, or civic organizations.

The Patch is open seven days a week during the following hours, with extended hours on Sunday, October 12. Bandy's is closed on Halloween.

Hours: Sept. 20 - Oct. 30  
Sunday-Thursday: 9 am-8 pm  
Friday-Saturday: 9 am-10 pm  
Sunday, October 12: 9am-10pm

See [www.bandypumpkinpatch.com](http://www.bandypumpkinpatch.com) for pricing options and party time slots, or contact Bandy's by phone: (618) 983-8676 for more information.

## Arrowhead Campground plans Spooktacular event

Arrowhead Campground will once again host its Halloween Spooktacular, October 25. Free and open to the public, this annual event includes games, face painting, kids' activities, and a golf cart parade with ample opportunity for trick or treating at participating campsites throughout the campground. Awards will be given for best costumes, best decorated camper, and best decorated golf cart. Contact the campground for event start time.

## Follow the Trail of Treats

Local businesses, churches, and civic organizations will converge downtown on Halloween, providing hundreds of children and families a safe and organized setting for trick-or-treating. Police will block off a large section of Broadway to traffic, with parking available on adjoining streets and open parking lots. Individuals can follow the trail throughout the downtown area, participating in activities and obtaining treats from a variety of booths and designated sources. Groups desiring to participate should contact City Hall (100 W. Broadway) or call (618) 983-6651 for more information. The Trail of Treats begins at 4 pm and continues until 6 pm, with citywide trick-or-treating ending at 8 pm.

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The Stiritz Bridge crossing Interstate 57 was to be closed September 29. IDOT plans to deconstruct the bridge, October 5, starting at 7:00 pm with completion by October 6, 7:00 am. During that time, I-57 will be closed between Johnston City and West Frankfort.

Detour routes are as follows: Southbound I-57 Traffic: Exit 65 (West Frankfort) to IL 37 south, rejoining I-57 at Exit 59. Northbound I-57 Traffic: Exit 59 to IL 37 north, rejoining I-57 at Exit 65.

## Jefferson's Fall Carnival returns October 30

Jefferson Elementary will host its annual Fall Carnival on Thursday, October 30, 5-8 p.m. The popular family fundraiser had been suspended during construction at the school.

Children are encouraged to wear their Halloween costumes to the carnival. Festivities include a chili supper at 5 pm, games and activities from 6 to 8 pm, and raffle drawings at 7:30 pm. Prizes include a \$100 gas card, \$100 grocery gift card, and a Nintendo Switch. Students were given raffle tickets in late September; the top three ticket sellers will receive prizes.

Classrooms are collect-

ing items for themed gift baskets. The school requests donations of store-bought cakes and 2-liter soda bottles for a cake walk.

The Fall Carnival is Jefferson's largest fundraiser, supporting a variety of student programs and resources, including classroom prizes, attendance incentives, and books. Principal Andria Murrah explained, "The Fall Carnival helps us fund important programs like PBIS parties, classroom rewards, playground upgrades, student incentives, and field trips. It's also a great way for our school community to come together for a night of fun."



Paul Jacob now serves as pastor of the First United Methodist Church. (Tim Hastings photo)

## First Methodist Church welcomes new pastor embarking on second career

BY TIM HASTINGS

First United Methodist Pastor Paul Jacob took the reins of the Johnston City congregation on July 1. Retired from a career in social work, this is his first pastorate.

"I have always loved the church," Jacob said. "I was raised in church. With the exception of a couple of years in my adolescence, I've been a member of a church consistently."

Jacob comes to the part-time position after completing the United Methodist's "License to Preach" school. He said the church offers two pathways to preaching—seminary and "License to Preach." "The pathway I took was more for folks that are already employed and don't have the time to go away to seminary," he said.

With a new pastor and a relatively small congregation of 20 to 25 people, Jacob said First Methodist is seeking God's direction. "The question is, 'How is God going to lead us?'" Jacob posited. "That's where we're at."

Inviting new members into Christian fellowship is one of the Johnston City congregation's goals. "Like most churches we'd love to have more people in our church," Jacob said. "So that's one of the goals we have—inviting folks in and sharing the gospel of Christ with them and helping them grow in their faith; to come to know the Lord and to walk with him."

Jacob noted that the pastorate benefits him as well.

"It gives me an opportunity to read and study scripture and to pray, and it really helps me in my relationship with God," he shared. "I'm able to pass that along to other people."

First Methodist is well known for its monthly food giveaway. "There's been as many as 155 families that have come to get food," Jacob said. "The need is there, so I see us continuing to do that."

First Methodist offers worship each Sunday morning at 9:00 a.m. in its bright and inviting sanctuary at 400 W. Broadway. October 1, the church will begin midweek Bible studies on Wednesdays at 6 pm.

Jacob praised the relationships he sees in the congregation. "They love each other and they love God," he said. "They pray for each other and care for each other. It's a good group of people."

Jacob also expressed praise for the dynamics he's observed in Johnston City. "This is a neat little town," he said. "It's proud of itself and has a good history. It's doing stuff. I've been impressed by that."

Jacob said the pastorate fits the lifestyle and desires he's maintained for many years. "I believe the church is the primary place where people are discipled and learn about God and what it means to be a follower of Jesus and how to read and understand scripture and to pray. I've been doing that for a lot of years as a lay person."

## Jefferson Elementary renovations (FROM P. 1)

kitchen with new cold storage, ADA-compliant ramps, new office spaces, and designated rooms for Student Support Services and PE.

"One of the highlights we are especially excited about is the opening of our brand-new library and media center," said Principal Andria Murrah. "It's been a couple of years since our students could use the library, and

we can't wait to see it full of readers and learners again."

District Nurse Mary Johanson, who has worked at Jefferson for 16 years, praised her new health station after years of operating in a cramped space with only one electrical outlet. "Now I have five outlets, a bigger desk, more storage, and a private bathroom," she said. "It's always posi-

tive change—for staff, families, and students."

Parents and community members are invited to tour the upgraded facility during Jefferson Elementary's annual carnival, October 30.

The newly renovated Jefferson Elementary marks a new chapter for the school community, blending modern functionality with space to grow.

# EDITORIALS

OPINION

## Kicking the Can

BY JIMMY DEAN

"Kicking the can down the road" is a term we hear quite often.

The official definition is "put off confronting a difficult issue, or making an important decision, typically on a continuing basis."

This month's column might be controversial to some, but my name is on it, and I feel it is important enough to write about.

In 2010, the city disbanded its full-time fire department. I disagreed with this decision, but I do give the mayor at the time credit for doing this, as some firemen were taking advantage of the city by turning in an exorbitant amount of overtime, placing city government in a financial bind.

Most people thought this decision would be a temporary thing until the city got back on its feet. This is where kicking the can comes into play.

Many times, current Fire Chief Tom Burton has attempted to get his department back to full-time status, or at least as close as possible. He has spoken

to numerous groups, individuals, and the city council about possible ways to bring back the fire department.

Public safety is at the forefront of taxpayers' minds. They want to know that when they call the police, an officer will show up. When they have a fire, or an emergency, the fire department will arrive in a timely manner.

As it is now, the fire station is only manned during the daytime Monday through Friday. On other days, firemen are toned out (alerted by radio) to go to the station to get their rigs. This is time consuming and could cost lives—thus, the need for someone at the station on a 24-7 basis.

Insurance ratings also present an issue—the lower the rating number, the lower the cost of insurance. The city currently sits at a rating of five. In 2018, they were a four.

For too long this issue has been "kicked down the road," and a decision needs to be made one way or the other.

Instead of looking for reasons something can't be done, maybe we could look for reasons something can be done.

Everyone involved needs to go in with an open mind and brainstorm for answers.

Money is tight in every town's coffers, and the fire department is not a money-generating department. There's been mention of starting an ambulance service or having fundraisers, with other ideas being kicked around.

No matter what, taxpayers deserve a fair shake at knowing all avenues have been exhausted before abandoning the idea.

Maybe it won't happen; maybe it is not possible. But could we at least try to sit down and work together and stop kicking the can down the road?



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

OPINION

## Charlie Kirk's death shows importance of every single life

BY TIM HASTINGS

I am saddened at the tragic shooting of Christian political activist Charlie Kirk. Kirk was the founder of Turning Point USA and Turning Point Faith, aimed at reaching youth.

I trust the majority of Americans believe murder is never warranted, and that the hearts of most go out to Charlie's widow and orphaned children.

Like many, I am thank-

ful for the spotlight this has put on Christ, with the hope that many lives will be changed.

The worldwide impact of Charlie's life and death are, of course, phenomenal. After several days of reflecting on the tragedy, my focus has been drawn to the significance of every single human life. The shooter means as much to Christ as the victim. And, we can never imagine the eternal

impact of every single word we speak or action we take. There are no *little people*.



Tim Hastings of West Frankfort has been a volunteer reporter and columnist for *The Arrow* since the paper's first broadsheet edition in 2023.

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## CHURCHES of Johnston City

**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  
618-952-2591  
Adam King, pastor

**\*First United Methodist Church**  
400 W. Broadway  
Johnston City, IL 62951  
618-983-5150  
Paul Jacob, 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

**\*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

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

*\*Active members of Johnston City Ministerial Alliance*

# COMMUNITY CALENDAR



### October Events

OCTOBER 1  
Rotary Club luncheon,  
Andresen's, Noon

OCTOBER 3  
Rotary Club fundraiser, W.  
Broadway & Prosperity Rd.,  
8 am-12 pm

Lions Club Fish Fry, JCHS,  
11 am-2 pm

OCTOBER 4  
Free Movie Night, "God's  
Not Dead 2," JCity Church,  
5 pm

OCTOBER 7  
JC Business Meet N' Greet,  
Andresen's, 9 am

Lions Club, JCity Church,  
5:30 pm

Library Puzzle Race, Ma-  
sonic Hall

OCTOBER 11  
Lions Club fundraiser, W.  
Broadway & Prosperity Rd.,  
7:30-11:30 am

OCTOBER 11-12  
2025 Arrowhead Endur-  
ance Run, 7 am- 7 am

OCTOBER 13  
Columbus Day (No School)

OCTOBER 14  
City Council, Scout Cabin,  
5 pm

OCTOBER 15  
Rotary, Indigo Realty, 4 pm

OCTOBER 16  
School Board Mtg., Unit Of-  
fice, 6 pm

OCTOBER 18  
Halloween Hustle 5k, Line-  
men's Lounge, 10 am

OCTOBER 21  
Lions Club, Andresen's, 9 am

OCTOBER 25  
Spooktacular at Arrowhead  
Campground

OCTOBER 28  
City Council, Scout Cabin,  
5 pm

OCTOBER 24  
JCity Church's 4th Friday  
for Kids (K-5), 6-8 pm

OCTOBER 30-31  
Half-day/School's out

OCTOBER 31  
Downtown Trail of Treats,  
4-6 pm

Citywide Trick or Treat, 5-8  
pm

### November Events

NOVEMBER 27  
Thanksgiving

NOVEMBER 29  
Hometown Christmas

### Weekly Events

#### THURSDAYS

Food pantry open, First Unit-  
ed Methodist, 9 am-1 pm  
(Commodity distribution  
on the 3rd Thursday each  
month)

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

#### FRIDAYS

Farmers Market, 7-11 am  
(closing Oct. 7)

For calendar updates, please  
see Facebook or watch our video  
podcasts. To submit an event,  
email date, time, and details to  
jcitycenter@gmail.com or call 618-  
952-1272.

## Library challenges patrons to visit area libraries, race to complete puzzles

BY DOUG HANCOCK  
The Johnston City Public Library is gearing up for a lively October filled with engaging activities for all ages. JC Librarian Cindy Pulsford invites residents to participate in a "Library Crawl" and its popular annual puzzle race.

### Explore area libraries with IHLS Library Crawl

Readers of all ages can take part in the 7th Annual

IHLS Library Crawl. From October 1-31, the Library Crawl encourages community members to visit any of the 197 participating libraries throughout central and southern Illinois. Participants can pick up a passport at the JC Library's circulation desk, get it stamped at five different library locations, and return it to their home library to enter for a chance to win

door prizes.

"Everyone who registers at our Johnston City Library will receive a souvenir football and a passport listing all the participating libraries, their addresses, and hours," Pulsford said. The crawl also offers a helpful online guidebook, featuring staff-recommended eateries and local attractions near each library.

But there's more. Participants can check out items from any place they visit, then simply return these (on time) to the Johnston City library. A statewide

courier service will transport the item back to its initial location.

Social media enthusiasts are encouraged to post and share their crawl adventures by tagging photos with #IHLSLibraryCrawl2025. Happy Crawling!

### Puzzle Race Returns for its 4th Exciting Edition

Imagine trying to assemble a 500-piece jigsaw puzzle with no picture as a reference. Now add 10 five-person teams and a race to the finish. The library's fourth annual Puzzle Race is slat-

ed for October 7, at Lake Creek Lodge. Teams will be given identical puzzles to complete. Past winners have finished in less than an hour as teams scrambled (and unscrambled) the task at an alarming rate.

Sponsored by the Johnston City Public Library and supported by local banks, the event offers gift cards from Starbucks to the winning team, courtesy of SI Bank. Participants may also enjoy a hearty spread of chili, stew, and baked treats prepared by the library staff. While all team spots are currently filled, Pulsford encourages those interested to keep an eye out for future events.

### Community Hub for Learning, Discovery

Located in the heart of Johnston City, the public library is a vital resource dedicated to providing access to knowledge, culture, and lifelong learning opportunities. The library's mission is to meet the educational, cultural, and recreational needs of the community by fostering literacy and personal enrichment.

Visitors can explore an extensive collection that includes books, e-books, audiobooks, and movies suitable for all ages—from children's picture books to professional development materials for adults. The library also offers a wide range of programs and events designed for children, teens, and adults throughout the year.

For more information, visit the Johnston City Public Library or contact the staff to discover how you can get involved in October's exciting lineup. Go to [www.johnstoncitylibrary.com](http://www.johnstoncitylibrary.com), call (618) 983-6359, or email [Jcpublib@yahoo.com](mailto:Jcpublib@yahoo.com).

*Washington Avenue Baptist Church*

9th and Washington  
Johnston City, IL 62951

Barry Robertson, pastor  
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*\*hours will vary as unforeseen circumstances arise*



## Follow the String aimed at all ages

"Follow the string" means keeping your bow arm true to the string—and your shot on target. This section of *The Arrow* aims to do the same with interesting articles for readers of any age.

### Spiders are super cool (and a little creepy)

BY DON MCCHESENEY

Did you know that spiders are really amazing creatures? Yep, in a kind of icky-sticky, creepy-crawly way. But they're also super smart and sneaky hunters.

**What Do Spiders Eat?** Most spiders like to snack on insects like flies, mosquitoes, and beetles. That's actually helpful to us because it keeps bug numbers down. Thanks, spiders.

Some spiders go for bigger meals. The Huntsman spider can have legs as long as 12 inches (as long as a ruler). These big guys can catch frogs and lizards.

There are even some HUGE spiders, like the Goliath bird-eating spider, that can catch birds and bats in their giant webs. Whoa!

And then there are jumping spiders—they don't build webs to catch food. Nope. They use their strong legs to leap right onto their prey. They move super-fast, like tiny ninja hunters.

**All About Spider Silk.** Every spider can make silk, but not every spider uses it for webs. Spider silk is super useful. They use it to:

—Wrap up their eggs to keep baby spiders safe.

—Build little homes or shelters.

—Make safety ropes to climb or swing from place to place.

And of course, web-spinning spiders use their silk to build sticky traps to catch dinner. These webs are sometimes so thin and clear that bugs don't even see them coming. One second, they're flying along, and the next? SPLAT! They're stuck in a web.

When a bug gets trapped, the spider feels the wiggle-wiggle vibrations and



rushes over to wrap it up tighter in more silk. Then (*and this is kind of gross*), the spider spits in some special juice that turns the bug's insides into bug soup. That's what the spider slurps up—kind of like a bug milkshake. Ew!

**Spiders Are Smart.** Some spiders even build fake spider shapes in their webs using leaves or old bug parts to scare away other animals. Clever, huh?

And did you know that spider silk is stronger than steel (if it's the same sized thread)? Scientists are trying to learn from spiders to make super-strong materials for clothes, bridges, and even space suits.

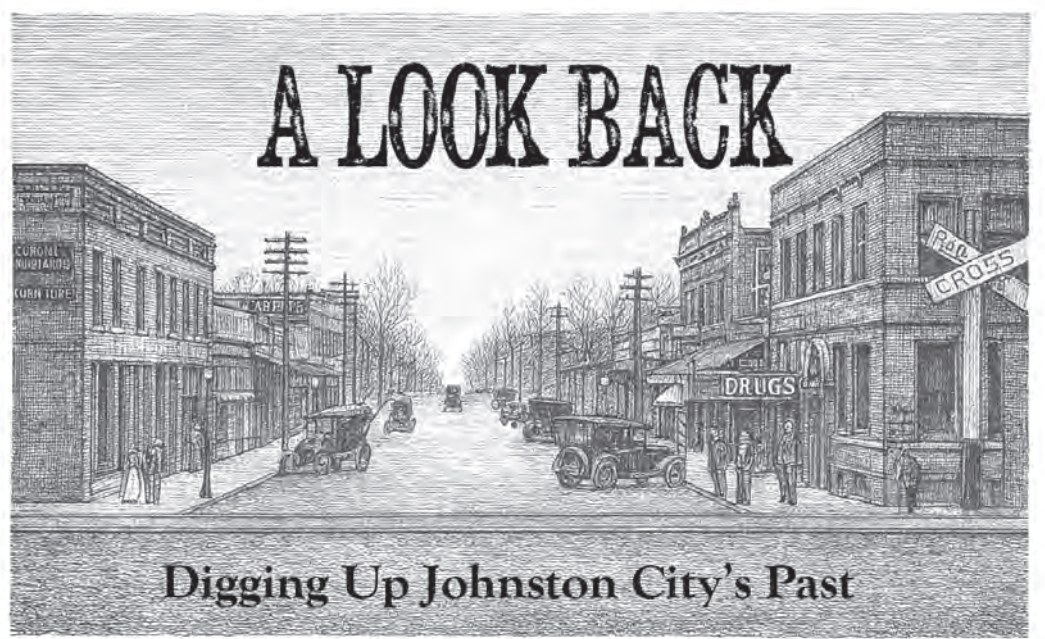
**Lies Are Like Spider Webs.** Now here's something to really think about. A spider's web is a sticky trap. Lies can be like that, too.

At first, you might tell just a tiny lie, like a web strand that's almost invisible. You think no one will notice. But then, to cover that lie, you might have to tell another lie, and then another, and another. Before you know it, you've made a whole web of lies.

And guess what? You're the one who gets stuck!

Lying can make you feel scared, sad, or guilty. But telling the truth keeps you free—like a spider swinging on a silk rope, not trapped in its own web.

Remember. Spiders are awesome, but their webs are meant to trap. Don't let your words do the same. Tell the truth, even when it's hard. It keeps life less sticky.



BROADWAY LOOKING WEST, JOHNSTON CITY, ILL.

## A LOOK BACK Digging Up Johnston City's Past

### A Tale of Two Cities

BY DON MCCHESENEY

*A Tale of Two Cities?* Actually, it's the tale of one settlement and one city that united to become our town.

Johnston City, Illinois, wasn't always the bustling little hub it would become. Its roots stretch back to a quiet settlement called Jeffersonville, where life centered around a small post office named Lake Creek, established in 1852. During the Civil War, Jeffersonville thrived modestly—a peaceful village amid a country in turmoil.

But everything changed in 1894.

That year, the iron veins of progress—the Chicago, Paducah and Memphis Railroad—cut through the region. Along its tracks, a brand-new stop appeared. That stop would soon become Johnston City, named after the railroad magnate who built the railroad line that was eventually acquired by the Chicago and Eastern Illinois Railroad. The area's destiny was rewritten with steel and steam.

As trains rolled in, people rolled out—residents from Jeffersonville packed up their homes, businesses, and dreams, relocating to this promising new settlement. By 1896, Johnston City was incorporated as a village. Just a few years lat-

er, in 1903, the Lake Creek post office was moved into the new town and officially renamed, signaling the end of Jeffersonville and the rise of Johnston City. By 1905, it gained full status as a city.

Then came the coal.

In the early 1900s, the discovery of nearby coal, erupted Johnston City into life. From a sleepy town of just 787 people in 1900, its population surged to 7,137 by 1920. Immigrants, primarily from Italy and Wales poured in, chasing opportunity underground. Coal was king, and Johnston City became its throne—earning the nickname "The Magic City of Egypt" (a nod to its location in southern Illinois, often called "Little Egypt").

The coal boom didn't just build fortunes—it built culture. The city welcomed theaters, shops, and even the famous Palace Theatre, which was the first in Southern Illinois to screen "talking pictures" in 1929.

But boomtowns are rarely peaceful.

The rapid growth brought tension. Diverse ethnic communities clashed, especially during periods of labor unrest and mine strikes. Beneath the surface of prosperity, struggles simmered.

Johnston City's story is one of reinvention, of com-

munities uprooted and reimagined. From a forgotten village to a coal-fueled boomtown, it has always been a place shaped by movement, ambition, and the promise of something more.

But the boom wouldn't last forever. In the late 1920s, underground lakes began flooding the area's coal mines, forcing them to shut down one by one. This natural disaster dealt a crushing blow to Johnston City's primary industry. As the years passed, stricter mine safety regulations introduced in the 1960s further accelerated the decline. With fewer jobs and little industry to replace coal, both the economy and population began a steady downward slide. The vibrant, bustling city that once echoed with the sounds of trains and coal carts grew quieter, holding tightly to the memories of its golden era.

**We want to hear your stories. If you have old photographs, newspaper clippings, or personal memories of Johnston City, please consider sharing them with us at [jcitycenter@gmail.com](mailto:jcitycenter@gmail.com). Help us preserve the rich history of this remarkable town for future generations.**

### Washington School Teacher Trivia (part 2)

BY MARGIE SANDERS

Are you a Washington Middle School student or parent? How well do you know your teachers?

This is the second of a three-part trivia series about the WMS faculty. Can you match each fact with a teacher (answers on p. 4)

1. One of our teachers is a published author.
2. This teacher wore a pony tail while in high school.

3. First teaching job was kindergarten at Jefferson School.
4. One of our teachers has a 1-year-old granddaughter.
5. This teacher has a hedgehog for a pet.
6. This teacher is left-handed.
7. One of our teachers got married this past June 14.
8. Her husband is a funeral home director.

9. This is a teacher who likes to do crafts, croquet, and embroidery.
10. She met her husband when they were both 12 years old..
  - Mr. John Reeder
  - Mrs. Carrie Williford
  - Mr. Bryce Glasco
  - Mrs. Renee Dudley
  - Mrs. Lindsay Arnold
  - Mr. Carl Harris
  - Mr. Blake Dobraski
  - Mrs. Cindy Hermetz
  - Miss Kara Stark
  - Mrs. Wendy McCluskie



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# Homecoming Happenings MORE ON P. 6

## Grand Marshal Kathy Clark to Lead Parade

Former Johnston City Superintendent Mrs. Kathy Clark has been named the 2025 Homecoming Parade Grand Marshal.

"Being selected as Grand Marshal is such a special honor for me," Clark shared. "This isn't just about me—it's about the students, staff, and families I've been privileged to work with. I'm proud to have played a role in Johnston City's story."

Mrs. Clark served the district for over a decade, including roles as Principal, Assistant Superintendent, and Superintendent.

## Spirit Week

Students are encouraged to participate in themed dress-up days and support their teams throughout the week. For parade float entries or more info, contact the high school office or email Ashley Gualdoni at [agualdoni@jcindians.org](mailto:agualdoni@jcindians.org).

## It's a great week to be an Indian

Whether you're cheering from the sidelines, marching in the parade, or dancing under the lights, Homecoming 2025 promises to be a celebration of community, tradition, and school pride.

For more information, contact Johnston City High School at (618) 983-8638. Follow updates on social media using #JCHSHomecoming2025

## Homecoming Event Schedule

The community is invited to come out and support the Indians during a week full of events:

- M** OCT. 6 JV Football at Fairfield, 6:00 pm
- T** OCT. 7 Home Volleyball, 5:00 pm
- W** OCT. 8 Coronation Ceremony, Wendell Star-rick Gymnasium, 7:00 pm
- F** OCT. 10 Homecoming Parade, begins at 12th & Washington, 3:00 pm,
- F** OCT. 10 Homecoming Football Game vs. Hamilton County, kickoff at 7:00 pm.
- S** OCT. 11 Homecoming Dance, 7:30–9:30 pm

## WMS Boys Baseball advances to State with 19-0 record



Washington Middle School boys baseball team (Photo by Tee Pee Talk)

The Washington Middle School boys baseball team finished the regular season with an undefeated record of 17-0, winning their first conference championship in 15 years. The Indians won the SIJHSAA Regional—Round 1 semi-final Game against Carbondale and will play the winner of Wolf Branch/Whiteside [game to be played after press time] at the Oasis Sports Complex, October 4 at 2:30 pm.

Coach William Brayfield provided *Arrow News* with the following information:

**Player Highlights:** Jaxson Mapps hits and pitches for the JCMS Indians. While playing shortstop, he drove in runs in five straight games. Mapps hit 9-16 and drove in 13 runs during the streak. Mapps has hit for power this season with one

home run, three triples, and three doubles among his 15 hits. On the hill, Mapps gets ahead in the count quickly. He threw first pitch strikes to 64 of 91 batters. He leads JCMS Indians with 26 innings pitched and has a 0.269 ERA this season.

Brantley Davis leads JCMS Indians with a .563 batting average and 1.543 OPS. The right-handed hitter has a 0.686 OBP and a 0.857 slugging percentage this season. Davis also has the most fielding chances this season with 74 total. Davis's primary position is catcher.

### Game Scores

JC 12	Crab Orchard 0
JC 7	Ewing 1
JC 11	Massac County 1
JC 5	Unity Point 0
JC 11	Christopher 1
JC 15	Christopher 1

## Honoring Legends: 2025 Athletic Hall of Fame Inductees

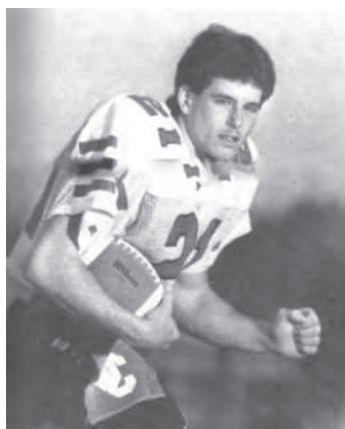
Three outstanding contributors to Johnston City athletics will be inducted into the JCHS Athletic Hall of Fame during Homecoming Week:



Kyle Baker (Class of 2004)

### Kyle Baker

A football standout, Baker earned All-State honors, was named 2003 Southern Illinois Player of the Year, and rushed for over 2,000 yards in a single season. He credits his success to Coach Rude, his teammates, and the unwavering support of his parents.



Tony Kendrick (Class of 1985)

### Tony Kendrick

Kendrick was Johnston City's first-ever Southern Illinoisan Football Player of the Year and led the Indians to their first playoff appearance. His inspirational journey—attending 31 schools before finding home at JCHS—epitomizes resilience and the power of community.

### Induction Ceremony

A formal induction ceremony and banquet will take place on Saturday, October 11 at 11:30 a.m. in the JCHS Gym. Tickets are \$15 and available at the school or district office.



Roy Rogers (Class of 1968)

### Roy Rogers

Roy Rogers served as the official videographer for Johnston City athletics from 1986 to 2024, documenting nearly four decades of memories. From football to graduations, Rogers became a behind-the-scenes legend and fixture of school life.

JC 10	Eldorado 0
JC 6	Carterville 5
JC 13	Hamilton County 2
JC 13	Hamilton County 0
JC 8	West Frankfort 0

Scores for latest games unavailable at press time.

## Washington Middle School's new playaways make reading more accessible

BY BROOKE SCHLYER, JOHNSTON CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Washington Middle School library now has more than two dozen Playaways available for students to check out and take home. These small, portable devices come preloaded with audiobooks and do not require apps, downloads, or internet access. Students simply plug in headphones or earbuds and listen anytime, anywhere.

"It's all self-contained in the device," explains Librarian Amanda Harris. "So, it's really more accessible, because there are probably parents out there who don't have internet, or sometimes there are internet connection issues."

Playaways currently offer 24 titles, including fiction and non-fiction works such as *Charlotte's Web*, *Wings of Fire*, *Duke*, and selections from the *Harry Potter* and *I*

*Survived* series. Book selections were based on popularity with students as well as classic literary value. Aside from convenience, Harris cites additional benefits of the Playaways:

"Those who struggle with reading can listen to the device. Any student listening to books encourages more reading. I also think it helps students who don't necessarily have the time to sit down and read. They can take it with them on a car ride and listen."

Students wishing to check out a Playaway must first return a signed parent permission slip to Mrs. Harris. Each device may be borrowed for one week and renewed for an additional week if needed. Families will be responsible for the \$50 replacement fee if a device is lost or damaged.

Playaways provide Washington Middle School students greater means for connecting with stories, growing as readers, and enjoying the power of books—anytime, anywhere.



### Caregiver

DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL Blisshaven, 1508 Benton Ave., Johnston City. We are seeking a compassionate and dedicated Direct Support Professional to join our team. In this role, you will provide essential support to individuals with developmental disabilities, assisting them in daily living activities and promoting their independence. Your commitment to patient care and understanding of individual needs will be crucial in creating a supportive and nurturing environment. From \$15 an hour. Part-time, Full-time. See job description and apply on indeed.com (<https://tinyurl.com/58tf6tdu>)

### Food Service/Retail

SANDWICH ARTIST® Subway (24544-0) Johnston City. Part-time, Full-time. As part of the Subway team, you as a Sandwich Artist will focus on four main things: providing an excellent guest experience, preparing and serving great food, keeping restaurants clean and beautiful, being a team player. Apply online at indeed.com.

TEAM MEMBER Casey's General Stores, 1117 Grand Ave., Johnston City. \$15.00 - \$19.75 an hour. Part-time, Full-time. See job requirements and apply on company website: <https://tinyurl.com/p88u92rs>

SALES ASSOCIATE RollnUp. The Sales Associate will use cash registers, electronic scanners, and other related equipment to conduct monetary transactions with customers. The ideal candidate is dependable and reliable with excellent customer service skills, top-notch accuracy, and displays exceptional customer service. Responsibilities: (1) Customer service - Greet customers as they enter the location and answer any questions or as needed. Assist the customers with locating various products and resolving complaints as they arise. (2) Cash handling - Accept money in the form of cash, checks, and credit or debit cards for items purchased. Ensure accurate transactions by balancing the cash register at the beginning and end of the shift. Accept and process all returns or exchanges according to store policy. Requirements: High school diploma required (or equivalent), 21 or Older, Check IDs to ensure safe and legal sales of age restricted products. Apply on indeed.com (<https://tinyurl.com/2ktv57fs>)

SALES ASSOCIATE J.D. Streett & Company, Inc. (ZX) 709 Grand Avenue, Johnston City. Part-time. See job requirements and apply on company website: <https://tinyurl.com/2hhcscmt>

SALES ASSOCIATE Dollar General 612 West Broadway Blvd, Johnston City. \$15.00 - \$15.10 an hour - Part-time See job description and apply on company website: <https://tinyurl.com/btb26abh>

### School District Positions

PART-TIME CUSTODIAN Apply online. Return application to Mr. Ronnie Lumpkin, Director of Maintenance, at 1113 Grand Avenue, Johnston City, IL 62951

PART-TIME LPN Send letter of interest, resume, and credentials to Mr. Josh Pietrantonio, Superintendent, Johnston City C.U.S.D. #1, 1113 Grand Avenue, Johnston City, IL 62951.

HIGH SCHOOL DANCE COACH Send letter of interest to Mrs. Lindsey Bush, IHSA Athletic Director, Johnston City High School, 1500 Jefferson Avenue, Johnston City, IL 62951.

### Transportation

BUS DRIVERS, MONITORS Apply online. Return the application to Mrs. Rebecca Vancil, Director of Transportation, Johnston City C.U.S.D. #1, 1103 Monroe Avenue, Johnston City, IL 62951.

### School Food Service

OPPA is hiring KITCHEN STAFF. Perform all positions within the kitchen. Apply online.

KITCHEN STAFF SUBSTITUTE. Perform all positions within the kitchen and be able to perform these skills on an as needed basis. Apply online.

### Substitute Positions

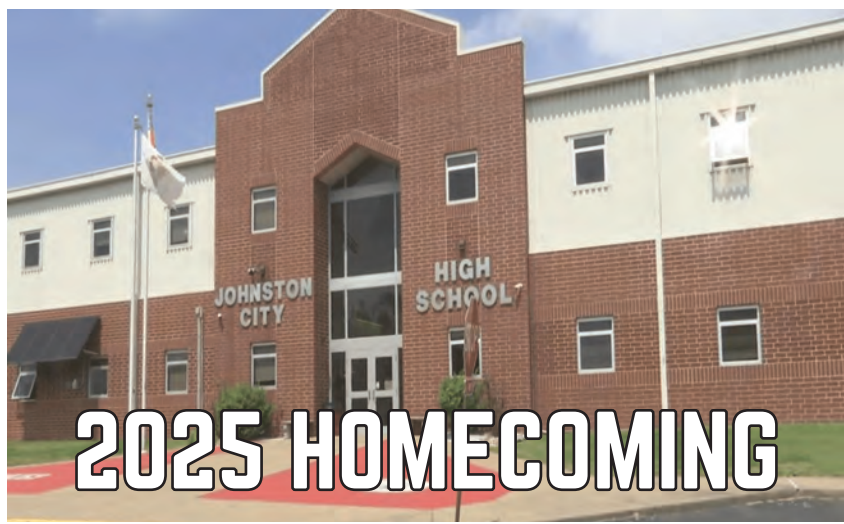
Apply online for these positions: SUBSTITUTE TEACHER, SUBSTITUTE CUSTODIAN, SUBSTITUTE BUS DRIVER, SUBSTITUTE BUS MONITOR.



Scan for online applications for jobs with the Johnston City School District: <https://www.jcindians.org/page/employment>

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# Tradition, pride, celebration take center stage

School spirit is alive and thriving as Johnston City High School kicks off Homecoming Week 2025, a celebration packed with tradition, pride, and community. From the crowning of a new queen to honoring Hall of Fame legends and spirited dress-up days, this year's festivities promise to be unforgettable.

## Meet the Homecoming Queen Candidates

Five outstanding seniors are vying for the crown in this year's Homecoming Court. These young women have not only excelled in academics and athletics but also embody the character and school spirit of JCHS.

by Mrs. Gualdoni both in volleyball and the classroom, Olivia hopes to become an elementary school teacher.



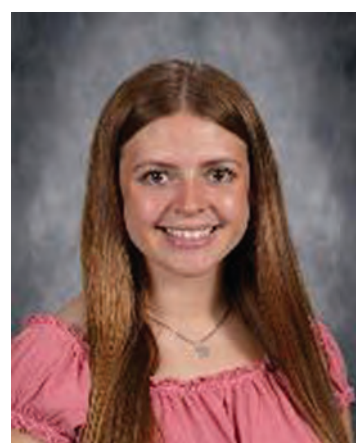
### Breanna Timmons

Breanna cherishes the energy of football games. She cites Ms. Borger as a motivational figure and is involved in volleyball, cheer, and HOSA. After graduation, she plans to become an ultrasound technician.



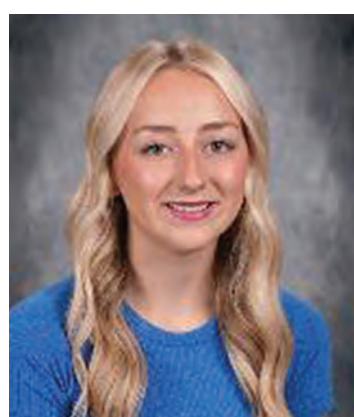
### Erika Hinkle

Erika's favorite high school memory is competing in late-night Scholar Bowl matches. She credits Mr. Stanley with inspiring her academically and plans to pursue a nursing degree after graduation. Erika serves as captain of the Scholar Bowl team and treasurer for both Student Council and Art Club, among many other roles.



### Sophie Walker

Sophie proudly remembers winning the Math Team State Championship. Teachers Mr. Shick and Mr. Stanley played key roles in shaping her passion for education. Sophie hopes to pursue a degree in teaching at either the University of Illinois or Murray State.



### Olivia Mays

For Olivia, the highlight of high school has been reaching the football final four during her freshman and junior years. Inspired



### Josie Welch

A proud golfer, Josie's top memory is competing at

State. She credits Mr. Shick and Mrs. Morgan for motivating her to grow both personally and academically. After high school, she plans to play golf at John A. Logan College while majoring in Special Education.

## Homecoming Court

Class Representatives—

- Juniors: Azlynn Gower, Aliyna McCoy, Kyla Watson
- Sophomores: Kathryn Carnine, Alivia Crespi,

- Bentley Williams
- Freshmen: Alexandria Carpenter, Lexington Peters, Brayleigh Williams

Football Escorts—

- Seniors: #6 Kaden Koenig, #10 Wyatt Henderson, #11 Trey Johnson, #22 Jace Weaver, #59 Jessie Pugh, #60 Landon Moore, #66 Logan Moore, #65 Casey Tanner.
- Juniors—#0 Kallen Karnes, #5 Wyatt Kerley, #14 Braden McGee, #15 Aiden

- Sims, #33 Marcus Leitzen, #35 Hayden Burton, #52 Keegan Deason

Attendants—

- Flower girl: Jenna Lynn Johnson
- Football bearers: Jack Henderson, Warden Mummert, Beau Whitehead

Reigning Queen Zoe Cullum will help crown this year's winner during Wednesday's Coronation Ceremony.



Courtesy of: Shooting Star Photography

FROM P. 4 | Answers to WMS Teacher Trivia: (1) Mr. Carl Harris (2) Mr. Blake Dobraski (3) Mrs. Cindy Hermetz (4) Mr. John Reeder (5) Miss Kara Stark (6) Mrs. Renee Dudley (7) Mr. Bryce Glasco (8) Mrs. Wendy McCluskie (9) Mrs. Lindsay Arnold (10) Mrs. Carrie Williford

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9			3		5			1
	1	8		6	4			
	8	1		2	9			
7								8
	6	7		8	2			
	2	6		9	5			
8		2		3				9
	5		1		3			

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