



Fall 2021

MARION MESSENGER

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Marion Named 2021 All-Star Community | page 3



Nick AbouAssaly

We recently learned that Marion was selected as the winner of the Iowa League of Cities' All-Star Community Award (large city category) for an unprecedented fourth time in the last five

years. It will be my great pleasure to accept this award on behalf of all Marion residents at the upcoming League conference. The award signifies the statewide visibility and recognition Marion has gained and an overall endorsement of our amazing progress in recent years.

Amenities such as the Klopfenstein Amphitheater, Uptown Artway, Prospect Meadows Sports Complex and the Marion YMCA & Community Rec Center are just a few of the more recent additions that have expanded opportunities for all Marion residents. This focus on quality of life and serving the needs of people has fueled Marion's dynamic growth and contributed to its current standing as Iowa's **13th largest city** and one of the best places to live in our state.

We are currently witnessing significant roadwork and construction across Marion. This requires patience and understanding as we work to keep up with infrastructure needs, improve travel through our city, accommodate growth and drive better opportunities for economic development. The City's projects are accompanied by numerous and significant private development projects.

In the Central Corridor, for example, our new library is on track for a spring opening, the new 6th Avenue is now open to traffic, and the much needed reconstruction of 7th Avenue and Uptown streetscape will improve traffic safety and the overall curb appeal of the area.

Without a doubt, this is an exciting time for Marion. The future is bright and we have much to be proud of.

Let's keep reaching even higher, together.

City Bids Farewell to City Manager Lon Pluckhahn



Marion City Manager Lon Pluckhahn submitted his resignation to the Marion City Council effective Aug. 2, 2021. Pluckhahn has accepted an opportunity to serve as deputy city manager in Vancouver, WA.

He joined the City of Marion in March 2007 and has served as its chief executive officer for the last 14 years, providing a strategic vision and operational direction based on policies established by the City Council.

Under his direction, the City revamped its economic development strategy and policy, increased capital projects funding and enhanced the community's transportation network.

Pluckhahn played a significant role in making projects like the Marion Police Facility, Marion Enterprise Center, Marion YMCA & Community Rec Center, Prospect Meadows Sports Complex, Uptown Artway and inclusive playground at Lowe Park a reality.

"Lon has been an asset to Marion and his expertise helped the City accomplish great things," said Marion Mayor Nicolas AbouAssaly. "We wish him and his family all the best."

"Making the decision to leave Marion has been one of the toughest of my career," said Pluckhahn. "It has been a privilege to be a part of this community and lead the City into the next stage of development. Marion is blessed with an exceptional team of leaders and elected officials that will maintain the momentum we have built."

A search is currently underway to identify Pluckhahn's successor. Community Development Director Tom Treharne has been named acting city manager and Fire Chief Deb Krebill is serving as acting city manager pro tem.

HR UPDATE

Bisinger Honored with Paul Draper Spirit of Marion Award



Communications manager, Amber Bisinger, was awarded the first Paul Draper Spirit of Marion Award by the City of Marion. The award was established to recognize a City employee who best exemplifies public service, teamwork, a strong work ethic and humility, all combined with a sense of humor. The award was presented by

City Manager Lon Pluckhahn and Mayor AbouAssaly during Public Service Recognition Week in May 2021.

Bisinger was hired in 2012 for the then-new communications coordinator position. She built the communications function from the ground up and has helped raise the caliber of work across the organization. She focuses on public relations, media relations and community outreach for the City.

The award is named after long-time resident and businessman Paul Draper, who was committed to public service. During his 40 years in Marion, Draper served on both the City Council and the Civil Service Commission, in addition to the boards of directors for the Marion Chamber of Commerce and the Marion Economic Development Corporation. Draper passed away in February of 2020. His positive leadership is remembered with this annual award.

Marion Named 2021 All-Star Community Award Recipient

For the fourth time in five years, the City of Marion has been named an All-Star Community by the Iowa League of Cities

The 2021 award was given for the Marion YMCA & Community Rec Center. The City will be recognized during the award ceremony on Thursday, Sept. 16, which is part of the League's Annual Conference & Exhibit planned for Sept. 15-17.

The All-Star Community Award is the most prestigious honor given by the League to cities. Entries are judged by a panel of former city officials and others familiar with municipal government. Judges determine winners based on innovative efforts in areas such as urban renewal, development, preservation, collaborative efforts or quality of life improvements. Marion was among three of Iowa's 940 cities to garner such recognition.

The new YMCA was the product of a decade-long effort to replace the community's aging, 56-year-old facility. While

the Y had adequately served its members for many decades, the facility was outdated and no longer able to meet the needs of the community which had grown by over 30,000 residents in the same 56-year timeframe.

The City of Marion's commitment to providing quality recreational services for its residents and surrounding communities was one of the greatest factors supporting this project. A community visioning process in 2009 established the need for a new community recreation center. The community wanted a facility that would serve as a focal point for community meetings, recreational opportunities, youth programs, events and senior services.

The City's contribution of \$7.3 million represents broad public support from the Marion community. The project broke ground in November 2019 and the YMCA

obtained its certificate of occupancy on Dec. 30, 2020. The building opened to the public just weeks later.

The first-class facility is more than double the size of the former Marion YMCA. The building spans over 70,000 square feet with more than 7,000 square feet of fitness space, three full-size basketball courts, an indoor track, plus leisure and lap swimming pools.

"This project is much more than a beautiful building," said Marion Mayor Nicolas AbouAssaly at the ribbon-cutting ceremony. "The truly spectacular part of the story is what will happen here, through the partnership between the Y and the City of Marion. Community will happen here."

This year's other All-Star Community Award winners are Mount Vernon and Woodbine.





7th Avenue Reconstruction & Streetscape Project

Upgrades coming to Uptown Marion

A long-awaited reconstruction project in Uptown Marion began in July 2021. Work is underway on 7th Avenue between 10th and 12th Streets. As construction continues, detours will be posted for through traffic, but all businesses remain open.

“Uptown Marion is about to get an impressive upgrade,” said Brooke Prouty, director of the Uptown Marion District and business liaison for the project. “We know construction can be challenging, but we are doing everything we can to minimize disruptions to businesses and want to complete a quality project in a timely fashion. While customers might have to walk an extra block or two during construction, I assure you, Uptown Marion is worth the walk.”

The project includes the reconstruction of the street and sidewalks and replacement of underground utilities, sanitary sewer, storm sewer and water main on 7th Avenue and adjacent side streets between 8th and 12th Streets and 6th and 8th Avenues in the historic central business district. It also includes the addition of a plaza on 11th Street that stretches from the Uptown Artway south across 7th Avenue.

Work is expected to span two construction seasons.

Initial estimates show a total project cost of \$6.9 million, which is being funded by Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) proceeds and bonding through the City’s Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Rathje Construction will be completing the project.

Those interested in keeping informed of the progress are encouraged to sign up for the 7th Avenue Streetscape/Plaza Project eUpdate.

Streetscape



How is this project being paid for? The 7th Avenue reconstruction and streetscape improvements will largely be funded by Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) and bonding through the City’s Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

What about other streets? Marion has grown quickly. In the last 10 years, 30 percent of Marion roads have been rebuilt, resurfaced or built new. Traffic volumes, utility repair, and level of street deterioration all play a role in how streets are prioritized for maintenance, repairs, and reconstruction.

What about parking? The addition of angled parking on the south side of 7th Avenue will add more parking around the park with the total project having about the same number of parking spots before and after construction. Extra effort will be made to encourage traffic to the local businesses and identify parking options. During construction, customers might have to walk one or two blocks extra, but Uptown is worth the walk! The City of Marion plans to do a parking study once construction is complete to better understand additional parking needs. As Marion continues to grow, increased demand for parking could lead to a paid parking model to be considered in the future.

What does this mean for the businesses in Uptown? When building and business owners were asked to rank their highest priorities on possible downtown enhancement efforts in the 2019 Uptown Marion Business Survey, improvements to the streets, sidewalks, lighting, furnishings, green spaces and trails in Uptown Marion returned as the highest priority. This project delivers on that request.

The City’s role in economic development is to facilitate an attractive business environment. While street improvements are important, there’s an important balancing act at play between amenities and infrastructure. Uptown Marion Main Street is a partner in this project and a liaison to the business community.

Unlike standard street reconstruction, the streetscape improvements incorporate many additional amenities to attract people to Uptown and to enhance the environment. Improvements are expected to generate traffic, which could lead to an increase in profits for businesses. Improvements will also enhance the accessibility and walkability of the district. The plaza project and aesthetic enhancements to 7th Avenue in Uptown contribute to the quality of life that residents enjoy and keep visitors coming to the community.

What will happen to City Square Park and Events? The new amenities planned for the plaza will enhance the programming being offered in City Square Park. Even though events within City Square Park may need to be relocated during construction, events will continue to be held within the Uptown District. In the future, 7th Avenue will be better equipped to accommodate festivals and events during traffic closures.



Learn more about the project at www.cityofmarion.org/7thAveStreetscape.



10 Year Extension of Local Option Sales Tax to Appear on November's Ballot

On Nov. 2, 2021, Marion residents and the metro area will vote on whether or not to extend the local option sales tax (LOST) for 10 years. In this vote, the contiguous cities in the Cedar Rapids metro area will vote as one.

In Marion, the ballot language states that 70 percent of the funds will go toward street and sewer construction, reconstruction, repair and improvements and the other 30 percent will be used for community projects consisting of any general or essential corporate purpose.

Marion as a community will be a net beneficiary of the tax, if passed. The city would receive an estimated \$6.4 million in the first year. Over the life of the tax, an estimated \$70 million would be returned to the community.

Marion has used the current tax to support community improvement projects like the new fire station, YMCA and library in addition to enhancements to our parks and trails and replacement of fire equipment. In addition, the City has invested in improvements to major and arterial roads, neighborhood streets, regional stormwater detention and the sanitary sewer system.

Using LOST proceeds for infrastructure projects keeps the debt service levy down. This is an indirect form of property tax relief. It allows the City to pay cash for projects rather than borrowing.

Proposed infrastructure projects to be funded by local option sales tax include improvements to neighborhood streets, sidewalks and sanitary sewer, broadband infrastructure, 11th Street realignment, 10th Street/Echo Hill Road connection and Tower Terrace Road construction.

Proposed community improvement projects include the expansion of recreational aquatics opportunities, the second phase of Prospect Meadows, a fourth fire station and fire station equipment replacement, the second phase of Prairie Hill Park and other park facility improvements.

The funds would help accomplish infrastructure projects in 10 years that would otherwise take 24-26 years.

Pass or fail?


State law requires cities in a metro area with touching borders to vote as a block on sales-tax measures. The total vote in the block of cities determines the vote outcome. Because of that, there are four potential outcomes.

- A** If it passes in Marion and passes metro-wide, the tax is collected in Marion and Marion gets a share. Current and future councils are bound by the ballot language requiring 70 percent of the funds to be use on roads and 30 percent to be used on community projects.
- B** If it passes in Marion and fails metro-wide; the tax would end at the current sunset date in 2024.
- C** If it fails in Marion but passes metro-wide; the tax is collected metro-wide (including Marion), and Marion gets its normal share.
- D** If it fails in Marion and fails metro-wide, the tax would end at the current sunset date in 2024.

Election Information

The next City election is Tuesday, Nov. 2, 2021. Polls will open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Voter registration forms and absentee ballot request forms must be submitted to Linn County Election Services by Oct. 18, 2021.

Current council seats that will be on the ballot are Council At-Large, Council At-Large to fill a vacancy, Ward 2 and Ward 4. There will also be three public measures on the ballot including the renewal of the 1% local option sales tax collection, a change to the number of members on the Library Board and a change to the length of the term for members of the Library Board.

 For more information, please contact the City Clerk at cityclerk@cityofmarion.org or 319-743-6301.

MARION MESSENGER

The Marion Messenger is published quarterly for the residents of Marion, Iowa, to keep them informed of City policies, new developments and community events. If you have comments or suggestions concerning this or future issues, please contact:

Amber Bisinger, Editor

Marion City Hall | abisinger@cityofmarion.org



Kick-off Labor Day weekend at Low Park! The City of Marion is excited for the return of Fireworks & Fireflies, which will take place at the Klopfenstein Amphitheater at Low Park, 4500 N. 10th Street, Marion, beginning at 6 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 3.

The event is free to attend and will feature food trucks, live music by The Mixtape, face painting and more. Coolers are allowed, but please leave pets and sparklers at home.

Please see the map at the right for parking options.

Organizers are pleased to welcome Hanna Plumbing & Heating, Inc. as the event's presenting sponsor. Thank you to all sponsors who make this event possible.

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BLUE SPONSORS Ohnward Bank & Trust | D&N Fence Company Inc. NXT Bank | Edward Jones - Ted Steger, Financial Advisor

 **For more information and FAQ's about the event, visit cityofmarion.org/fireworks**



UPCOMING UPTOWN Events

Chocolate Walk

Friday, Oct. 1 | 8-10:30 p.m. | Uptown Marion

Fall's favorite night, The Chocolate Walk returns! Enjoy strolling Uptown Marion at this after-hours, adult-only shopping event. Visit your favorite stores, listen to live music performances, discover what's new just around the corner and savor a sweet treat from participating businesses.

Be sure to check marioncc.org or facebook.com/MarionIAC for event specifics as we navigate the changing 7th Avenue Streetscape project.

The Chocolate Walk, hosted by the Marion Chamber of Commerce and Uptown Marion, is held the first Friday in October each year and is a free community event thanks to our Platinum Community Partners: Farmers State Bank, ImOn Communications, Mercy Community Physicians, Summit Pointe Senior Living and Z102.9.

Save the date!

Small Business Saturday

Saturday, Nov. 27 | 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Christmas In The Park

Friday, Dec. 3 | 4-8 p.m.



PURSUE YOUR CAREER WITH A PURSUIT GRANT!

PURSUE A CAREER HERE!

The work you've done to equip yourself through a job shadow, internship or part time job is paying off! Now we'd like to help you with funds to pursue skills for long term success!

WHAT IS A PURSUIT GRANT?

Pursuit Grants financially support student efforts to become trained and skilled assets to the local workforce. Grants of up to \$4,000 can be used to cover college tuition, certifications, or vocational training costs.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Qualifying applicants must be a currently enrolled high school student or a graduate of either the Marion Independent or Linn-Mar Community School District. Students who reside in either district shall also qualify. Young adults within 36 months following high school graduation with plans to reside in Marion also qualify. Must have a business relationship.

Read more details: www.medcoiowa.org/pursuitgrant



This September, get ready to experience a full month of fun during Fall into Marion. While the Swamp Fox Festival is typically held this time of year, and traditional events like the parade and 5K are on pause as Uptown gets an upgrade, there will still be many activities to enjoy. See below for the list of events in September.

Friday, Sept. 3

Fireworks & Fireflies

presented by Hanna Plumbing & Heating
Lowe Park | 6 p.m.

Friday, Sept. 17

Pop-Up Acts in the Artway: Billy Heller

Uptown Artway | 5 p.m.

Friday, Sept. 24

Pop-Up Acts in the Artway: Matt Gogel

Uptown Artway | 5 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 25

Uptown Marion Market

Corner of 8th Ave & 12th Street | 8 a.m.-1 p.m.

Dog Fashion Show

sponsored by Apple Creek Kennel
Uptown Artway | 10 a.m.

Uptown Fall Fest

Uptown Marion | 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

Marion Fall Family Bike Ride

with the Iowa Bicycle Coalition
City Square Park | 1 p.m.

Doug T Hypnotist Show

Lowe Park | 6 p.m.

Sunday, Sept. 26

Classic Car Show & Shine

Thomas Park | 9:30 a.m.- 3 p.m.



6th Avenue Ribbon Cutting

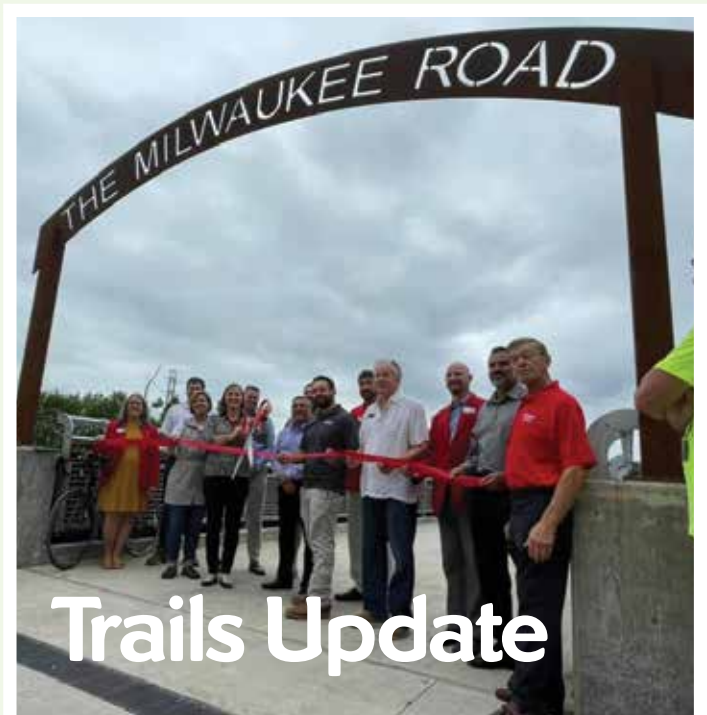
City leaders, elected officials and Chamber ambassadors gathered for a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the completion of 6th Avenue and a significant portion of Marion's Central Corridor Project on Friday, Aug. 6. The Central Corridor Plan was adopted in 2009 to revitalize and redevelop one of the most prominent and identifiable areas within the community.

It repurposed the former railroad right-of-way into a street and introduced a long-term traffic management plan for Marion's core, balancing traffic between 6th and 7th Avenues and creating a more pedestrian-friendly atmosphere in Uptown Marion. In turn, properties once reserved for warehouses and industrial uses are now better positioned for a mix of commercial and residential uses. The project was funded in part with Local Option Sales Tax funds.

In July, the City held a ribbon cutting for the former railroad bridge over Indian Creek that is considered part of the CeMar Trail project. The bridge disassembly began in 2020, which consisted of removing the old bridge girders, demolishing the deteriorating concrete columns and replacing/repouring them with new right-sized columns. Re-fabrication of the girders took place on-site and earlier this year they were set atop the new columns and finishing trail components were added to complete the project.

The second and final large-scale bridge for the CeMar trail will be the pedestrian bridge over Marion Boulevard, just south of Merrill Gardens. The project began on Aug. 9 and will have 95 working days allocated to complete the project. Federal funding will cover 80 percent of the cost of the project, with local funds covering the remainder. Once the bridge is complete, local artist Cara Briggs Farmer with Synergy Metalworks will fabricate decorative gateway columns to be placed on the bridge.

Another important trail project began on Aug. 9 and will include the construction of 10-foot wide sidepaths along both sides of 10th Avenue (Business 151) from 35th Street to Eagleview Drive in Marion. This connection will provide more than one mile of new, paved pedestrian access between a number of businesses and residential areas. This project has been allocated 120 working days and is anticipated to stretch into the 2022 construction season. Federal funds will cover up to 80 percent of the project costs, and local funds will cover the remaining 20 percent.





Fire Prevention Week Returns in October

This year's Fire Prevention Week (FPW) campaign, "Learn the Sounds of Fire Safety!" works to educate everyone about the different sounds the smoke and carbon monoxide alarms make. It's important to know what to do anytime an alarm sounds to keep you and your family safe. When an alarm makes noises – a beeping sound or a chirping sound – you must take action.

Here are some Frequently Asked Questions about smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms.

What's the difference between smoke alarms and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms? Why do I need both? Smoke alarms sense smoke well before you can, alerting you to danger. In the event of a fire, you may have as little as two minutes to escape safely, which is why smoke alarms need to be in every bedroom, outside of the sleeping areas (like a hallway), and on each level (including the basement). Do not put smoke alarms in your kitchen or bathrooms.

Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas that displaces oxygen in your body and brain and can render you unconscious before you even realize something is happening to you. Without vital oxygen, you are at risk of death from carbon monoxide poisoning in a short time. CO alarms detect the presence of carbon monoxide and alert you so you can get out, call 9-1-1, and let the professionals check your home.

How do I know which smoke and CO alarm to choose for my home?

Choose an alarm that is listed with a testing laboratory, meaning it has met certain standards for protection. Whether you select a unit that requires yearly changing of batteries or a 10-year unit that you change out at the end of the 10 years, either will provide protection. CO alarms also have a battery backup. For the best protection, use combination smoke and

carbon monoxide alarms that are interconnected throughout the home. These can be installed by a qualified electrician so that when one sounds, they all sound. This ensures you can hear the alarm no matter where in your home the alarm originates.

Do you hear a beeping or a chirping sound coming from your smoke detector or carbon monoxide alarm? What does it all mean?

Knowing the difference can save you, your family and your home.

If you hear a **beep**, you must get on your feet! A beeping sound means smoke or carbon monoxide is present. Get out, call 9-1-1 and stay out.

Hear a **chirp**? You need to make a change! A chirping sound means the battery is low or the entire alarm needs to be replaced. Check the battery. If the battery is low, replace it. Check the expiration date on the back of the alarm. If the alarm is more than 10 years old, replace it.

Do I have to test my alarms each month?

Yes. Test the alarms by pressing and holding the test button to make sure you hear a loud "Beep, beep, beep" sound. Consider setting an alert on your cell phone to remind you to test the alarms monthly and change the batteries annually.

In a fire, mere seconds can mean the difference between a safe escape and a tragedy. Fire safety education isn't just for school children. Teenagers, adults and the elderly are also at risk in fires, making it important for everyone to take some time this October during FPW to make sure they understand how to stay safe in case of a fire. For more information and to learn the sounds of your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, go to fpw.org. Check the user guide or search your brand and model online. If you have any additional questions, please call the Marion Fire Department at 319-377-8237.

Marion PD Introduces Online Reporting System for Non-Injury or Minor Injury Motor Vehicle Accidents

Marion Police Department is introducing a new online reporting system. It allows residents and visitors to our community to report a non-injury or minor injury motor vehicle accident, so long as the incident does not require medical attention. It also allows you to report a hit and run that caused property damage without summoning a police officer. Upon completion of the report, you will be able to print a temporary copy for your records.

Access the online system at www.cityofmarion.org/reportaccident. You need to have a valid email address, have your vehicle VIN# readily available, and verify that damage is less than \$1,500 for the incident.

Upon completion of this process, you will receive an email that has a temporary case number. The report will be reviewed by the Patrol Division and then you will be contacted via email if there are any issues. If no issues exist, your report will be approved and you will receive an email with your permanent case number.

Please note:

- **Filing a false police report is a crime!**
- Please be sure to review the entire list with definitions and examples.
- Do NOT submit a new report if you have already talked to an officer about the same issue.
- If your incident is not listed in the category selection list, please call the 911 Communications Center at 319-377-1511.



Hose De-Coupling at Marion Fire Department Headquarters

City leaders and Chamber ambassadors joined members of the Marion Fire Department on Monday, Aug. 9 to celebrate the completion of Marion's third fire station and the department's new headquarters. In lieu of a traditional ribbon-cutting, the Fire Department opted to de-couple a fire hose to mark the occasion. The event took place at 100 Irish Drive, on the southwest corner of Tower Terrace Road and Irish Drive.

Population and geographic growth to the north have resulted in the need for a third station in Marion, keeping emergency response times within the national standard for fire and medical service.

The physical and mental well-being of Marion's firefighters is at the heart of the facility's two-story design. It incorporates biophilic design elements, decontamination and training areas, as well as administrative offices. The facility includes a community safe room/storm shelter and the City's disaster emergency operations center.

The project was partially funded by Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) dollars. A public open house is planned for later in the fall.



Did you know?

Garage fires tend to spread farther and cause more injuries and dollar loss than fires that start in all other areas of the home.

Keep your home safe by following a few easy tips:

- › Store oil, gasoline, paint, propane and varnishes in a shed away from your home.
- › Keep items that can burn on shelves away from appliances.
- › Plug only one charging appliance in to an outlet.
- › Don't use an extension cord when charging an appliance.

To improve garage safety through construction, install:

- › A 20-minute fire-rated door that is self-closing and self-latching from the garage into the house.
- › A ceiling made with 5/8-inch Type X gypsum board (or the equivalent) if you have living space above the garage.
- › A wall with 1/2-inch gypsum board (or the equivalent) if the wall attaches to the garage to your home.
- › An attic hatch cover if you have attic access to the garage.
- › A heat alarm — not a smoke alarm — in your garage. The heat alarm will sound if the temperature rises too high. Learn more about what type of heat alarm is best for garage installation at www.usfa.fema.gov

For more information and free fire-safety resources, visit www.usfa.sema.gov.

CONTACT CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mayor Nicolas AbouAssaly

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3476 Barnsley Circle | (319) 538-7888
ward4@cityofmarion.org

Send the same email to all members at: council@cityofmarion.org

Marion's City Council meets in work session (no action taken, just discussion) on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month at 4 p.m. Regular session meetings are held the Thursday following the Tuesday work session at 5:30 p.m. Meeting information can be found at www.cityofmarion.org.

WATER DEPARTMENT NEWS

Marion Water Department has Moved!

The Marion Water Department has moved from City Hall to 3050 5th Avenue, Marion. Their new offices are located beneath the elevated water tower at 31st Street and 5th Avenue. Office hours are 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m., Monday-Friday.

Water System Upgrades



The Marion Water Department has hired WRH, Inc. from Amana to construct a \$2.87 million Iron Removal Treatment Plant at 2351 31st Street. This new facility will be capable of treating 1500 gal/min of water from both the Jordan and Silurian Aquifers to meet the community's future drinking water needs. Construction is underway with work expected to be completed by June 2022.

The Marion Water Department is also investing over \$1.2 million in new water main infrastructure in the next fiscal year. Projects are slated for the following locations:

- › Tower Terrace Road west of Alburnett to C Avenue
- › 3rd Avenue from 22nd Street to 31st Street
- › 10th Street and Central Roundabout
- › 14th Street from 8th Avenue to 10th Avenue
- › 2nd Street and 10th Avenue
- › 7th Avenue from 8th Street to 12th Street
- › 10th Street from 6th Avenue to 8th Avenue

2021 HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

City of Marion IOWA Garbage & Recycling Collection

Date	Holiday	Day	Pick-Up Schedule
Sept. 6	Labor Day	Monday	One day late all week
Oct. 11	Columbus Day	Monday	Regular collection schedule
Nov. 11	Veterans Day	Thursday	Regular collection schedule
Nov. 25	Thanksgiving Day	Thursday	Collection on Friday
Nov. 26	Day after Thanksgiving	Friday	Collection on Saturday
Dec. 23	Christmas Eve Observed	Thursday	Regular collection schedule
Dec. 24	Christmas Day Observed	Friday	Regular collection schedule
Dec. 30	New Year's Eve Observed	Thursday	Regular collection schedule
Dec. 31	New Year's Day Observed	Friday	Regular collection schedule

(Bold indicates City of Marion holidays. Offices will be closed in addition to the Recycling and Compost Facilities.)



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CITY DEPARTMENTS

City Hall

1225 6th Avenue
Marion, IA 52302
cityofmarion.org

Administrative Offices

319-743-6301
aabernathey@cityofmarion.org

Building Inspection

319-743-6330
building@cityofmarion.org

City Clerk

319-743-6327
cityclerk@cityofmarion.org

City Manager

319-743-6301
citymanager@cityofmarion.org

Community Development

319-743-6320
abartlett@cityofmarion.org

Engineering Department

319-743-6340
mbarkalow@cityofmarion.org

Finance Department

319-743-6350
lcairy@cityofmarion.org

Human Resources Department

319-743-6350
kfisher@cityofmarion.org

IT Department

319-743-4735
thunter@cityofmarion.org

Water Department

3050 5th Avenue | 319-743-6310
tsteigerwaldt@cityofmarion.org

Parks & Recreation

Lowe Park, 4500 10th Street
319-447-3590
khummel@cityofmarion.org
Thomas Park, 343 Marion Blvd.
319-447-3580
ssaashelm@cityofmarion.org

Public Services

(solid waste, sewer, streets)
195 35th Street
319-377-6367
public-services@cityofmarion.org

Marion Public Library

1064 7th Avenue
319-377-3412
info@marionpubliclibrary.org

Fire Department

100 Irish Drive
Emergency - 911
Non-Emergency - 319-377-8237
firechiefkrebill@cityofmarion.org

Police Department

6315 Highway 151
Emergency - 911
Non-Emergency - 319-377-1511
Records - 319-200-7714
Administration - 319-200-7727
administration@marionpolice.com



Seth Staashelm Named Parks and Recreation Director

The City of Marion is pleased to introduce Seth Staashelm as director of the Marion Parks and Recreation Department.

Staashelm joined the community in March 2019 to serve as the City's deputy parks director. He has served as the interim director for the past year, guiding the department through both the derecho and the pandemic. In this new role, he oversees all divisions of the Parks and Recreation Department, guides future planning and budgeting, and coordinates the efforts of boards, committees and partnering organizations.

Before joining the City of Marion, Staashelm was the parks director in Atlantic, Iowa, where he established their first dog park, introduced dozens of new programs and events, and developed a 147-acre recreation area that included an RV campground, two playgrounds, a bathhouse, pavilions, an accessible fishing pier and over three miles of hard surface trails.

"Marion has great momentum," said Staashelm. "There's a lot of energy that comes with being a growing community. I'm excited to help continue to enhance our parks, trails and other amenities that contribute to a great quality of life."

During his time in Marion, Staashelm has supervised the completion of the Butterfield Skate Park and the Lowe Park Inclusive Playground. He also oversaw the addition to the Lowe Park Maintenance Facility and upgrades to Lininger Park.

Currently, the Parks and Recreation Department is taking part in a feasibility study for a new outdoor aquatic center, adding a new soccer mini-pitch and basketball court to Hanna Park, and forging a new partnership with the Marion YMCA & Community Rec Center. In addition, the department is beginning the process to develop Prairie Hill Park which will include a playground, shelter, basketball court, baseball diamond and an inner loop trail.

In his free time, Staashelm enjoys watching sports, cooking and spending time with family. His wife Morgan teaches at Linn Mar High School and the Staashelms are the proud parents of seven-month-old twin boys, Sawyer and Asher, and two husky dogs.



Upgrades Happening in Hanna Park Including Soccer Mini-Pitch

Hanna Park sustained major damage in the derecho. But that isn't stopping the Parks and Recreation Department from investing in some upgrades. In the last year, fitness equipment has been added to the trail system and bollard lighting has been installed to enhance after-dark running and walking through the park.

A new basketball court is under construction and a soccer mini-pitch is being installed thanks to a partnership with Musco Lighting, Pro Iowa, and Kick It Forward. The existing court saw its end of life and will be replaced by separate amenities consisting of a basketball court on the

south side and a mini-pitch on the north.

The futsal-sized pitches are part of a unique \$1 million statewide effort to design and construct 10 mini-pitches in seven Iowa cities and expand soccer interest across the state. Marion was selected as the tenth community to receive a mini-pitch.

"This is such an exciting opportunity for Marion," said Parks and Recreation Director Seth Staashelm. "It will be the only facility of its kind in the Cedar Rapids metro area."

Mini-pitches are smaller soccer pitches that sometimes are hard-surfaced and surrounded by a



rebound wall, similar to hockey, and provide for a constant state of faster game play. This allows for both passive and organized play to take place along with additional programming opportunities for the community.

The mini-pitch will see completion later this fall.



Marion to Begin Removal of Stumps in the Right-of-Way; Residents Asked to Remove Plantings

The City of Marion has hired a contractor to assist with the large-scale removal of more than 1,000 right-of-way tree stumps resulting from the derecho storm and prior.

The removal process began in July 2021 and is expected to be completed no later than Nov. 1, 2022.

Residents are asked to remove any landscape materials they wish to save such as rock, brick, stone block and plastic edging, as well as any ornamental plantings they wish to salvage. Any items left in place at the time of work will be removed and disposed of by the contractor.

The contractor is responsible for underground utility locates for each stump, grinding stumps below the grade

in the right-of-way, clean-up of all woody chip debris, backfilling voids within 48 hours and final seeding of the site. Upon completion, each location will be inspected by a member of Marion's Urban Forestry Division.

Work is expected to begin in the oldest parts of Marion, where trees were of greater maturity. Contractors will move outward from there. Work is required to stop once an inch of snowfall accumulates and will resume in the spring when conditions allow.



A list of Frequently Asked Questions is available at www.cityofmarion.org/UrbanForestry. Questions or concerns may be directed to the City Arborist at 319-447-3580.



Eagles in Oak Shade

For the third time in recent history a non-bald eagle—in fact, an Eagle Scout candidate—has left his mark on our historic cemetery.

In July, Marion High School senior Blake Roling completed a project which he had proposed to earn himself the high honor and designation of Eagle Scout. Blake's cemetery project was inspired by the cemetery maps installed in 2003 by an earlier Eagle Scout, Nickolas Lockart. Blake noticed that the 4x4 posts on which Nick's maps hung were suffering a lot of damage after 17 years of weed-wacker abuse. With the financial support of Murdoch Funeral Home and Cremation Service, he was able to replace all six posts, set in concrete in order to reduce future damage. From there Blake's project grew to include an additional public service: a weather-protected bulletin board to provide information like cemetery rules and contact numbers to cemetery visitors.

Between the projects completed by Nickolas and Blake, a third Scout, Andrew Klosterman, contributed his time and talent to Oak Shade. In 2018, Andrew led a team of scouts in recording the GPS coordinates of all US Veterans' graves in the cemetery.



Bill Carroll

Meet Bill Carroll, New Director of Marion Public Library

The Library Board of Trustees are pleased to announce that Bill

Carroll will serve as the next Marion Public Library director. Carroll comes to Marion from the North Central Washington Libraries in Wenatchee, Washington, where he served as the Director of Branch Operations for the past year.

As director of the Library, Carroll will manage the human resources, physical facilities, collection development and financial operations of the library in accordance with the policies established by the Library Board of Trustees and City administration.

“We look forward to his expertise on a variety of fronts, from mentoring and guiding staff, to overseeing the completion of the new library facility and reuniting staff and materials under one roof,” said Sally Reck, President of the Library Board of Trustees.

Carroll has worked in the library industry for nearly 10 years, including nine years at Carnegie-Stout Library in Dubuque, Iowa, as the Circulation Supervisor and Adult Services Manager. He has also served as an adjunct instructor at Northeast Iowa Community College. Carroll comes to Marion with more than a decade of experience in management, implementation, budget and strategic planning.

“I’m very excited to be returning to Iowa and looking forward to working with the Board, library and city staff, volunteers and all of the other community stakeholders,” said Carroll. “The possibilities for the Marion Public Library are endless!”



Construction Update at New Library

Exterior masonry is complete and drywall has started to go up on the second floor. The new Library should be completely enclosed by the end of September and then the contractor plans to pour the parking lot in October. Bush Construction has stated they are on track for a March 2022 completion.

Upcoming Library Events

BACK TO SCHOOL BEANSTACK CHALLENGE | AUG. 1 – SEPT. 30 |

It’s back to school time! Start this fall off right by logging how many minutes you read to earn badges as we gear up for the 2021-2022 school year! Add your friends’ Beanstack codes to challenge each other for reading streaks and to take over the leaderboard! Download the Beanstack app from your app store or sign up at www.marionpubliclibrary.beanstack.com.

100 BOOKS BEFORE GRADUATION BEANSTACK CHALLENGE |

SEPT. 1 - MAY 31 | Looking ahead to the future? Get an early start on your senior year goals by joining our 100 Books Before Graduation challenge. Log all the books you’re reading for class, for fun and everything in between as you earn virtual badges and bragging rights before you walk towards that diploma! For ages 13 to adult!

1000 BOOKS BEFORE KINDERGARTEN BEANSTACK CHALLENGE

| YEAR-ROUND CHALLENGE | We want to help parents prepare their children for one of life’s big milestones: kindergarten. So, start building your child’s reading library by joining our 1000 Books Before Kindergarten challenge and earn virtual badges and fun learning activities on their way to attaining their 1000 Books certificate!

PRIDE 365 BEANSTACK CHALLENGE |

Pride 365 is all about celebrating everyone for who they are all year round, especially the LGBTQ+ community. Check out book recommendations and activities that honor everyone’s uniqueness! Log your reading and activities to earn badges.

UPDATE AT ANNEX | Our Marion Annex location at 4151 3rd Ave., Suite 103 is now available for curbside holds pickup. When you arrive, please pull into one of our three spaces available, and call 319-743-1981. A staff member will come out to hand you your holds. The Marion Annex location can be selected for curbside holds pickup through our website or Metro Library Network App available on Android and iPhone.

JOIN OUR VIRTUAL BOOK CLUB! | The Marion Public Library has partnered with PBC Guru to create a virtual book club for patrons and the community. The Marion Public Library will connect through a private forum where all participants can discuss the current book and network with each other.

- The book club will read one book every two to three months, so you’ll have plenty of time for each book.
- There are no membership or subscription fees. Joining the book club is completely free!
- Marion residents and members of our contracting community will have access to download an eBook of each reading selection for free!
- Non-Marion residents can join the book club at no cost but are responsible for obtaining a copy of the selected books via their preferred vendor or method.
- Don’t have a card? Sign up for a free Library card online. Join now at pbc.guru/marionlibrary

LIBRARY BOARD BALLOT ISSUE | The Marion Library Board has requested to increase the number of board members from nine to 11 as well as reduce the term length of board members from six years to four years. Iowa Code Section 392.5 requires voter approval to alter the composition, manner of selection or charge of a library board. The goal of this change is to stagger the tenures so there is always a balance of tenured and new board members as well bring in new perspectives for the future of the library.

LIBRARY SERVICES

Kids

TODDLER TIME | WEDNESDAYS | 9:30-10 A.M. | Come join us for Toddler Time on Sept. 15 at 9:30 a.m. at the Lowe Park Arts and Environment Center. Toddler Time is geared for children 18 months to three years old. Toddler Time will include songs, rhymes, and stories. Toddler Time will meet indoors but on sunny days we may sneak outside to wiggle, giggle and run in the sun.

PRESCHOOL STORYTIME | WEDNESDAYS | 10:30-11 A.M. | Are you ready to “Fall” in love with Storytime again? Starting Sept. 15, we’re having Preschool Storytime at the Lowe Park Arts and Environment Center (4500 N. 10th Street) every Wednesday from 10:30-11 a.m. We’ll enjoy stories, songs, rhymes and activities perfect for children ages 3-6! And, if the weather is nice, we might even sneak outside to run, play and enjoy the beauty of Lowe Park! (Psst! Also, our local heroes, the Marion Fire Department, will be our special guests on Oct. 6 for Fire Prevention Week, so mark that on your calendar right away!)

MUSIC AND MOVEMENT | THURSDAYS | 9:30-10 A.M. | Beginning Thursday, Sept. 16 at Lowe Park Arts and Environment Center, children and caregivers are invited to enjoy songs, stories, and movement that will build early childhood skills! Geared toward 2-6-year-olds, but all ages and abilities welcome!

BABY TIME | THURSDAYS | 10:30-11 A.M. | Beginning Thursday, Sept. 16 at the Lowe Park Arts and Environment Center, babies and caregivers are invited to participate in lap bounces, rhymes, stories and music in this interactive program geared toward children aged 0-18 months. All abilities are welcome!

NEW! CRAZY 8S MATH CLUB | Registration for Crazy 8 Math Club is now available! Crazy 8’s is a fun, math centered program for 3rd-5th graders. The Crazy 8 Club runs for eight consecutive weeks starting on Monday, Sept. 13 at 4 p.m. The club will meet at the Lowe Park Arts and Environment Center. Each meeting will last approximately one hour. Registering will automatically register you for the whole series. We ask that those registering attend all eight weeks. Space is limited.

DOODLEBUGS | LAST WEDNESDAY OF SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER, NOVEMBER, AND DECEMBER | 10:30-11 A.M. | Join us virtually every month as we learn about art and creative history with our friend Ms. Erin from the Cedar Rapids Museum of Art. Each month, we’ll tell you the theme and the everyday craft supplies you’ll need to create at home as we listen to a fun story with some art history sprinkled in for good measure! Most activities and stories are geared for ages 3-6. Find the Zoom link and supply list on our event calendar!

Teens

TEEN DISCORD | Join our online community! Teens 13 and older are welcome to chat, connect, geek out and share on our Discord server. Teen Services librarians will hold office hours every Monday from 3-5 p.m. to answer questions about area resources, library materials, book recommendations and more through DMs and channel posts. Fill out a form on our website to join.

TEEN READ & PIZZA | TUESDAY, AUG. 31 | 3:30-4:30 P.M. | “Marion, the Unofficial Pizza Capitol of Eastern Iowa.” That might not be our slogan, but it just *feels* like it should be! We’ve got a pizza bracket you won’t want to miss. Teens are invited to come sample cheese pizzas from local restaurants, vote for their favorites, and relax with a book (bring your own or grab one from a librarian!). This event is open to all middle and high school students. Please email Shanel at sslater@marionpubliclibrary.org for questions, clarifications or requests to help us make the event accessible for you. Advanced registration is encouraged.

TEEN SUMMER END CELEBRATION | TUESDAY, SEPT. 14 | 3:30-4:30 P.M. | Days are getting shorter and school’s back in session, celebrate summer one last time before pumpkin spice season is upon us! Come hang out, grab some food, chat with friends and play outdoor games at our Teen Summer End Celebration. This event is open to all middle and high school students. Please email Shanel at sslater@marionpubliclibrary.org for questions, clarifications or requests to help us make the event accessible for you. Advanced registration is encouraged.

HALLOW-TEEN PARTY | TUESDAY, OCT. 12 | 3:30-4:30 P.M. | It’s spOoOky season! Teens are invited to watch movies, play games, sing some karaoke, nosh on snacks, make some crafts and wear a costume (not required!), at our Hallow-Teen Party. This event is open to all middle and high school students. Please email Shanel at sslater@marionpubliclibrary.org for questions, clarifications or requests to help us make the event accessible for you. Advanced registration is encouraged.

TEEN BACK TO KINDERGARTEN PARTY | TUESDAY, NOV. 9 | 3:30-4:30 P.M. | Want to go back to the years of nap time and parachute games? Well, we don’t have a time machine, but we can bring back Kindergarten’s greatest hits at our Teen Back to Kindergarten Party! Play parachute games, get some milk and cookies, watch cartoons, play board games like Chutes n Ladders and color. This event is open to all middle and high school students. Please email Shanel at sslater@marionpubliclibrary.org for questions, clarifications or requests to help us make the event accessible for you. Advanced registration is encouraged.

Adults

GERI-FIT AND TAI CHI | MONDAYS | 9:30 A.M. | Starting Monday, Sept. 13 at 9:30 a.m. at the Lowe Park Arts and Environment Center! In partnership with Heritage Area Agency on Aging, our Geri-Fit and Tai Chi series is an evidence-based fitness program geared toward older adults. Geri-Fit and Tai Chi will alternate weeks; Tai Chi will be the first program on Sept. 13. Participants should wear tennis shoes and comfortable clothes for physical activity (and bring two cans of food or 1-3 lb. free weights for Geri-Fit). Enjoy fitness with a supportive community!

SWAP IT! | Join us the third Monday of the month, September–November (Sept. 20, Oct. 18 and Nov. 15) from 5-6 p.m. at the MPL Tech Station (located inside the Marion Columbus Club, 5650 Kacena Ave.) Give your collection a refresh at our Swap It! events this fall. Teens and adults are welcome to bring materials to share with the group and pick up something new from their neighbors.

September: Stationary, planner and scrapbooking materials

October: books

November: vegetable, fruit, herb and flower seeds



1225 6th Avenue
Marion, IA 52302
www.cityofmarion.org



“The 2020 derecho will be etched in our collective memory not only as the greatest natural disaster in Marion’s history, but also one of its finest moments,” said Marion Mayor Nicolas AbouAssaly. “At a time of great hardship, we set aside our differences and did what needed to be done to help our neighbors. We united around a common purpose and our shared humanity, and in turn, we experienced the true power of commUNITY.”

DERECHO One Year Later



The City of Marion paused to recognize the first anniversary of the derecho on Tuesday, Aug. 10. Events included a community lunch grilled by Marion Hy-Vee, a canned food drive to benefit the Churches of Marion Food Pantry and the unveiling of a new tree carving by Carve-R-Way artist Clint Henik. A ceremonial tree planting was held in Thomas Park and a derecho-inspired art installation by local artist Cara Briggs Farmer was dedicated at City Hall.

Later that afternoon, Marion Economic Development Corporation, Marion Chamber of Commerce and Uptown Marion hosted Future Focused: United through Recovery to reflect on the anniversary of the derecho and take note of the forward momentum and development activity that continues in the community. The day concluded with the Derecho Oral History Readers Theatre presentation by Marion Public Library and Giving Tree Theater. It featured actors reading a selection of oral histories from Marion residents that were conducted in the spring of 2021.

