

March 2024

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Marion Named Community of the Year

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Nick AbouAssaly

On Jan. 1, 2024, I began my third term as mayor of the City of Marion. Thank you to Marion's voters for giving me this honor and privilege.

When I took office eight years ago, I promised to work hard, listen to all voices, bring people together, build consensus and invite to the table all who have Marion's best interest at heart and are willing to work

sincerely to shape a vibrant and growing community full of opportunity.

I challenged our city leaders to put the "reaching higher" motto into action, stop settling for "good enough" and become fully in charge of driving our own destiny.

I asked all Marion residents to set a high bar of excellence for our town, set aside differences, see the best in each other and work together toward a common vision as one Team Marion.

I personally invested thousands of hours meeting, listening, collaborating, sharing ideas, promoting a positive and ambitious vision, recruiting businesses and investors, fundraising for community projects and doing whatever else is necessary to ensure our success.

What a difference eight years makes! In that time, we've strengthened our team, expanded partnerships across the region and cemented our progress in collaboration. We've engaged the community in setting the vision and earned the buy-in of residents, business owners and investors who are now actively involved in making the vision a reality. Our City team has become decidedly customer-service oriented and focused on giving residents amazing opportunities.

In the past eight years, we've grown up as a city, putting behind us contentious, divisive politics and uniting all corners of our town in shaping an inclusive, progressive community where all people belong, are valued and have opportunities to add value. We're more responsive to resident needs, focused on giving them the best services and helping them solve their issues.

We work hard to be accessible, communicative and transparent in all we do. We use every opportunity to inform residents of what we're doing and the reasons for our decisions. We've become more professional, more methodical and more process-oriented. Our decision-making has become future-focused, fact-based, expert-informed and well-founded. We've set the highest expectations of ourselves, recruited capable leaders and assembled an awesome team of qualified profes-

sionals who are establishing a solid road map for sustained growth and prosperity long after any of us are involved.

The list of amenities and improvements we've added in eight years is extensive. The Uptown Artway, the skate park, the inclusive playground, the YMCA and Community Rec Center, the library, the fire station headquarters, the public services facility and the new Uptown streetscape and North Plaza are just a few examples. We've added two new parks, improved others with new recreational facilities and built a system of 35 miles of trails. As part of the major road and infrastructure improvements, we built out Tower Terrace Road and 6th Avenue and invested \$30 million in the Central Corridor and reinvented the City core from a quiet, nondescript place to a vibrant city center and destination for the region.

We've seen commercial and residential development soar with single-family neighborhoods and new residential options such as Broad & Main, Boulevard Apartments, Green Park Apartments, Eastown Apartments, Terrace Glen, the Views and Marion Lofts. We developed new industrial parks and transformed the old industrial section in the heart of our town into a beautiful commercial center. We grew our industrial and commercial tax base and welcomed many new businesses eager to contribute to Marion's momentum. Our city's total valuation increased by nearly \$2 billion!

In this eight-year period, we steered our city successfully through a historic pandemic and a historic natural disaster (derecho), putting the unity in CommUNITY and showing the world exactly how it should be done.

We did all of this by setting aside differences, giving each other the benefit of the doubt and collaborating as one TEAM MARION toward a vision of excellence.

Today, Marion is Iowa's 13th-largest city and one of the fastest growing, having welcomed more than 2,300 new households in the last two years alone.

Our city is widely recognized across the state and nation as a place that is doing things the right way. In many ways, Marion is setting the pace as an indispensable part of the regional equation. With excellent services, great neighborhoods, more than 100 annual community events and an unequaled quality of life, Marion's residents love their Marion address.

Truly, what a difference eight years makes. I'm encouraged by where we are, inspired by the prevailing can-do attitude and enthusiastic about our future. Imagine what we can do in the next eight years! It's up to us. We've laid the foundation and set a solid course to achieve our fullest potential.

Let's continue to reach even higher, together. God bless.

Community Resource Landing Page

To better serve residents and community members, the City of Marion has launched a community resource page for anyone seeking assistance and services.

This page is a robust listing of print, online and local area resources and information for community members to access at their own pace. Categories of resources include activism, healthcare, mental health, post-secondary education, career opportunities and more.

Anyone wanting to access the resources page can do so by visiting marionpubliclibrary.org/communityresources.



WE WON!

City of Marion named Community of the Year

Community Playmaker, a media platform designed to provide news, features, and trends that highlight American communities and civic leaders, names the City of Marion, Iowa as its Community of the Year for 2023. The city of 41,864 residents beat out nearly 100 small, midsize and large communities that entered the nationwide contest to earn this honor.



The Community of the Year Award is a celebration of cities and visionary leaders that spark progress. It's about innovative programs and initiatives that drive economic development, promote community engagement, provide places for residents to work and play, support public safety, amplify the arts and culture and build open, inclusive, high-quality environments for all citizens.

Communities from around the country submitted entries for the Community of the Year Award. The size of communities ranged from towns with a little more than 1,000 residents to some of America's largest and most well-known cities, and everything in between.

A panel of experts reviewed each entry with several criteria in mind, including the scope of the "quality-of-life" projects that were launched and the impact of each project, among other items. While they received many tremendous and inspiring entries, the panel said one stood above the rest.

"Marion is a great example of what can happen when a community, both its leaders and citizens, cast a vision for a tremendous quality of life for everyone. And the power is not just in the vision; it's also in the determination Marion leaders showed driving these projects through to completion," said Ashley Whittaker, editor-in-chief of Community Playmaker. "Through initiatives as diverse as their partnership to build a state-of-the-art YMCA to converting unused alleyways into accessible arts and entertainment space, we are inspired by the work they've done and continue to do."

In 2007, City and business leaders in Marion embarked on a bold path toward enhancing their city. It started with polling residents for their thoughts on how to make Marion a better place. Their responses and conversations in community brainstorming sessions helped civic leaders develop a list of projects that met the needs of the community.

Once ideas were further refined,

funding and partnerships were sought for a variety of projects that shape Marion today. These include:

- A new 75,000-square-foot recreation facility in partnership with the YMCA.
- Uptown Artway- an unused, dumpster-filled back alleyway that was converted into a concert and art venue.
- A state-of-the-art library, which includes a recording studio, teen area, art studio, demonstration kitchen, quilting machine and 3D printer.

"It is a great honor for our city to be named 'Community of the Year,'" said Marion Mayor Nick AbouAssaly. "We are grateful for the recognition as it places Marion on a national stage and endorses our focus on serving residents and giving them the best opportunities for an unequalled quality of life. Marion's success is hard-earned by an energized team that works together and engages the entire community in moving the city forward."



Come Work with Us

The City of Marion has a wide variety of job opportunities available. We are a highly collaborative team where people can learn and grow while making a positive impact in the community. We offer competitive pay and a benefits package that includes health and dental insurance, a retirement plan, tuition reimbursement, vacation, sick and holiday pay and more.



For a complete list of current openings, visit cityofmarion.org/employment.

Residential Stormwater Rebates

As spring approaches, consider using water-smart practices on your outdoor projects and take advantage of Marion's residential stormwater rebate program.

The rebate program now includes the following practices:

- **Rain barrels** help save money on your water bill by collecting the rain that falls on your roof.
- **Trees** reduce stormwater runoff and provide shade that reduces cooling bills in the summer.
- **Native plants** have deep, dense root networks that improve rain infiltration and need little maintenance once established. They are also great for attracting birds and pollinators.
- **Pervious pavers** are comparable to typical landscaping pavers but have a porous gravel layer below them that temporarily stores rainwater.
- **Soil quality restoration (SQR)** involves aerating and applying compost to your yard. This improves lawn health and allows yards to absorb more water when it rains.
- **Rain gardens** are small depressions that allow rainwater to infiltrate into the ground. They are great features to incorporate into landscaping projects.



Rebates for rain barrels and trees are up to \$50 per tree/rain barrel and can be applied three times per household. Rebates for

native plants, pervious pavers, soil quality restoration and rain gardens are 50 percent of applicable project costs, up to a maximum rebate amount of \$1,000.



Learn how to qualify for the program and find rebate applications on the City website at cityofmarion.org/stormwater-management.

Engineering Department Update

Here are a few of the higher-profile projects that are in the Engineering Department's upcoming work plan. The department helps maintain existing infrastructure and support new development.

5th Avenue Reconstruction – Phase 1 • Phase 1, expected to begin early this summer, includes the reconstruction of 5th Avenue from 1st Street to 3rd Street and includes water main improvements along 1st Street from 3rd Avenue to 6th Avenue. This phase allows for 85 working days and includes a milestone of completing the 1st Street work by Aug. 16, 2024.

Westbound 10th Avenue/Business 151 Rehabilitation • This project includes the rehabilitation of the westbound lanes of 10th Avenue (Business Highway 151) from 35th Street to Highway 13. Work is expected to begin later this summer.

Asphalt Resurfacing Program • This annual program to mill and replace the existing asphalt surface on several of our roadways is expected to begin in July. Targeted streets include:

- 3rd Avenue from 11th Street to 12th Street
- 21st Avenue from 24th Street to Golfview Court
- 23rd Avenue from 24th Street to 26th Street
- 26th Avenue from 24th Street to 27th Street
- 11th Street from 1st Avenue to 5th Avenue
- 31st Street from 10th Avenue to McGowan Boulevard

Highway 100 and East Post Road Traffic Signal and Turn Lanes • This project will complete intersection upgrades to one of Marion's busiest intersections. The improvements include adding an additional eastbound and westbound left turn lane, a westbound right turn lane and new traffic signals. Construction is expected to begin in June and the contractor will have 80 working days to complete the project.

Tower Terrace Road - Phase A Paving • Work continues on this project with the paving of Tower Terrace Road from just east of Meadowknolls Road to Alburnett Road. This project is being managed by the City of Cedar Rapids and the paving is expected to be completed this season.

Alburnett Road Extension Project • This project will extend Alburnett Road from Boyson Road (from the Bowman Woods subdivision) south to Marion Boulevard/7th Avenue via 2nd Street. Second Street from 7th Avenue to 9th Avenue will become Alburnett Road. This project includes a bridge over Indian Creek in the northern portion of Willow Park and traffic signal installations at the 7th Avenue, 8th Avenue and Boyson Road intersections. This project, first identified in 1999, was awarded \$7 million in federal funding. The project is designed to connect a developing region with the business district along Marion Boulevard and alleviate congestion, accommodate and encourage continued growth and decrease response times for first responders. Plans are currently being finalized and property acquisitions are underway.

Indian Creek Trunk Sewer Project – Segment 7 • Work continues on this project, which will upsize the sanitary trunk sewer to 60-inches in diameter from approximately the Mt. Calvary Cemetery in Cedar Rapids to north of Highway 100, just west of Menards. Segment 7 work is expected to be completed by late summer to early fall 2024.

Indian Creek Trunk Sewer Project – Segment 11 • This project includes upsizing the sanitary trunk sewer to 48-inches in diameter from Willow Park westerly along Dry Creek to the Marion city limits. Construction will begin with tree removal in March. The project is expected to be substantially completed by the summer of 2025.

Central Plaza Project Update

The City of Marion, in partnership with RDG Planning and Design and Rinderknecht Associates, continues to finalize plans and the construction timeline for the Central Plaza. The City secured \$3 million through the Destination Iowa program several months ago and has been working to navigate several layers of requirements at the State and Federal levels to ensure the funding is not jeopardized.

The Central Plaza includes the eastern portion of City Square Park and what was formerly 11th Street adjacent to the park.



In early February, Marion City Council approved a guaranteed maximum price for the project of \$8.3 million. The Marion Park Foundation is currently leading a \$1.3 million private fundraising campaign to support the project. Construction is slated to begin in March (weather permitting) with substantial completion anticipated in December of this year. Some amenities, including the chiller for the ice loop, have extended lead times, so it is unlikely the ice loop will be operational next winter.

Quality of Life in Marion Receives High Marks in the National Community Survey

Last fall, the City of Marion contracted with Polco and the National Research Center, Inc. to conduct The National Community Survey™ (The NCS™). A representative sample of approximately 3,000 households were invited to participate.

The survey measures the overall livability of communities, taking into consideration the relationship between government entities, the private sector, community-based organizations and the residents of a geographic area.

For Marion, 95 percent of residents rated the community as an excellent or good place to live and 91 percent rated the overall quality of life positively. Ninety-three percent of respondents indicated they intend to remain in Marion for the next five years.

Marion's ratings were compared to national benchmarks from over 500 communities representing a wide geographic and population range. The results were also compared to a select subset of the database with similar characteristics to Marion: secondary cities (in a metro but not the primary city), similar in both population and annual household income.

The results show ratings for Marion government performance are strong and above national averages. Satisfaction with public information services increased by 10 percentage points and overall confidence in Marion government, honesty and transparency all scored higher than the national and peer benchmarks.

"It is so gratifying to see these results," noted Marion Mayor Nicolas AbouAssaly. "When we look at our trend data, we see consistently high marks from residents for the level of service they receive and the opportunities their city provides them. I'm encouraged by the consistent improvement in overall confidence and trust our City government is developing with the people we serve, particularly in the areas of honesty,



transparency and treating all residents fairly. Our City team, elected officials and residents should be very proud."

When assessing City services, about nine in 10 respondents were pleased with the customer service provided by the City. Ninety-two percent of respondents indicated that Marion is an excellent or good place to raise children and 87 percent of residents positively rated the overall feeling of safety in Marion. The new Marion Public Library and associated services achieved a 96 percent approval rating.

In addition to the high marks for quality of life and a strong sense of safety in Marion, nine in 10 residents identified utility infrastructure as a priority. While several aspects of Marion's economy showed improvement since the 2021 survey, including the vibrancy of the downtown commercial area and Marion as a place to visit, the economy continues to be a focus for residents.

"Community feedback comes in many forms, and we thank all who participated in this biennial community survey," said City Manager Ryan Waller. "The data reaffirms many of the initiatives that are currently underway and will help inform a refresh of our Strategic Plan so that future projects align with our community's desires."



Visit cityofmarion.org to view the full report.



A Vital Lifeline at Community Events

In the bustling heart of Uptown Marion, large events bring people together for celebrations, festivals and various gatherings. While the focus is often on creating memorable experiences, safety is paramount. Seconds count in emergencies, and a quick response can bridge the gap until professional help arrives.

In October 2023, the Marion Chamber of Commerce was the recipient of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) and Stop the Bleed Kit through St. Luke's Heart Saver Grant Program, funded by St. Luke's Foundation. Both are located in the Chamber's office at 1070 7th Avenue, just across from City Square Park.

Beyond AED placement, community education is key. Training volunteers and attendees on AED locations and basic CPR equips the community to act confidently in emergencies, turning ordinary individuals into potential lifesavers. Marion Chamber staff have undergone CPR, AED and stop the bleed training and in April, the Chamber's volunteer committee will also receive AED training.

Throughout the year the Marion Chamber organizes and facilitates the Uptown Marion Market, Uptown Getdown, Oktoberfest, Chocolate Walk and Christmas in the Park. The gift of having an AED in close proximity to these community events transforms them into safer spaces. Attendees can enjoy the fun knowing that help is within reach in case of emergencies.



Community Build

Students continue to work on the Marion Community Build home, the third that students have helped renovate since the 2020-21 school year.

Marion Community Build is a partnership with the City of Marion, Marion Independent School District and Linn-Mar Community School District. The program works to purchase deteriorated single-family homes for students to complete full rehabilitations that support low- to moderate-income individuals and families.

The program continues to thrive and the hope is to grow the number of homes that are rehabilitated each year.



Learn more: medcoiowa.org/marioncommunitybuild



Comprehensive Plan Update

In October, the City of Marion contracted with RDG Planning and Design for an update to the City's Comprehensive Plan that will guide future land use, transportation, public spaces and other aspects related to community growth over the next 20 to 30 years. In November, a Visioning Committee was appointed by the Mayor and City Council. In addition, a number of robust public engagement opportunities are included as part of plan development, including listening sessions, an online survey, an interactive mapping tool and open houses to provide feedback on the future growth of Marion.



Learn more at cityofmarion.org as the Comprehensive Plan develops.

MARION MESSENGER

The Marion Messenger is published quarterly to keep Marion, Iowa, residents 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
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New Vacant Building Ordinance Implemented

In January 2024, the City of Marion has implemented a Vacant Building Ordinance. The purpose of the ordinance is to protect the public health, safety and welfare of residents by establishing a program for the identification and regulation of vacant buildings within the City.

Neglected vacant buildings are a major source of blight in residential and non-residential neighborhoods, especially when the owner or responsible party fails to actively maintain and manage the building to ensure it does not become a liability to the neighborhood. Vacant buildings discourage economic development and depress the appreciation of property values of both residential and commercial buildings.

A vacant building or structure is defined as a building with no person or persons actively and currently conducting lawful business or lawfully residing or living in any part of the building in accordance with the City's zoning regulations. Vacant building owners or their responsible party must register a vacant building with the City no later than 30 calendar days after the building has become vacant.

There are registration fees the owner must pay annually to have a vacant building. The fees are established by City Council and cover the City's administrative and monitoring costs for the site.

Exemptions to the registration and fees include:

- › A building that has suffered damage from a natural disaster or fire is exempt from the registration requirement for a period of 90 days after the date of the incident.
- › A vacant property that is actively listed and offered for sale or lease by a State of Iowa licensed real estate agent shall be exempt from registration requirements provided the property is offered for sale at a price not to exceed 25 percent over the assessed value as documented by the Linn County Assessor's Office.
- › When a building is vacant because of business or pleasure travel for a period of five months or less during a calendar year, the owners are not required to register the building, but they may do so voluntarily.

Vacant buildings shall be maintained and kept so that they appear to be occupied. All vacant buildings must be secured from outside entry by unauthorized persons or pests. Security must be provided by normal building amenities, such as windows and doors having adequate strength to resist intrusion.



Find the full ordinance and policy at cityofmarion.org, or contact the Community Development Department at (319) 743-6330 for more information.



Library Site RFP Update

The City of Marion, in collaboration with Marion Economic Development Corporation, Marion Chamber of Commerce and Uptown Marion Main Street District, issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the former Marion Public Library site, located at 1095 6th Avenue in Marion. The RFP was issued in October 2023 to identify private developers and development teams interested in redeveloping the City property. Three proposals were submitted and as of mid-February, the City and its partners are reviewing submissions and engaging in interviews as they develop a recommendation for consideration by the City Council.



MARION SPRING / SUMMER COMMUNITY EVENTS

Coffeehouse Nights

Fridays | March 1, April 5 | Lowe Park Arts & Environment Center

These musical performances feature talented local acoustic artists in a relaxed coffeehouse-type atmosphere. Admission is free and doors open at 6:30 p.m. with music starting at 7 p.m. Coffee will be available for purchase.
 March 1: Irish Jam
 April 5: Deep Dish Divas

B-I-N-G-O Nights

Fridays | March 8, April 12 | Lowe Park Arts & Environment Center

Join us for Bingo! Doors open at 5:30 p.m. with games beginning at 6 p.m. Bingo will be played for \$0.25 per card, per game.

Wee Parade

Saturday | March 9 | Uptown Artway
 Join us for a parade – in miniature! Float registration is at 1:30 p.m., and the parade starts at 2 p.m.

Be Green at Home

Saturday | April 13 | Marion Public Library Community Room
 Learn tips from experts about gardening, composting, tree planting and Marion's rain garden/rain barrel rebate program. A great way to celebrate Earth Month and learn tips that will help the environment while saving you money. The event will go from 2-4 p.m.

Healthy Kids Day + City Showcase

Saturday | April 20 | Marion YCMA
 From 9 a.m.-noon, City staff will be on hand to visit with residents and share information about upcoming projects. City vehicles will be on display, and several community partners will have a presence. Plus, participate in fun activities and enter for a chance to win door prizes as part of the YMCA's Healthy Kids Day.

Red Cedar Chamber Music

Wednesday | April 24 | Lowe Park Arts & Environment Center

Red Cedar Chamber Music is a Cultural Leadership Partner in the State of Iowa. Each season, the group brings nearly 100 enlightening and entertaining performances to audiences in Eastern Iowa and beyond. Concert begins at 7 p.m.

Marion Farmers Market

Saturdays | May-Sept. | Taube Park

Visit your neighborhood farmers market throughout the summer. Find produce, baked goods, meats, wine and more between 8-11 a.m. each week.

City-Wide Garage Sale

Saturday | May 11 | Throughout Marion

Marion will hold a city-wide garage sale from 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Find some great bargains and be sure to make a pit stop for lunch or ice cream while you're out and about. A map and sign-up link will be posted at cityofmarion.org/garagesale.

Migratory Bird Day Celebration

Saturday | May 11 | Thomas Park

Join the Marion Parks and Recreation Department, Friends of the Marion Parks and Iowa BIG to celebrate all things birds! Activities include educational displays, speakers, bird hikes, children's activities and more! For more information, visit cityofmarion.org/parks-recreation.

Marion Arts Festival

presented by Farmers State Bank

Saturday | May 18 | Uptown Marion

One day. Fifty artists. Exceptional art. Enjoy hands-on experiences and one-of-a-kind art from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Additional details can be found at marionartsfestival.com.

Marion Arts Festival 5K & Half Marathon

hosted by Corridor Running

Saturday | May 18 | Uptown Marion

Start the day with the Marion Arts Festival Half Marathon and 5K races, hosted by Corridor Running. The races begin at 7:30 a.m. Register now at corridorrunning.com/marion-arts-festival.

Great American Kites

sponsored by Summit Pointe Senior Living Community

Saturday | May 18 | PeeWee Diamonds at Lowe Park

For the third year, the Marion Parks and Recreation Department will host Great American Kites at Lowe Park from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Great American Kites specializes in producing the most astonishing and colorful outdoor giant kite displays. Guests should bring lawn chairs or blankets for seating. Outside food and drink are permitted.

BBQ Rendezvous

Saturday | June 1 | Klopfenstein Amphitheater at Lowe Park

Visit Lowe Park for this day of music and fun supporting the Kiwanis Miracle League at Prospect Meadows. The fun begins at 11 a.m.

Marion by Moonlight

hosted by Farmers State Bank

Thursdays | June 6, 13, 20, 27 | Klopfenstein Amphitheater at Lowe Park

Gather your people, a cooler and some lawn chairs and kick back to enjoy live music compliments of Farmers State Bank. Music goes from 6-9 p.m.

CITY DEPARTMENTS

City Hall

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Marion, IA 52302
cityofmarion.org

Administrative Offices

319-743-6301
aabernathey@cityofmarion.org

City Clerk

319-743-6327
cityclerk@cityofmarion.org

City Manager

319-743-6301
citymanager@cityofmarion.org

Community Development

Building Division
319-743-6330
buildingpermits@cityofmarion.org

Planning Division
319-743-6320
planning@cityofmarion.org

Engineering Department

319-743-6340
mbarkalow@cityofmarion.org

Finance

319-743-6350
lcairy@cityofmarion.org

Human Resources

319-743-6329
lspersflage@cityofmarion.org

IT Department

319-743-4735
itdepartment@cityofmarion.org

Water Department

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

Parks & Recreation

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

Public Services

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

Marion Public Library

1101 6th Avenue
319-377-3412
info@marionpubliclibrary.org

Fire Department

100 Irish Drive
Emergency - 911
Non-Emergency - 319-377-8237
tfagan@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

Pop-Up Acts in the Artway

sponsored by Iowa Appliance Center
and Affordable Heating and Cooling

**Most Fridays | June-August |
Uptown Artway**

Sit on the patio of a nearby bar and hear local musicians perform on the Uptown Artway stage. Music begins at 6 p.m. Visit cityofmarion.org or facebook.com/CityofMarionIowa for specific artists and dates.

Moonlit Movie Series

presented by Hills Bank

**Fridays | June 7, July 19, Aug. 2 |
Klopfenstein Amphitheater at Lowe Park**

Join the Marion Parks and Recreation Department for free outdoor family fun. Bring your blanket or lawn chair and enjoy the movie. Activities begin at 7 p.m., and movies begin at dusk (about 8:30 p.m.)

Sunrise Yoga

**Saturdays | June 8-Aug. 31 |
Klopfenstein Amphitheater at Lowe Park**
Enjoy free outdoor yoga each Saturday morning at 7:30 a.m. Participants should bring water and a yoga mat or towel.

Uptown Marion Market

presented by Marion Chamber Platinum
Community Partners*

**Saturdays | June 8, July 13, Aug. 10,
Sept. 28 | 7th Avenue between 10th
and 12th Streets**

This festival-style market, hosted by the Marion Chamber, features vendors offering fresh produce, baked goods and artisan items from 8 a.m.-noon.

Music Under the Moon

presented by Veridian Credit Union
**Saturdays | June 8, July 13, Aug. 10 |
Klopfenstein Amphitheater at Lowe Park**
Enjoy live music at the beautiful Lowe Park amphitheater. Bring a blanket, cooler and lawn chair. Concerts begin at 7 p.m.

Poker Challenge

Ongoing | June 10-Aug. 9 | Marion Parks
Fifty-two large playing cards have been hidden around Marion's parks and trails. Assemble your best five-card hand (with photo proof) and submit it for a chance to win cool prizes.

Marion Community Band

Tuesdays | June 11 & 25 | Thomas Park
Bring a lawn chair or blanket and enjoy a nice summer evening listening to our great community band! Wear something red, white or blue to get into the spirit. Music starts at 7 p.m.

*Marion Chamber Platinum Community Partners include Farmers State Bank, ImOn Communications, MercyCare Community Physicians, Summit Pointe Senior Living and Z102.9 with support from the Marion Hotel/Motel Grant.

Event details accurate at time of publication. Consult the website of the event host for any updates.

Picnic on the Prairie

presented by Marion Arts Council

**Saturday | June 15, Aug. 17 |
Klopfenstein Amphitheater at Lowe Park**
Come be inspired by music, art and the beautiful outdoors. Bring your picnic basket, blanket and lawn chair. The concerts begin at 7 p.m.

June 15: Funk Stop
Aug. 17: Bear Cat Pickers

Movies on the Move

**Fridays | June 21, July 26, Aug. 16 |
Marion Parks**

Join the Marion Parks and Recreation Department as it brings cinematic adventures right to your neighborhood. Bring your chairs/blankets for seating. Specific movies will be posted on cityofmarion.org.

June 21 - Hanna Park
July 26 - Ascension Park
Aug. 16 - Prairie Hill Park

Fireworks & Fireflies

presented by Hanna Plumbing & Heating
Wednesday | July 3 |

Klopfenstein Amphitheater at Lowe Park
Bring your lawn chair, blanket and cooler and enjoy live music by Funk Daddies before the fireworks show. The event starts at 6 p.m. and fireworks begin at dusk.

**Eat. Drink. & Be Marion:
Pub Crawl Fundraiser**

**Thursday | July 11 | Various stops in
Uptown Marion | Must be 21+**
Enjoy a night out for a good cause! The 10th year of the Pub Crawl features live entertainment, exclusive deals and extended shopping hours as you walk to each participating establishment between 5:30-9:30 p.m. Have fun while supporting the ongoing revitalization and beautification efforts of Uptown Marion - A Main Street Iowa District. (Ticketed event)

Uptown Getdown

presented by Marion Chamber Platinum
Community Partners*
**Thursdays | Aug. 1, 8, 15, 22 | 7th Avenue
between 10th and 12th Streets**
For over 25 years, Uptown Getdown has been the best way to wind down the dog days of summer! Grab your chairs and coolers and meet your neighbors for a street party in Uptown. The festivities get underway at 6 p.m. each Thursday.

Marion Sprint Triathlon

Saturday | Aug. 10 | Marion YMCA
Swim, bike and run for fun! Challenge you or your whole family in this sprint triathlon right here in Marion. Register by July 1. More information available at cityofmarion.org/parks-recreation.



Automated Curbside Collection Program Begins to Take Shape

City staff, in partnership with SCS Engineering, continue to plan for the successful transition to automated curbside collection for garbage, recycling and yard waste. The work will continue for the next 8-9 months. To date,

- Solid waste trucks equipped with a mechanical arm have been ordered and are expected to be delivered this summer.
- Recommended cart sizes have been identified. Each resident will be provided a 64/68-gallon container for garbage and a 64/68-gallon container for recycling. Residents will have the option to choose a smaller 46/48-gallon container. The cart sizes were determined by using the data collected through the 2023 curbside collection survey, field observations, current and projected garbage and recycling generation rates and information from comparable communities. The combination of all the data showed that slightly more than nine out of 10 households' needs would be met with the 64/68-gallon cart for both garbage and recycling.
- It has also been determined that residents will be able to opt-in to the curbside yard waste collection program. Participants of this service would be issued a 64/68-gallon cart. The carts will soon be displayed at various locations in the community so residents can become familiar with the containers and determine the preferred size for their situation. In the coming months, after the fee structure has been determined, residents will receive a postcard mailing and be asked to indicate their preferences.

One unique aspect of Marion's program is that the body of all carts will be the same and colored lids will differentiate the container use. This helps reduce inventory needs and allows for carts to be repurposed simply by changing the lid.

Staff continue to work to determine the rate structure, cart deployment plan and overall schedule for implementation.



Find the latest information at cityofmarion.org/automatedcollectionstudy

Marion Water Dept. Taking a Lead Service Line Inventory

The Marion Water Department is updating its records of water service lines. Homes and businesses built before 1950 may have a private lead service line. The private water service line is the pipe connection between the publicly owned water main in the street and the privately owned water service line from the public water main to the water meter in your home or business.

Between now and April, Marion Water Department staff will be contacting homeowners to verify what type of pipe enters their home or business (if no records currently exist).

Owners of older homes can be proactive and take a picture of the water service pipe where it enters the dwelling before the water meter and send the photo with their address to tsteigerwaldt@cityofmarion.org. Pipe material will either be made of lead, copper, galvanized or plastic.

This mandated inventory by the EPA is a costly undertaking. Customer participation can reduce the expense of the inventory and reduce inconveniences associated with potential home or office visits.



For more information on the EPA's lead service line inventory requirement, call the Marion Water Department at (319) 743-6310.



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2024 HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

City of Marion Garbage & Recycling Collection

Date	Holiday	Day	Pick-Up Schedule
March 29	Good Friday	Friday	Regular collection schedule
May 27	Memorial Day	Monday	One day late all week
June 19	Juneteenth	Wednesday	Regular collection schedule
July 4	Independence Day	Thursday	One day late starting Thursday
Sept. 4	Labor Day	Monday	One day late all week
Oct. 10	Indigenous Peoples' Day	Monday	Regular collection schedule
Nov. 11	Veterans Day	Monday	Regular collection schedule
Nov. 28	Thanksgiving Day	Thursday	Collection on Friday
Nov. 29	Day after Thanksgiving	Friday	Collection on Saturday
Dec. 24	Christmas Eve	Tuesday	Regular collection schedule
Dec. 25	Christmas Day	Wednesday	One day late starting Wednesday
Dec. 31	New Year's Eve	Tuesday	Regular collection schedule

Bold indicates City of Marion holidays, Yard Waste Facility and City offices are closed.

Did you know?

The Marion Water Department pumped 1,152,956,000 gallons of water from two different aquifers last year. Sixty percent of the water came for the Jordan Aquifer (1600-1800-foot deep) and 40 percent came the Silurian Aquifer (500-foot deep). The Marion Water Department is drilling another Silurian Aquifer this winter on the east side of Marion to meet future water demands. The cost to drill the well is \$254,000.

The Marion Water Department spent over \$2.4 million on multiple capital projects last year, including three well rehabilitations, tank and elevated tower re-coatings, tower washings, general plant maintenance, multiple water main relay projects and loan payments.

Automatic Aid Agreement for Emergency Response



Preventing fires is just as important as fighting them, which is why the Marion Fire Department places a strong emphasis on fire safety education. In November, Fire Chief Tom Fagan, Fire Marshal Shawn Fluharty and Mayor Nick AbouAssaly recognized Greenlee Quillin, a 3rd grader from Indian Creek Elementary, with a Fire Safety Award for the actions she took to get her family and pet out safely after a fire started in their home. Greenlee did exactly what the Marion Fire Department had taught her just weeks before during Fire Prevention Week. Her bravery and quick actions are to be commended.



The Marion and Cedar Rapids Fire Departments recently entered into an agreement to provide automatic aid to one another during emergency calls for the Fire Department. This agreement automatically calls for support (of both equipment and staff) when needed based on pre-established call types in the 911 system. This differs from a standard 28E mutual aid agreement where departments call out for assistance post-dispatch, after arriving on scene or once realizing an incident is beyond their own resource capability.

Automatic aid agreements are a standard quality practice seen throughout the nation to help ensure the appropriate response to calls based on time, assessed risk and resources needed to safely provide emergency services. Every call type has an identified Effective Response Force (ERF), which indicates the number of resources, apparatus and staff needed to safely work on scene. Call types and responses may range from structure fires, technical rescues, hazardous materials spills, medical incidents or multiple calls occurring in a short period of time. Partnering with neighboring agencies provides a more reliable response to both communities, specifically when emergency time to task completion is essential.

Forging these response models allows the Fire Department to provide the best customer service to our residents when life and property are at risk.

CONTACT CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mayor Nicolas AbouAssaly

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marionmayor@cityofmarion.org

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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.



Marion School Resource Officer Program Benefits Students and the City

The Marion Police Department began its school resource officer (SRO) program back in the late 90s when one officer was assigned to work with both the Linn-Mar and Marion Independent School Districts to teach D.A.R.E. courses and help create a safe and secure learning environment for students.

As the enrollment within both districts continued to grow, so did the SRO program. Currently the department has two school resource officers, Tom Daubs and Brian Davis, who work full-time during the academic year in elementary schools, intermediate schools, middle schools and two high schools. They also work with home school students. When school is out, both officers return to patrol duties at the Marion Police Department.

The SROs were selected for their experience, patience, problem-solving ability, empathy and listening skills. Officer Davis, who has been an SRO for the past six years within the Marion Independent School District, went before an interview panel made up of representatives from the school board, a school counselor, school administrators, a parent and another SRO before being selected. He currently works with approximately 2,600 students scattered between three elementary schools, one middle school and one high school.

Officer Daubs, who is in his 12th year as an SRO for the Linn-Mar School District, works with 7,600 students attending seven elementary schools, two middle schools, two intermediate schools and one high school.

Both officers work closely with school administrators but are not

involved in disciplining students. While they do handle the occasional criminal matter, arrests are infrequent within both districts. The bulk of their time is spent teaching D.A.R.E. courses, working with administrators to address truancy issues and interacting with students. The SROs are familiar with community agencies offering services to students and families, including mental health treatment, and frequently connect students to those services in conjunction with the schools.

The SRO program is a cooperative effort between the districts and the City, which is updated every two years pursuant to a 28E agreement. The school districts currently pay \$43,760 each for the SRO program, which goes to offset the salary and benefits of the two officers. The department provides the officers with vehicles that are fully identifiable as SRO vehicles due to their white color and red graphics, and both officers wear traditional police uniforms.

In addition to working throughout the school day, the SROs attend board meetings, after-school activities and school sporting events. Students often stop to say hello to the officers when they are working these events. Demonstrating to students that officers are there to help them pays dividends long after the students graduate from high school, and is hugely beneficial to the community.

Marion Police Department Launches “Resident Connect” Transparency Hub

With the modernization of the Marion Police Department’s records management system, an online transparency hub is now available to the community.

The hub, called Resident Connect, is available at cityofmarion.org/residentconnect and provides data on recent Marion Police Department activity. It offers a database and map of Police Department incidents, accidents and citations, searchable by date and geographic location. Names and exact address information are not included in the search results.

“This is a useful tool for residents and business owners to understand what type of criminal

activity is happening in our community,” said Mike Kitsmiller, Marion Chief of Police. “It also demonstrates our commitment to transparency and community collaboration.”

The tool gives users the ability to query statistics in several ways. Data collection began last spring with the implementation of the records management system, but the department was deliberate in waiting to launch Resident Connect until an ample amount of data was collected.

“Being informed about criminal activity in our community is the first step in preventing future crime,” added Kitsmiller. “Really, it comes down to community-oriented policing and working together to create a safe and secure environment.”



Learn more at cityofmarion.org/residentconnect.



Senior Programs

PELLA TULIP FESTIVAL BUS TRIP

Adults Age 55+ | Join us for a trip to the 89th Annual Tulip Time Festival! Take a tour of magnificent tulip gardens and hear about historical locations as we pass by. See the childhood home of Wyatt Earp, the Molengracht Market (100+ booths – crafts, food and beverage stand), the historical village and Vermeer Windmill, watch the Klokkenspel or just take in the sites as you wander around this beautiful Dutch treasure. Enjoy an authentic Dutch luncheon and show before making your way to the grandstand, where you will see dancing, singing, a costume-style show and the presentation of the Tulip Queen and court. Enjoy the famous street scrubbing followed by a spectacular parade. This is a trip you won't want to miss.

OPTION	DAY	DATE	TIMES	LOCATION
Pella Bus Trip	Thur	5/2	6:30 a.m.	Low Park

REGISTRATION FEE: \$90

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: April 1, 2024

NOTES: 6:30 a.m. Depart from Low Park
6:15 p.m. Return to Low Park

SENIOR PROGRAMS AT LOWE

Adults Age 55+ | The Lowe Park Arts and Environment Center is home to FREE daily senior activities. The programs and activities are geared towards adults ages 55 and up. For more information on these programs, please contact the Parks and Recreation office at (319) 447-3590. The senior site at Lowe Park is always welcoming new guests, so stop out and join in the fun.

OPTIONS	DAYS	DATES	TIMES	LOCATION
Tai Chi/Geri Fit	Mon	All Year	9:30 a.m.	Low Park
Yahoo!	Mon (1st/3rd)	All Year	9 a.m.	Low Park
Open Mic	Tues (2nd/4th)	All Year	10 a.m.	Low Park
Cards-500	Wed	All Year	9 a.m.	Low Park
Line Dancing	Wed	All Year	1 p.m.	Low Park
Nickel B-I-N-G-O	Thu	All Year	9:30 a.m.	Low Park
Cards-Pinochle	Fri	All Year	9 a.m.	Low Park
Encore Cafe	Wed/Thu	All Year	11:30 a.m.	Low Park

NOTES: Encore Café meets Wednesdays and Thursdays at Lowe and Fridays at the Marion Public Library. Please call (319) 398-2585 at least 24 hours in advance to sign up for a meal.

If Linn-Mar Schools are cancelled due to inclement weather, all senior activities scheduled at Lowe Park are cancelled that day as well. If a two-hour delay is issued, activities will continue as scheduled.

RecAssist Financial Assistance Program

The Marion Parks and Recreation Department recognizes there are Marion residents who are financially unable to participate in programs offered by the department but still desire the opportunity to experience the benefits of leisure activities. We've established RecAssist, a financial assistance program to make recreation and swimming programs available to all Marion residents.

Marion residents who are experiencing financial hardship are eligible to apply for assistance. If you feel you need assistance but do not meet the income guidelines, you may attach a letter to your assistance application stating your circumstances. These special circumstances

will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Financial assistance forms are available online or at either of the Thomas Park or Lowe Park offices.

Applicants will need to return the completed assistance form, which requires proof of income as well as any additional assistance, to one of our offices. If approved, the applicant will be required to pay a 50 percent co-payment of the recreation program cost and a 50 percent co-payment for a swimming pool pass and pool programs.



Visit cityofmarion.org/parks-recreation for additional information.

Butterfield Park Improvements



Improvements are coming to Butterfield Park this summer. The current play area will be removed and replaced with a new tower play feature, swings and glider and landing surface. In addition, the City's first public gaga ball pit will be installed.

What is gaga ball? Gaga ball is a variant of the classic playground sport of dodgeball. Gaga ball limits the impact when players are hit. Players will slap or hit the ball, aiming to hit other players at or below the knees. If you're hit, you're out. T last player in the pit is the winner.



Parks & Recreation Updates

Adopt-A-Flowerbed Program to Expand

In 2023 the Parks and Recreation Department launched the Adopt-A-Flowerbed program, allowing residents to adopt City-owned flowerbeds. Residents, groups and businesses that adopted flowerbeds were responsible for the care and maintenance of the beds during the summer season. After the successful launch of Adopt-A-Flowerbed, the Parks and Recreation Department has decided to expand the list of adoptable spaces to include trails, parks and green spaces.

Individuals and groups will be able to adopt select areas in the Marion parks system and maintain them from April to November. Volunteers will be responsible for collecting litter in the designated area once per month during this period. The Parks and Recreation Department will provide the necessary personal protective equipment, training and colored garbage bags. The department will also collect the bagged garbage. Each area will have signage installed to recognize the volunteers for their efforts.

For information regarding the Adopt-A-Spot program, please call the Thomas Park Administrative Office at (319) 447-3580.

Upcoming Bus Trips

Pella Tulip Festival	Cubs vs Cardinals at Wrigley	Iowa State Fair
Thursday, May 2	Friday, June 14	Thursday, Aug. 15
\$90 per person	\$165 per person	\$75 per person

Find reservation instructions at cityofmarion.org/parks-recreation.

Linn County Master Gardener Charlene Woeste Memorial Spring Plant Sale

Friday, May 10 from 4-7 p.m.
Saturday, May 11 from 8 a.m.-noon
Lowe Park Arts & Environment Center

The sale features a wide assortment of sun and shade perennials, hostas, native plants, grasses, wildflowers and drought-tolerant plants from the home gardens of Master Gardeners. In addition, annual flowers, vegetables, succulents and hanging baskets grown in the Master Gardener-managed greenhouse at Lowe Park will be available for sale. The sale proceeds help support the Linn County Master Gardener service projects and educational events.

Highlighted Upcoming Programs

Intro to Kayaking

Anyone Ages 12+

Saturday, June 15 from 9-11 a.m.

Marion Swimming Pool at Willowood Park

Have you always wanted to learn to kayak but don't know where to start? Or maybe you just want to brush up on your skills? Led by American Canoe Association (ACA) certified instructors Chuck Ungs and Lynne Majetic, participants will learn exactly what they need to start their kayaking adventures. The class will cover appropriate gear, safety basics, kayak strokes and more and is sponsored by the Linn County Conservation Department. *Class size is extremely limited, so register early at cityofmarion.org/parks-recreation.*

A Memorable Monument

The following was adapted from a story that appeared in the Cedar Rapids Evening Gazette in April 1885:



A few minutes after six this morning, L.P. Owen, a prominent druggist of Marion, was opening his drugstore and admiring the beauty of the Spring morning. Suddenly, he heard a terrible shriek accompanied by the words "He's dying! For God's sake, save him!" coming from somewhere in the neighborhood of the Park Place Hotel. Mr.

Owen seized a vial of camphor and rushed to the site of a woman wringing her hands and crying, "Billy is dying, save him, save him!"

Arriving at the lifeless body, Owen saturated a handkerchief with camphor and applied it to the nostrils of William Henry Harrison. For a moment, he could detect a faint quivering of the eyelids and a few uncertain flutterings of the heart, and then...the soul of Mr. Harrison "Returned to Him who gave it."

Handyman "Billy" Harrison, as he had been known by everyone in Marion for upwards of 20 years, had actually been taken from slavery in Arkansas in the early stages of the war by Colonel David Carskaddon of the 9th Iowa. He was, all through the war, with the Colonel, serving as his body servant and aide until the latter was wounded in battle. Billy came home with Carskaddon after that and made Marion his own.

Although now living in Western Iowa, David Carskaddon happened to be in Marion the day of his old friend's death, and learning of it, said, "I'll see that he has a respectable burial."

Ultimately, that respectable burial in Oak Shade's Pioneer Section came to include a monument resembling the chess piece "rook" commemorating the game Carskaddon had taught Billy to play during the course of their partnership during the Civil War.

Friends of Oak Shade volunteers are rewarded for their participation in many ways beyond thanks and pride in preserving and restoring grave markers. Helping families in their genealogical research often leads to interesting histories and stories like Billy's. To learn more about the organization and the opportunities available, call (319) 447-3580.



FY 2025 City Budget to be Adopted by the End of April

At the end of January, City staff and the City Council held a budget work session to discuss the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 budget. During the session, City Council considered strategic priorities and provided direction regarding funding various initiatives. The proposed budget includes:

- filling two vacant police officer positions left open last year to fund unplanned wage increases to help Police Department recruitment,
- an upgrade to a recently vacated administrative position within the Fire Department,
- Central Plaza project implementation,
- staffing for the mobile library (a new initiative that is part of the new library project),
- and implementation of Compensation Study recommendations.

To maintain competitive wages and benefits, the FY 25 recommended budget includes the cost to increase the non-bargaining wage scale by 2 percent (a cost of living increase) plus a 2 percent merit increase – for a total of 4 percent in July 2024. This recommendation aligns with the updated compensation and classification structure. Bargained increases for our organization's union members have been applied. The budget also includes an increase to implement the Compensation Study recommendation for part-time staff.

New this year – the State consolidated numerous general fund levies and created a newly defined Consolidated General Fund Levy. The Consolidated General Fund Levy is subject to a new limitation based on property tax valuation growth “tiers” (<3%; 3-6%; >6%) with the overall goal of bringing the Consolidated General Fund Levy to or below \$8.10 for all communities in Iowa. The ratchet-down mechanism will bring the levies of high-growth cities (Marion included) down below \$8.10 through FY 28 with the ability to go back up to \$8.10 in FY 29. Marion's taxable valuation grew by 9 percent. With the ratchet down-mechanism, Marion's Adjusted City General Fund Levy rate reduces from \$8.275 to \$8.034 and includes the elimination of the \$0.04 voted Library Levy and the \$0.135 Civic Center Levy previously used to support the Lowe Park Arts & Environment Center.

A \$14.80203 property tax rate is budgeted to bring in the additional \$2.1 million in property tax revenue required to fund needed services to our community. Due to the change in residential rollback, assessed home values would have needed to increase more than 19.75 percent for homeowners to see an increase in the City portion of their property tax bill. We are unable to control the shifts in tax burden between the tax classifications. The City does not determine or control the value of a property.

Continued dialog on this topic will occur between now and April 30, the required date to have the FY 25 budget filed with the State.

Happy Retirement, Sandy Ransier!



At the end of 2023, Marion Public Library bid farewell to Sandy Ransier as she began the next chapter in her life: retirement!

Sandy started her journey at the library in the fall of 1982 – 41 years ago – and worked for the collections and patron services teams, rounding out her time as a patron services lead. You might have seen her at a help desk, in the stacks or worked with her through the home book program. She's worked in all three of Marion's libraries – Carnegie, Nancy A. Miller and now our new library on 6th Avenue – and has helped many patrons with their library materials, questions and other service-related items.

Q: What has changed most since you started at MPL?

A: The biggest changes have been in technology. When I started at the Carnegie building, I checked out patrons' books with a due date stamp and used an old library card catalog to look up items.

Q: What are you most proud of? What have you enjoyed most working with MPL and the City of Marion?

A: I have really enjoyed working with the public and staff throughout the years. I am most proud of becoming patron services lead and being a part of the opening of the new building.

Q: What are you most looking forward to in retirement?

A: I plan on traveling, camping and spending lots of time with my family and grandson!

Sandy's contributions to Marion Public Library and our community are immeasurable. We wish her all the best in the years ahead!

Library Updates



Hop Over to MPL for Spring Interests!

The days are getting longer, which means there's more time for fun activities! Here are some of the ways to include MPL in your spring interests:

- › Level up your gardening skills – we've got **books** to inspire you, a Seed Library to get you started and a gardening kit to bring it all together.
- › Check out a spring-themed **picture book** in our Youth Collection and spread the joy of warmer weather.
- › Grab a **cookbook** if you're cooking for a springtime gathering.
- › Walk the trails in and around Marion while listening to a **Playaway**.

Friends of MPL Book Sale

Shop local this spring and support the Friends of the Marion Public Library during their first book sale of 2024! Visit the sale in Community Room A on Saturday, March 9, from 10 a.m.–4 p.m. and Sunday, March 10, from 2–4 p.m. Friends members can also shop an exclusive members-only sale on Friday, March 8, from 4–5 p.m. All proceeds go back to support library programs and initiatives.

Upcoming Programs & Events

Puzzle Exchange

March 3 | 2–4 p.m.

Bring the whole family to Saturday Storytime at MPL! Book selections will be geared toward preschool age, but everyone is welcome to attend.

3rd Annual Women's Panel

March 27 | 6:30–7:30 p.m.

We're celebrating Women's History Month with a panel composed of local women leaders! Join us for an engaging conversation around women's leadership and the importance of women leaders in Marion and Eastern Iowa. There will be time for questions at the end.

K9 Ambassador Dog Safety Program

April 11 | 6–7 p.m.

Join MPL and the Iowa City Dog Obedience Club for a presentation that includes pet tricks, obedience presentations and tips on how to interact with dogs. This program is great for younger patrons and families who interact with dogs often or who are interested in bringing a dog into their family.

Pied Piper

April 13 (Woodwinds) and May 11 (Brass) | 10:30–11 a.m.

Presented by Orchestra Iowa, Pied Piper concerts introduce preschool-aged children to the instruments of the orchestra. Join their talented ensemble as we explore woodwinds and brass together.

Find a full calendar of programs at events at marionpubliclibrary.org/events.

Subscribe to MPL Monthly News!

Don't miss out on what's new at the Marion Public Library! Sign up for the library's newsletter – filled with programs, library resources and more – sent to your inbox every month. Visit marionpubliclibrary.org/newsletter or scan the QR code to subscribe.





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



Sponsorship Opportunities



Fireworks & Fireflies

Generous support from businesses makes many of Marion’s events possible. The annual fireworks event would not be possible without our valued sponsors.

Marion will be hosting its annual Independence Day fireworks display, Fireworks & Fireflies, on July 3, 2024, at the beautiful Klopfenstein Amphitheater at Lowe Park. Because it takes place on the eve of the 4th of July, this event gives community members an extra opportunity to celebrate and enjoy family-friendly activities during the holiday.

In addition to the fireworks show, attendees of this free event will enjoy live music, food trucks, balloon artists and more. Well over 6,000 people attended the event last year and we only expect it to continue to grow in popularity.

As logistical needs grow, so do our expenses. We would love to be able to have an even bigger and better fireworks display, but we can only do so with additional sponsorship support.

Are you able to contribute towards this signature Marion celebration? Reach out to events@cityofmarion.org or visit cityofmarion.org/sponsorships for additional information.

Banner Sponsorships

For the first time, Marion Parks and Recreation is offering area businesses the opportunity to sponsor advertising banners that will be displayed on our pool or athletic field fences. Show your support for community recreation programming and promote your business in the process!

Sponsoring a banner has the potential to reach 48,000 Lowe Park visitors or nearly 20,000 pool patrons over the course of a year. Sponsors will also be listed on the City website and mentioned on the Marion Parks and Recreation Facebook page. The cost is \$300, and we’ll produce the 4’x6’ banner for you.

Not only will your sponsorship help keep programs affordable and offset ongoing maintenance and operational costs, but it will also help support the RecAssist program for families who qualify for reduced registration fees.

To receive the benefits of a full season, the deadline to participate is April 1, 2024. Questions may be directed to Karlene Hummel, Recreation Superintendent, at (319) 447-3590 or khummel@cityofmarion.org.

