



SOLON SENIOR NEWS

Solon Senior Advocates 319-430-8655 – Sandy Hanson sandrahanson@southslope.net

Solon Senior Support 319-624-2773 – Jill Weetman solonseniors@gmail.com

Solon Senior Dining 319-624-2251 - Marcy Olson

Solon Food Pantry 319-321-5232 - Elaine Claude luv2runiowa@yahoo.com

To receive a paper copy of the newsletter in the mail, call Jill at 319-624-2773

SENIOR NEWS:

Representatives from the Senior Groups of Solon have been meeting monthly since August to discuss challenges and collaborate to best serve the needs of Solon-area older adults. Current City Council member Cole Gabriel is serving as a liaison between the group and the Council. City Council member Lauren Whitehead has been assisting the group in an advisory role.



Reanna Robb

Representatives of Solon's support, transport, senior dining, news, advocates and food pantry meet to discuss senior needs Monday, October 13. Back Row: Amy Runge, Cindy Jensen, Stephanie Bell, Jill Weetman, Cole Gabriel, Doug Tuetken, Elaine Claude Front Row: Karen McFarland-Miller, John McFarland, Joyce Cook

As a result of the meetings, Jill Weetman, President of Solon

Senior Support, and Cindy Jensen, Solon Senior Transportation Coordinator, spoke to the City Council during Citizen Speak time. Jill highlighted the high number of older adults served by Senior Advocates, Senior Dining, Senior Support, Senior Transportation, the Food Pantry, and JCPC (Solon Pickleball group).

Cindy presented four requests for the City Council from the Senior Groups:

1. Dedicated space for older adults and the Food Pantry- groups are currently utilizing the Solon United Methodist Church (SUMC) / Family Life Center, the Solon Public Library, and the Solon Community Center. The Pantry is currently housed in the basement of the SUMC, which is not ADA accessible and not able to grow to meet the needs of Solon citizens.
2. Funding for a new Senior Fitness program in conjunction with the Solon Recreation Department and funding for liability insurance for volunteer Senior Transportation drivers and Senior Support volunteers.
3. A Senior Liaison who would report to the City Council quarterly regarding needs of older adults.
4. A "seat at the table" when planning starts for a proposed new Community Center.



November 4th is Voting Day for Solon City Council
Need a ride to vote? Call Cindy @ Senior Transport 319-360-3279

We asked the 5 candidates - Cole Gabriel (incumbent), Tim Gordon, Matthew Macke, Greg Morris and Lauren Whitehead (incumbent) - for City Council four questions specifically regarding the needs of Solon-area older adults.

- 1. What value does the senior community bring to the city of Solon in your own words?
- 2. How would you plan to support and expand senior services in Solon?
- 3. How would you work to secure funding or partnerships to ensure we can maintain accessibility, affordability, and staffing of current programs?
- 4. In what ways will you include senior voices in future community planning?

We received responses from Lauren Whitehead, Cole Gabriel, and Tim Gordon.

Lauren Whitehead:

1. What value does the senior community bring to the City of Solon?

What value? Incredible value. Seniors are the backbone of our community—engaged, caring, and deeply invested in Solon’s future. Seniors are amazing volunteers and community members and carry the historical memory of the community. Growing up, I was especially close to both my grandmothers and my great-aunt May through years of handwritten letters. Their influence shaped who I am today, and I see that same wisdom and heart reflected in Solon’s senior community. Our seniors deserve to be honored, heard, and included in every part of our community life.

2. How would you plan to support and expand senior services in Solon?

I support Cole Gabriel’s proposal for a dedicated senior liaison—someone whose role is to connect with residents who may not be online or able to attend meetings. We also need dedicated space for senior activities and the food pantry—accessible, welcoming, and built to meet long-term needs.

I’m also mindful that many seniors live on fixed incomes. Rising water and housing costs are real pressures, and I’m advocating at the county, state, and federal levels for relief and investment to ease those burdens.

3. How would you work to secure funding or partnerships to maintain accessibility, affordability, and staffing of current programs?

I bring grant-writing experience and a proven record of advocacy. I’m not shy about making noise on Solon’s behalf—especially when it comes to fair funding. I’ve pushed at every level of government for regional investment in infrastructure and services, and I’ll continue to do so.

Seniors are Solon’s fastest-growing demographic, and we must plan accordingly. That includes seeking grants, partnerships, and creative housing solutions to ensure seniors can stay in Solon comfortably and affordably.

4. In what ways will you include senior voices in future community planning?

I will continue to be personally accessible—by phone at (319) 383-4166 or email at Lauren.Whitehead@solon-iowa.com regularly seek input from senior advocates like Jill and Cindy, who stay closely connected to our older residents. But even if I haven't heard from you yet, I want to. I'll continue to make time for direct conversations and make sure Solon's seniors can age in place with dignity, respect, and a strong voice in our shared future.

Cole Gabriel:

1. What value does the senior community bring to the city of Solon in your own words?

The Senior Community is a growing part of Solon, and their value is immeasurable. They bring a deep knowledge and experience that can help guide Solon with its families, neighborhoods, and government to better outcomes. The beautiful community we have today is in no small part due to their contributions and efforts. The efforts of Solon's Seniors can be equated to planting and tending a garden; today's harvest is the result of their patience and diligent work.

2. How would you plan to support and expand senior services in Solon?

I've been working with Solon's Senior support groups over the last several months on ways to engage the wider Solon City Council and City Administration. I think one of the most important ways to get sustained support and representation is to institutionalize representation of Seniors within the City. I am advocating for the creation of a City Liaison to Solon's Senior Support groups, so that these groups can become a routine part of the agenda, allowing them to report on their activities and their needs to the City. I believe this will increase the visibility of Seniors needs and build off of the progress the City has already made with programming within the Recreation Department and Public Library.

3. How would you work to secure funding or partnerships to ensure we can maintain accessibility, affordability, and staffing of current programs?

If we improve communication and coordination between Solon's Senior services and the City we will foster a better understanding of the scope of services and the vital role that these volunteer organizations play in not only maintaining, but improving, the quality of life for Seniors. This will allow us to more easily pinpoint specific areas that are in need of additional funding or support. By giving regular reports to the City, the Solon Senior services will be able to highlight the vital services provided and help bring light to areas that need additional support, allowing the City Council to respond to specific requests in a timelier manner to provide financial or logistical support.

4. In what ways will you include senior voices in future community planning?

I would start by holding listening sessions for any major projects or policies that would impact our Seniors; hearing their feedback, wishes, and concerns will allow me to better advocate on their behalf. I believe that the new Community Center will be a good place to start, by inviting Senior Support groups and citizens to provide input on what would be beneficial for their needs and experiences, we can ensure that the future Community Center is a place that can truly be used and enjoyed by all Solon residents for generations to come.

Tim Gordon:

I am involved with two groups that support seniors in Solon. The Solon Centennial Lions Club as well as the Solon Beef Days Committee. Both of these organizations play a key role in helping with funding for many items for the senior community.

1. What value does the senior community bring to the city of Solon?

Senior citizens bring lots of value to our wonderful town. They are the core that represents not just the town, but past and future generations of the people who make it great! Through the Senior Support's free programs like fitness classes (chair yoga, etc..), recreational outings, and volunteer drives, seniors foster intergenerational connections, turning potential

isolation into shared stories and lasting bonds with the younger generations in Solon. They preserve the town's heritage, from its one room schoolhouse days to modern volunteer drives, all while mentoring youth in schools or at other community events.

These elders aren't just aging gracefully, they're the unsung stewards of Solon's spirit, fostering resilience in a place where family roots run deep and neighbors still wave to one another. In short, Solon's seniors don't just add value, they embody it, transforming a small Iowa gem into a mecca for aging with grace, grit, and genuine connection.

2. How would you plan to support and expand senior services in Solon?

I would certainly use my voice on the city council to share success stories as well as stories that have touched me personally to ensure that the residents of town know how important our seniors are. I would continue to work with the groups I currently serve on (Beef Days and Lions Club) as well as challenge other groups to match funds to help with the financial burden of the programs. I would make every effort possible to find a space for seniors to gather and utilize some of the amazing programs provided for them. Expanding these services isn't just a policy goal; it's a commitment to ensuring every senior can thrive independently while staying connected to the town we all love,

To ensure accountability, I'd like to incorporate participation rates and satisfaction surveys, reporting annually at town halls. I would work with a small group of seniors to guide these efforts, incorporating direct feedback to refine and grow services whether it involves adding memory care resources or virtual options for homebound seniors.

3. How would you work to secure funding or partnerships to ensure we can maintain accessibility, affordability and staffing of our current programs?

As a resident of Solon for 24 years, business owner, and dedicated volunteer who's served on our Planning and Zoning Commission, I've seen firsthand how our senior programs at places like the Solon Retirement Village and through Solon Senior Support keep our community strong, connected, and compassionate. These aren't just services; they're the heartbeat of what makes Solon a place where we look after our own, especially as our 65+ population grows alongside our small town charm.

I would do my best to partner with state and regional senior support organizations to ensure we are not missing out on any potential funding through grants and other subsidies.

I'd advocate fiercely in our budget process, building on the framework where we need to prioritize more on quality of life investments, to earmark a dedicated line item for senior staffing or program subsidies, potentially reallocating from underused pots without dipping into property taxes.

Partnerships would be my secret weapon for amplifying impact and sharing costs. Locally, I'd deepen ties with Johnson County's Community Foundation, pushing for Coldren Fund grants to subsidize staffing training or accessibility retrofits at the Solon Nursing Care Center, where higher turnover is a real hurdle. As a Lions Club member, I'd rally our network for matching sponsorships from Solon businesses.

4. In what ways will you include senior voices in future community planning?

I would like to see the establishment of a Senior Advisory Council. This would include a diverse group of seniors from independent living at Terrace Lane Glen, assisted living at the Solon Nursing Care Center, and homebound folks connected via Solon Senior Support. I understand that technology may be a hiccup, so I would work with the Solon Public Library and incorporate a digital feedback portal on the city's website with simple forms for seniors to share ideas on planning issues and concerns. For those less tech savvy, I'd ensure paper versions are distributed at the senior center and mailed to homebound residents through Solon Senior Support's volunteer network. Monthly summaries of this feedback would go straight to the City Council, ensuring no voice is missed.

This plan honors Solon's roots as a resilient, neighborly community while preparing for growth, ensuring our seniors aren't just supported but celebrated. With my experience volunteering and leading local initiatives, I'm ready to make it happen!

FREE! FRIDAY LUNCH

1130am Friday, October 31st

Solon United Methodist Church

Costumes encouraged! Lunch provided by
Solon Senior Support- come for lunch, stay
for Euchre!



Call Jill at 319-624-2773 by Wednesday, October 29th to RSVP (leave a message if no answer)

Taco Bar and dessert from Frida Kahlo will be served

Need a ride? Call Jill at 319-624-2773.

*THE NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER FREE FRIDAY LUNCHES WILL BE REPLACED WITH A FREE HOLIDAY MEAL
IN DECEMBER. CHECK THE DECEMBER NEWSLETTER ISSUE FOR DATE, TIME AND PLACE!*

EUCHRE and BINGO

**Fridays at 1230pm- Solon
Methodist Church**

Coffee and snack at 2pm

We need more Bingo players!



Nov 1st -Battery Up



TIME FOR A
**SAFETY
CHECK!**

- ☒ Test Your Smoke Alarms
- ☒ Replace batteries if needed
- ☒ Replace alarms older than 10+ years old



🕒 BATTERY UP, SOLON! 🔥

It's that time of year to change out the batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. The Solon Fire Department offers a Battery Up program to our senior residents and disabled individuals within our service area. We will come to your home and change out the batteries in your detectors, for free!

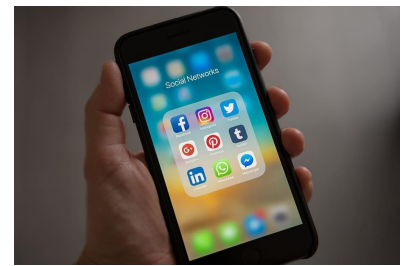
We will be providing this service on Saturday November 1, 2025 starting at 8am. If you are in need of this service or know of someone who is, **please contact the Solon Fire Department via e-mail at john.studt@solonfire.com or call 319-624-2386 ext 2208** and leave a message with your name, address and phone number.



The Solon Public Library has **Tech Talk every 3rd Thursday of the Month from 930-1030am!**

You can take your devices and questions in for the library staff and they can assist you!

Next Tech Talk is November 20th!



Did you know...that Solon Senior Support volunteers will deliver Library books/materials to your home and pick them up when you are done using them? Call the Library at 319-624-2678 for more information or to set up a delivery.

Click [here](#) for link to the Library's website.



Feeding the Community

SOLON FOOD PANTRY

Location: Lower Level of the Solon United Methodist Church
122 N. West Street, Solon. Entrance is in the back (East side) of the church.

Hours: Donations: 830-10am on Mondays, also a Box outside Pantry Door for after hours donations. Clients: 2-6pm on Mondays

Contact information: Elaine Claude, Pantry Manager
Phone: 319-321-5232 Email: luv2runiowa@yahoo.com
Mailing Address: PO Box 582, Solon, Iowa 52333

SOLON Senior Support & **SOLON PARKS & RECREATION**



THURSDAY SENIOR SOCIAL

at the Solon Community Center

It's a perfect way to connect with others, stay active, and unwind.

- ✓ Walking
- ✓ Coffee
- ✓ Crafting
- ✓ Conversations

9AM-12PM Every Thursday

 **319-624-2499**



It's getting cold outside! Time to lace up your sneakers and head to the Community Center on Thursday mornings for a cup of coffee and an indoor walk!

Did you know...if you walk from the lobby to the auditorium and back 8 times, you will have completed 1 mile!!

Don't lose that progress you've made over the summer and fall- come on over to the Community Center and continue those healthy habits!

Don't want to walk? No problem! We've got coffee, tea, hot chocolate and treats just waiting for you!

SPEAKING OF COLD TEMPERATURES..... OUR FIRST **FREE MONDAY**

MATINEE WILL BE ON DECEMBER 1ST! AND IT'S "WHITE CHRISTMAS"!! What better way to get in the Christmas Spirit than with Bing, Danny, Rosemary and Vera-Ellen?



MONDAY

Matinee



© 1ST MONDAY EACH MONTH
9 313 SOUTH IOWA ST

FREE ENTRY



It's time for your **Influenza and Covid-19 immunizations!**

Older adults who get vaccinated are more likely to avoid serious disease, stay out of the hospital, and have a lower risk of death from these illnesses.

If you have questions about vaccinations, please discuss with your health care provider. Solon Towncrest also has [online sign up](#)

available now. If you need assistance with signing up, call Solon Towncrest at 319-624-2239.



FROM JOHNSON COUNTY:

Residents of unincorporated Johnson County and the small cities of Hills, Lone Tree, Oxford, Shueyville, Solon and Swisher are eligible for no-cost home energy audits.

The audit team can accommodate residents' schedules for the home visits. To sign up for a free audit, visit the Green Iowa AmeriCorps application form online at

<https://docs.google.com/.../1FAIpQLSetULq9GQWhsr.../viewform> or call the team at 319-339-5399.

Medicare Open Enrollment begins October 15th!

Medicare Open Enrollment runs from **October 15 to December 7**. This is your yearly opportunity to review and make changes to your Medicare coverage. Even if you're happy with your current plan, it's a good idea to compare options to ensure you're getting the best coverage and value for your needs in 2026. **Need help navigating your choices? Make an appointment with a SHIP Counselor through the Iowa City Senior Center at this link: [Schedule Appointment with Iowa City Senior Center](#)**

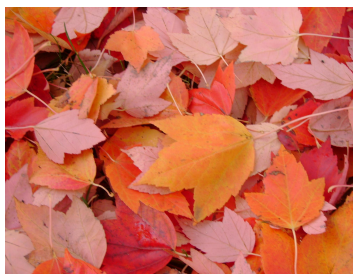


**Solon
Volunteer
Services and
Activities for
Older Adults**

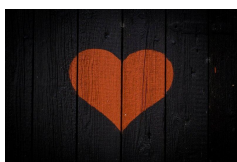
Solon Senior Advocates
Solon Senior Dining
Solon Senior Support
Solon Senior Transport

Physical Activities
Social Activities

Solon Senior Support has created a Directory for Older Adults with local services and activities- click [HERE](#) to view the directory or click [HERE](#) to view the NEW brochure updated 10/25..



Need assistance with fall leaves? Our High School volunteer group can earn Silver Cord hours by helping! Give Jill a call at 319-624-2773 and we will set up a time to lend a hand.



Solon Senior Support volunteers usually meet on the first Monday of each month from 7-8pm at the Solon Public Library. Come learn more about us! *Next meeting is moved to Monday, November 17th (Senior Groups meeting) from 7-8pm, due to meeting room availability*

SOLON SENIOR TRANSPORT-

Let our volunteer drivers transport you to and from medically related appointments! An enrollment form and a detailed brochure will be sent upon request. Once enrolled, the senior may call for a ride to a specific appointment. Requests for rides should be scheduled several days prior to the appointment date. All volunteer drivers are self-insured. Call Cindy Jensen 319-360-3279.



Chair Yoga

AT SOLON PUBLIC LIBRARY

**Mondays at
12:30 PM &
Wednesdays
at 10 AM**



**SOLON
Public Library**
...where you can branch out

CHAIR YOGA: Come join the FREE class and feel stronger, more balanced and flexible! Don't forget to come early for coffee on Wednesdays!

Everyone can benefit from chair yoga, come try it out!

Zumba meets Tuesdays and Fridays from 830-930am at the Solon Community Center gymnasium. The class is taught by the fantastic Rebecca Donovan and is only \$1! Bring a water bottle and be ready to have some fun!



Johnson County Livable Community posts a terrific newsletter each month! Check their website for more valuable information.
[https://johnsoncountyiowa.gov › department-of-livable_community](https://johnsoncountyiowa.gov/departments-of-livable_community)



DID YOU KNOW WE HAVE INDOOR PICKLEBALL IN SOLON?

Want to join Johnson County Pickleball Club (JCPC)? Or just come try it out and see if you like it?

The Solon United Methodist Church- Family Life Center 131 N. West Street has 3 indoor courts used by the JCPC from 8-1130am on Mon/Wed/Fri, 9-11am on Tues/Thurs, 6-830pm on Fridays, and 930-11am on Sundays. Walk-in fee is \$5, JCPC membership is \$15/year

and yearly court fee is \$100. The courts may also be rented for private groups- call the church at 319-624-2288 for rates and scheduling. Contact Doug Tuetken at 563-608-4483 for more information. Newcomers and walk-ins are always welcome and lessons are on Sunday mornings!

SOLON ADVOCATES

NOVEMBER 2025 NEWSLETTER

Advocate 2026 Proposed Trips

Wednesday, April 22 “Honky Tonk Angels” Circa 21/Rock Island TBA

Circa 21 Theater is a rehabbed 1921 historic building in the Art Deco style with Black Hawk Indian motifs imbedded in the décor. Matinee shows include a meal, entertainment from the “Bootlegger” servers plus the featured show. Trip price includes bus travel and theater ticket.



“Gets Toes Tapping & Crowds Clapping”



March 13 — April 25, 2026
Preview performances March 11 & 12

	Doors	Meal	Preshow	Show
Mat.	11:45	11:45	12:45	1:15
Wed., Fri., Sat. Ev.	8:45	8:45	7:00	7:30
Sun. Ev.	3:45	3:45	5:00	5:30

Elegant, plated meals are served by our performing wait staff. The Bootleggers. Menus will be on your tables, and guests will order when they arrive.

For more information, contact Hollie Myers, at 309-786-2667 Ext. 305 or by email at groupsales@circa21.com

Color posters available on our website!

www.circa21.com

The Advocates first attended Circa 21 Playhouse theater in 2010 and have traveled to the theater to enjoy the many musicals 29 times since our first visit “Branson on the Road.” We first saw “Honky Tonk Angels” in 2010 at the Old Creamery Theater in Amana.

Restaurant Runs

Thursday, November 13 Barrel House Restaurant/North Liberty Personal Cars

Sign up sheet Wednesday’s Senior Dining or call 319-430-8655

Solon Senior Transport provides volunteer transportation for seniors to medical appointments – for information and to enroll please call Cindy Jensen, 319-360-3279. Sign up as a volunteer driver!

Senior Advocates Board

Art Tellin 319-626-2816	Barry Byrne 319-354-8757	Larry Brecht 319-624-2925
Mark Hollinrake 319-551-2811	Cindy Jensen 319-360-3279	Phyllis Fiala 319-331-7447
Joyce Cook 319-541-6527	Sandy Hanson 319-430-8655	Penny Tompkins 319-471-3662

