It is my great pleasure to share the State of our City each year on behalf of our City Council, staff, and all Marion residents. In addition to sharing our successes of the past year and our future initiatives with a crowd of nearly 600 attendees, I found it timely to reflect on the past decade of growth and development in Marion. Below is an excerpt from my remarks on January 23, 2020.

A LOOK AT THE LAST 10 YEARS

As we embark on a New Year, we’re not just capping off a successful 2019, but an incredible decade of growth and positive change in Marion. A decade is not a very long time in the life and development of a city. There’s no doubt that this incredible decade was a transformative period for Marion. There’s no better word to describe it.

Growth occurred in all parts of the city over the last 10 years, but especially to the north, where we’re moving closer by the day to County Home Road and to the east of Highway 13, where both commercial and residential development is taking off.

Since 2010 we added around 1,000 households. And we saw commercial and industrial development take a major leap forward with significant projects in the Marion Enterprise Center, the 3rd Street industrial area, Squaw Creek Crossing, Tower Terrace Road, Lincolnview Square, Highway 100 Corridor, and the Central Corridor.

We’re keenly focused on leveraging the benefits of growth to better serve people, strengthen community, and increase opportunities for all residents, giving them the quality of life they desire.

And I’m certain that this is not an exhaustive list, but consider how much the things on this list alone have elevated how residents are served every day and the additional opportunities they provide. Add to that our many other amenities, the core day-to-day services residents receive, excellent schools and Marion’s consistent record as one Iowa’s safest cities, and it’s no wonder that nine out of 10 residents say...
The City of Marion, Marion Chamber of Commerce and Uptown Marion Main Street District again invite residents and local businesses to honor a veteran or active duty service member with a military tribute banner on city streetlights. The banners will go up around Memorial Day and remain up through Veterans Day. In addition to covering the cost of the banner, a portion of the sponsorship will be donated to local veteran affairs programs.

The Uptown Marion/Chamber office is accepting tribute banner sponsorships through March 6. Requests are filled on a first-come, first-served basis or until availability runs out. To be notified of future opportunities, visit http://tinyurl.com/marionmilitarybanners.

In Memory of
Paul Draper

The City of Marion is mourning the passing of at-large City Council member, Paul Draper, and extends sincere condolences to his family and friends. Draper died on Thursday, Feb. 6 at St. Luke’s Hospital.

Draper was a great supporter of Marion’s progress and lifelong advocate for the community. At 85, he recently began his third term on Marion City Council.

“Paul was the definition of a public servant,” noted City Manager Lon Pluckhahn. “He worked tirelessly on behalf of his city.”

Draper made a lasting mark on Marion. In addition to his years of service on the Marion City Council, he was a respected business owner and public servant. He was on the Civil Service Commission for 25 years and served on both the Marion Chamber of Commerce and Marion Economic Development Corporation boards of directors.

“It’s hard to find a bigger supporter and a more staunch advocate of Marion,” said Marion Mayor Nicolas AbouAssaly. “Paul supported making Marion better for future generations.”

Draper was integral in relocating and preserving the Marion Depot in City Square Park. More recently he initiated the creation of Waldo’s Rock Park. In 2018 he was recognized as Marion’s Citizen of the Year. The City Council will discuss plans for filling the vacancy. As of press time, next steps have not yet been determined.

Message from the Mayor – continued

they’d recommend Marion as a place to live, and four out of five residents say that Marion is the perfect place for them!

The endorsement of residents is what matters most. So, it’s just icing on the cake when Marion gains visibility across our state and is recognized as one of the nation’s best small cities. Marion’s progress garnered significant attention across the region, state, and nation in the last decade, earning the city such accolades as:

- Family Circle Magazine’s Top 10 Cities for Families
- Iowa Leagues of Cities’ All-Star Community for two consecutive years
- Iowa Great Places designation, twice
- National Conference of Mayors’ list of Top 20 Most Livable Cities in America
- First city in the region and 13th in the nation to achieve Blue Zones Certification
- The state’s first Home Base Iowa Community
- The first recipient of the Healthy Iowa Award for a large city from the Healthiest State Initiative
- Six Main Street Iowa awards
- Wallet Hub’s top 10% of America’s Best Small Cities

Marion is currently experiencing what might be its most significant era of growth and development since its early rise as a railroad town and county seat. We’re witnessing the city’s transition from a town that, for decades, had been regarded as a sleepy bedroom community to a dynamic and vibrant urban center. As the third-largest city in the Corridor, Marion is a key component of the regional equation, offering its best and doing its part—in placemaking, economic development, workforce development, and quality of life—to help the region thrive.

Marion made tremendous progress in the last decade. What we do in the next decade is up to us. As I say each year, the sky is truly NOT the limit.

I have no doubt that if we continue our focus on serving people; if we see the best in each other and work together with a common purpose; and if we harness the power of community to achieve our true potential — we will have a city that is positive, forward-looking, inclusive, welcoming and thriving.

Marion will be a city where ALL PEOPLE feel valued and have the best opportunities to enjoy their lives and achieve their personal goals, whether in business or in life.

The City of Marion, Marion Chamber of Commerce and Uptown Marion Main Street District again invite residents and local businesses to honor a veteran or active duty service member with a military tribute banner on city streetlights. The banners will go up around Memorial Day and remain up through Veterans Day. In addition to covering the cost of the banner, a portion of the sponsorship will be donated to local veteran affairs programs.

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City Showcase Returns on May 2

On Saturday, May 2 from 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Marion will host its fourth City Showcase event in and around City Square Park. City staff will be on hand to visit with residents and share information about upcoming projects. A number of hands-on activities are planned.

Various City vehicles will be on display and a number of community partners will have a presence. A local balloon artist, face painter and musician will add to the atmosphere; making this a fun, festive activity for the entire family.

Attendees can work to get their “BINGO” card stamped at the various booths and activity stations, and turn it in for a chance to win prizes.

Mayor AbouAssaly and members of the City Council will serve popcorn and other food items will be available for purchase on-site. Attendees are also encouraged to visit Uptown Marion restaurants and merchants while in the area.

Come out and connect with the City of Marion on Saturday, May 2 from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. in City Square Park. Learn more at www.cityofmarion.org.

HAPPENING JULY 3

On Friday, July 3, Marion will host its 2nd annual Fireworks & Fireflies Independence Day fireworks celebration presented by Hanna Plumbing & Heating, Inc. This free event will take place at the Klopfenstein Amphitheater at Lowe Park beginning at 6 p.m.

Enjoy live music by Birdchild starting at 7 p.m. and various other family-friendly activities including face painting, balloon artists, and life-size games. Stay for the fireworks at dusk.

Attendees should bring their own lawn chairs and blankets for seating. Coolers are permitted and food will also be available for purchase through local food trucks. Patrons are asked to leave sparklers, fireworks and other flammable items at home. Please, no dogs or other pets.

The parking lots at Oak Ridge Middle School are available as an alternative fireworks viewing location. All food vendors, music, and activities will be surrounding the Klopfenstein Amphitheater on the east side of Lowe Park.

IN THE KNOW: OPEN POSITIONS

City Seeks Applicants for Boards and Commissions

Do you want to provide input on City policies and help shape both our city and its government? Apply to be one of 100+ volunteers that serve on Marion boards or commissions.

Marion residents interested in being considered a position may pick up an application at Marion City Hall, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m.-5 p.m., or download an application at www.cityofmarion.org.

There are currently openings on the following boards/commissions:

- Arts Council
- Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) Oversight Committee
- Zoning Board of Adjustment

Upon review of applications, Mayor AbouAssaly will recommend appointees to City Council for approval. For more information, call (319) 743-6301.

Learn more about the openings and roles/responsibilities associated with each board at www.cityofmarion.org/boards-commissions.
Hogan-Hansen, A Professional Corporation, recently released an audit report on the City of Marion, Iowa.

The City’s revenue totaled $53,757,111 for the year ended June 30, 2019, a 7.6 percent increase from the prior year. The revenue included $26,390,707 in property tax and tax increment financing; $4,915,835 in local option sales tax; $5,464,857 in other City tax and special assessments; $10,461,185 from charges for service; $1,045,221 from operating grants and contributions; $1,791,742 from unrestricted investment earnings; $89,269 from other general revenue; and a $1,111,114 gain on disposal of capital assets.

Expenses for City operations for the year ended June 30, 2019, totaled $47,929,165, a 12.8 percent increase from the prior year. Expenses included $15,137,471 for public safety, $11,358,111 for public works and $6,999,625 for culture and recreation. Also, expenses for business-type activities totaled $8,240,845.

It is the opinion of the auditing firm that the City of Marion’s financial statements as of June 30, 2019, fairly present the financial position and cash flows of the City and were conducted in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles.

A copy of the audit report is available for review in the office of the Auditor of State, the City Clerk’s office and at www.cityofmarion.org.
Water Department Office Staff Prepare for Move

Renovation of an unused facility located at 3050 5th Avenue is currently underway and will become the new location for the Marion Water Department administration office. The facility formerly housed the pump and filter operations for Well #3 that is no longer in service. The renovation project frees up much needed space in City Hall and meets the existing and future needs of the Marion Water Department. The new office is tentatively scheduled to be operational sometime this summer. Watch for further announcements.

Hydrant Flushing Planned for March/April

It may not feel like it, but warmer weather is around the corner. Each spring, the Marion Water Department flushes the water system to remove sediment from the mains and to exercise and check the operation of the City’s fire hydrants. Flushing typically begins sometime during March or April. During this time, Marion residents may notice some temporary discoloration of the water and should postpone laundry until it clears and minimize the use of hot water to prevent build-up within the water heater. The rusty color in the water is due to the accumulation of iron sediment in the water mains and is not harmful. Questions may be directed to the Water Department at 319-743-6310.

Pay Your Bill Online

- Safe and Secure
- Save postage and paper
- Fast and easy
- Convenient 24/7 access

Sign up now!
Go to: www.cityofmarion.org/departments/water/billing-options
Garbage & Recycling Collection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Holiday</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Pick-Up Schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 1, 2020</td>
<td>New Year’s Day</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>One day late Wednesday-Friday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 20, 2020</td>
<td>Martin Luther King Jr. Day</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Regular collection schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 17, 2020</td>
<td>Presidents Day</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Regular collection schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 10, 2020</td>
<td>Good Friday</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Regular collection schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 25, 2020</td>
<td>Memorial Day</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>One day late all week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 3, 2020</td>
<td>Independence Day (observed)</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Regular collection schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 7, 2020</td>
<td>Labor Day</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>One day late all week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 12, 2020</td>
<td>Columbus Day</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Regular collection schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 11, 2020</td>
<td>Veterans Day</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Regular collection schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 26, 2020</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Day</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Collection on Friday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 27, 2020</td>
<td>Day after Thanksgiving</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Collection on Saturday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 24, 2020</td>
<td>Christmas Eve</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Regular collection schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 25, 2020</td>
<td>Christmas Day</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>One day late Friday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 31, 2020</td>
<td>New Year’s Eve</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Regular collection schedule</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Have Bins at the Curb by 7 a.m.

Be sure to have your garbage and recyclables at the curb by 7 a.m. every collection day. Sometimes substitute drivers cover the routes and follow a different process from the regular driver. Any items placed later than 7 a.m. and missed will not be collected if they were placed after the truck has gone past.

MARIION 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
1. You should plan to have __________ escape routes from each room in your home.
   a. Zero
   b. One
   c. Two
   d. Three

2. Smoke alarm batteries need to be __________ once a month to make sure they are working.
   a. Cleaned
   b. Shined
   c. Disconnected
   d. Tested

3. If your clothes catch on fire, you should …
   a. Stop, drop, cover your face and roll over and over until the fire is out.
   b. Smother the flames with a blanket or rug.
   c. Run.

4. If you get burned, you should …
   a. Put ice or butter on it.
   b. Cool it with cold water.
   c. Ask an adult what to do.

5. If there is a fire in your home, you should …
   a. Grab all your photographs and valuables.
   b. Get out quickly and call 9-1-1 from a neighbor’s house.
   c. Call 9-1-1 from your house.

6. If you are in a smoke-filled room, you should …
   a. Hold your breath and run out of the house.
   b. Keep your eyes closed and walk out.
   c. Stay low beneath the smoke and crawl to safety.

7. A smoke detector needs new batteries …
   a. Never.
   b. Every six years.
   c. Twice a year.

8. You should test your smoke detector …
   a. Once a year.
   b. Every 3 months.
   c. Once a month.

9. You should replace your smoke detectors …
   a. Every year.
   b. Every 10 years.
   c. Every 15 years.

10. Once you are out of the house on fire, you should …
    a. Hide somewhere until the fire trucks are gone.
    b. Go to your family “meeting place”. 
    c. Ask your neighbor to find your family.

11. Your family has a home fire escape plan and you practice it.
    a. True
    b. False

12. You should go back inside your house …
    a. If you can’t find your family.
    b. Only after the fire chief tells you it is safe.
    c. When your friends tell you, it is okay.

You really know your FIRE SAFETY!!
For more information or questions, call the Marion Fire Department at 319-377-8237.

COngratulations!
Training Chief Doug Wyman Retires from Marion Fire Department

On Jan. 31, with 29 years of service to the Marion community, District Chief Doug Wyman retired from the Marion Fire Department.

Wyman joined the department in 1991. He worked up through the ranks and served as a firefighter, paramedic, lieutenant, captain, and district chief. He was also the City safety coordinator since 2009.

“Many things have changed over the years, but our philosophy on serving the citizens of Marion has not,” noted Wyman.

During his time in the department, he was involved with fire and emergency medical services training, public education, and technical operations such as rope, trench and low/high angle rescue. He was on the MFD Medical Team and served 10 years on the Linn County HAZMAT Team.

“I am very proud of the level of training we have been able to achieve on the department,” said Wyman. “It has been my pleasure and honor to have been part of this organization. The staff, my colleagues, and this community have contributed to a very rewarding career.”

In retirement, Wyman plans to operate Crimson Meadows Gun Dogs with his wife Kim, guiding upland bird hunts, dog training, dog breeding, and tournament hunting.

Captain Bill Houser will be the acting training officer until a successor is named.

MPD Seeking Crime Stoppers Board Members

The Marion Police Department is looking for volunteers to represent the City of Marion on the Linn County Crime Stoppers Board.

Linn County Crime Stoppers is a non-profit organization that allows citizens to report a crime, maintain anonymity, and if their information leads to an arrest, it could lead to a financial reward. The Linn County Crime Stoppers Board is responsible for fundraising and deciding which tips are eligible for financial rewards.

Appointment to the Crime Stoppers Board does require a background check and approval of the Crime Stoppers Board. The Linn County Crime Stoppers Board meets at 4 p.m. on the third Tuesday of every month. To learn more or express interest in serving in this capacity, contact Lt. Scott Elam of the Marion Police Department 319-377-1511.

Kitsmiller Announces Three Promotions on MPD

In December, Police Chief Mike Kitsmiller announced the promotions of three longtime police officers. Corporal Mark Kjormoe joined the force in 1999 and was recently promoted to sergeant, Sergeant John Chipman was hired in 1997 and was recently promoted to lieutenant, and Lieutenant Chad Nott joined the Marion Police Department in 1996 and was promoted to Deputy Police Chief.
Community Promise Equips School Districts with Career Pathway Planning

Students and parents can now see future career pathways in one simple digital document. Students in both school districts in Marion are now able to utilize the career pathway documents as they begin to plan their classes. These documents were created in partnership with Marion Economic Development Corporation (MEDCO) and representatives from both Linn-Mar and Marion Independent school districts to identify which classes would be aligned with specific careers.

“Creating the vision and pathway for a student to see how their career interests can be something students work towards now is immeasurable and gives so much more purpose to their studies,” said Emily Russ, workforce and communications specialist at MEDCO.

In fact, both school districts have recently directed students to specifically reference Community Promise Career Pathway documents as an essential component in registering for classes.

You may find these pathways, sorted by career cluster, at www.medcoiowa.org/students/career-path-curriculum/.

Marion Process Solutions Receives Prestigious Veterans Award

Marty Giergyng, Team Resources and Development Manager for Marion Process Solutions reserves a portion of her time and priorities for employing Veterans. Weekly, Giergyng checks the resume portal provided through the Home Base Iowa website. The City of Marion is a Home Base Iowa community, which connects Iowa businesses with qualified veterans to career opportunities, specifically in semi-skilled and skilled positions.

“My husband and sons were navy guys and hiring veterans has always been very important to me,” said Giergyng. “Of our 53 staff members, six are former vets. I think you just know what you’re getting when you hire someone in the military. They know what it’s like to keep a commitment and certain requirements. They already now what it’s like to work with a servant’s heart,” mentioned Giergyng.

Giergyng received information in early 2019 through Home Base Iowa about the HIRE Vets Medallion Award, the only federal-level veteran’s award that recognizes a company or organization’s commitment to veteran hiring, retention, and professional development. With Giergyng’s commitment and work to focus on the hiring of veterans, applying for this award was a simple decision.

“America’s veterans are proven leaders who bring skills, dedication, and determination to our nation’s workforce,” said U.S. Secretary of Labor Alexander Acosta. “To earn a HIRE Vets Medallion Award, job creators must demonstrate a solid commitment to providing veterans with the opportunity to build a meaningful career. This program recognizes a standard for excellence in veterans hiring, and helps veterans identify employers who are committed to advancing veterans in the workplace.”

Veteran’s Day 2019 brought the exciting notification of this award. Marion Process Solutions received tools to use in recruiting additional veterans as employees and recognition on www.hirevets.gov/. Marion Process Solutions was one of five Iowa companies receiving this award.

Two Home Base Iowa businesses were selected to receive 2018 HIRE Vets Medallion Program awards. BDC Group, Inc. in Cedar Rapids received a platinum medallion and SHINN KELLOGG, LLC in Albia received a gold medallion in the small business category.

Marion Process Solutions provides a positive experience for all their teammates and strive to make smart hiring decisions. — SUBMITTED BY MEDCO
Pool Feasibility Study Coming Soon

In 2017, the ImagiNEXT community visioning process revealed some exciting ideas for Marion. A pool with cool waterpark features was the number one idea offered by residents.

While very exciting, with the first step in exploring this initiative is a pool feasibility study.

The study will evaluate the current and future needs of our community relating to a new aquatic facility. The study will include public outreach, a market analysis, creation of a business plan, programming, potential site analysis, design elements, and more. A steering committee will guide the process.

In essence, it is a vital study and initial step necessary to better understand the process for bringing this idea to life. Keep an eye out for public input opportunities as we dive into this exciting project!

Volunteer Coaches a Key to Success

Many of our youth recreation programs and leagues utilize volunteer parents/adults to serve as coaches. These volunteer coaches are key to making many of our programs a reality and are a big part of their success. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer coach, please indicate that during the registration process or contact the Parks and Recreation office at 319-447-3590. All volunteer coaches are required to pass a background check and complete a non-statutory volunteer coverage application prior to beginning coaching.

BE A FORCE OF NATURE

The City of Marion is partnering with local non-profits to provide an educational series for those who want to learn how to be environmentally conscious in their home, yard, and community. Expert speakers will highlight practical steps that will save money, reduce waste, and help the community.

The events are free and open to the public. These events are geared toward all knowledge levels – environmental experts and novices alike will get practical tips to use at home.

On March 10 at 6:30 p.m. at the Marion Public Library, City Arborist Mike Cimprich will speak about identifying trees in your yard, and a seed library will be available to start or add to your home garden.

On April 22 at 5:30 p.m. at Lowe Park, City staff and community partners will give tips for water conservation, getting involved in the community, and more.

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Online Registration and Reservation Update

We are putting the finishing touches on our new online software, Recdesk! Once complete, this new platform will provide a more convenient program registration and facility reservation process. Look for updates from the department once we go live!

Some highlighted features include:
- A PayPal account will no longer be required to complete transactions.
- Real time views of available spots remaining for programs as well as facility availability for rentals.
- Ability to join a waitlist for programs that have reached capacity.
- Enhanced facility calendar with custom filters to better sort and view facility availability.
- More convenient ways to receive communications directly from the department including cancellation notices directly to specific program participants via email and/or text (must opt in to receive updates).
- Online pavilion reservations will begin later this spring or early summer. Availability for Lowe Park Arts & Environment Center and the Thomas Park Safe Room will be visible on the calendar to check availability, however in-person reservations will still be required for the time being for those spaces.

During this time of transition and implementation, please do not hesitate to reach out to us with questions about the platform at 319-447-3590.

New Pavilion
A new pavilion will open this spring at Lininger Park. Reservations will not be required, it will operate on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Park Restrooms
The restrooms at Thomas and Hanna Parks are expected to open in mid-April. Temperatures need to be above freezing for several nights before turning on the water.

City of Marion Night at the Stable
Open To All Ages | Join us for City of Marion Night at the Stable when the RoughRiders duel with the Madison Capitols. Bonus, its dog derby night in the stable! Any Marion employee or resident is eligible to buy discounted tickets for themselves, their family, and friends. Bring the whole family and wear your favorite hockey jersey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATES</th>
<th>TIMES</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sat., March 28</td>
<td>7:05 p.m.</td>
<td>Cedar Rapids Ice Arena</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


NOTES: Guests should use the code: Marion when purchasing tickets. Tickets available online at www.roughridershockey.com or through the RoughRiders’ ticket office.

Looking for Rental Space?
The Marion Parks and Recreation Department offers a variety of indoor and outdoor rental spaces for public use. These spaces include the Arts & Environment Center, Thomas Park Safe Room, Klopfenstein Amphitheater at Lowe Park, park pavilions/shelters, Marion Municipal Swimming Pool, and baseball diamonds. All rentals must complete the appropriate reservation process and payment before a reservation is final. For more information about rentals and/or availability please call Thomas Park at 319-447-3580 or Lowe Park at 319-447-3590.

Marion Weekly Farmers’ Market
May 2–Sept. 26 | Saturdays from 8–11:30 a.m.
Taube Park, 2200 31st Street

The Marion Farmers’ Market offers a variety of locally grown produce, fresh baked goods, flowers, homemade crafts, and much more. Stop by Taube Park on Saturday mornings and check out all the fantastic offerings that are produced locally. If you are interested in being a vendor at the Marion Farmers’ Market in 2020, lease applications are being accepted. Please contact the Marion Parks and Recreation office at 319-447-3590 for availability, rental rates, and any other questions.

MARKET RATES AND FEES
All Season – $125 / 22 markets
Drop-In – $10 / per date

Help Wanted!
The Marion Parks and Recreation Department is currently hiring seasonal employees. Are you or someone you know interested in being a lifeguard or swim lesson instructor at the Marion Municipal Swimming Pool this summer? Lifeguards must be at least 15 years of age and lifeguard certified prior to May 25.

The department is also accepting applications for park maintenance staff. Applicants must be at least 18 years of age. Applications are due by March 15 at Thomas Park.

Applications are available at www.cityofmarion.org/employment.

Check out the full listing of upcoming Parks & Recreation programs in this issue’s special insert. Learn more at www.cityofmarion.org.
Learn to love cold-weather bicycling

When the temperature drops, the last thing you’re probably thinking about doing is heading outside for a bike ride. But, biking isn’t just for fair-weather fans. More and more cyclists are taking the plunge into cold-weather riding — whether they want to commute to work or simply enjoy the trails. Wintry weather doesn’t have to stand between you and your bike. Try these easy and practical solutions to brave the elements for your next ride.

› Dress for success. You’ll want at least two layers: a moisture-wicking base layer and an insulating layer. In more frigid temperatures, or if the wind is howling and there’s snow or rain, add a third, wind-proof layer.

› Keep your extremities warm. Wear a helmet liner or thin wool stocking cap, and keep a scarf or balacava handy to cover your nose and mouth. It goes without saying, but gloves or mittens are a must. Wear one pair of light- to medium-weight socks with wicking properties, such as wool, nylon and polyester and block moisture with shoe covers.

› Protect your eyes. The sun’s ultraviolet (UV) rays are magnified by snow during the winter. You might want to invest in goggles for bike riding, but sunglasses with a good secure fit and 100 percent UV protection will also do the trick.

› Use the right equipment. In the winter, a bike with wide tires may be best—like mountain bike or hybrid tires. You may also want front and back fenders to keep road spray off your clothes.

› Watch the forecast and road conditions. When riding in the winter, it’s important to plan ahead for poor weather and icy or snow-packed roads. If you’re new to winter riding, stick to the trails or wait until streets are clear of snow before hitting the road.

› Make yourself visible. Days are shorter in the winter, so make yourself visible to motorists with headlights and taillights. When choosing clothing, make sure a couple of the items are brightly colored or have reflective patches.

Whether you’re driving a car or a bike, wintry conditions worsen visibility on the road. But if you’re on a bike, remember that motorists won’t be expecting to see you. Use caution when sharing the road — slow down, follow traffic signs and signals, and be careful when braking — to make your ride as safe as possible.

Gravity – Not a Friend to Oak Shade

During the past year, Friends of Oak Shade Cemetery devoted over 1,200 hours of volunteer time to projects concerning our cemetery. Of that, nearly 800 hours were spent restoring and preserving grave markers and grounds which suffer in one way or another from the effects of gravity.

One of the charming qualities of Oak Shade is its hills. Hills that invite heavy blocks of marble and granite to slip, sink, or tip from time to time. Such failures are especially understandable where such heavy objects may have been exposed to the elements for a hundred years or more.

Grave monuments can lean so far as to fall, separating them into several segments or actually breaking. They may be hit by falling limbs from trees, struck by mowers, or vandalized. In some cases, the cost of repair might be covered under homeowners insurance. It is not covered by the “perpetual care” of the cemetery owner, the city.

Friends volunteers can straighten, lift, reset, clean, and repair most problems monument owners face at Oak Shade. We do not charge for our service but appreciate free-will donations.

Linn County Master Gardeners

Master Gardeners are passionate about serving their communities and sharing gardening best practices. They are individuals who have taken the Master Gardener training and use research-based horticulture and gardening knowledge and practices to educate people and coordinate projects that promote healthy communities.

Lowe Park Greenhouse

The Lowe Park Greenhouse is a joint project between the City of Marion and the Linn County Master Gardeners. The greenhouse is used as a classroom for educational workshops which are open to the public, for growing plants for the Lowe Park demonstration gardens, the Master Gardener May plant sale and other events, flowers for the Marion Parks Department, donation of vegetable plants to community gardens, and growing produce for donation to local food pantries in our on-site raised garden beds.

The Demonstration Gardens at Lowe Park

The Demonstration Gardens include 12 continuously developing gardens located by the Arts & Environment Center. The gardens offer an outdoor plant growing and learning lab and feature herbs, veggies, a xeric garden, annual flowers, wetland planting, children’s garden, butterfly garden, and more.

Conifer Garden features dwarf conifers, each showing the date and size when planted.

Perennial Nursery features perennial stock plants that will be used for the Master Gardener plant sale and other events.

Monarch Tent provides an opportunity to watch the progression of the caterpillars to monarchs during the growing season. Please do not enter the tent as we need to keep the tent as free of other insects as possible.

The gardens are available to the public all day, every day for education and enjoyment.

Availability and Workshops All gardens are open to the public for education and enjoyment. Enjoy a self-guided tour or call the Iowa State University Extension and Outreach office at 319-377-9839 to schedule a tour. Keep an eye on the Master Gardener Facebook page for upcoming event details (https://www.facebook.com/linncountyISUMastergardeners).

Master Gardeners are available for questions whenever they are on-site or specifically at these times:

› Greenhouse: January – May: Tuesdays, 9-11 a.m. If you are interested in learning about starting seeds and transplants and propagation by cuttings, please join us. 

› Demonstration Gardens: May – September: Tuesdays, 9-11 a.m.

› Taube Park Farmers Market: May – September: Master Gardeners are available on most Saturdays

› Uptown Market at City Square Park: 2nd Saturday of the month in June, July, and August

› Linn County Master Gardener Garden Walk: Saturday, July 11, 2020 at Lowe Park
A Week at the Marion Public Library

Kick your 2020 off on the right foot by attending one of our weekly programs.

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<td>Teen Programming (topic varies each week)</td>
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Upcoming Special Events

**March**

**Parenting the Love & Logic Way**
March 2-April 6 | 6-7:30 p.m.
Parents with children up to age 18. Childcare provided. Registration requested.

**Pop Up Play & Learn**
March 7 | 10 a.m.
Caregivers with toddlers and younger children.

**Ready, Set, Grow! Seed Library Orientation (Part of the “Be A Force of Nature” series)**
March 10 | 6:30-7:30 p.m.
Open to everyone.

**Saturday Stop By: Rainbow Wonders**
March 14 | 10 a.m.
Child-friendly, open to all ages.

**Choose Your Own Adventure Storytime**
March 16 | 1 p.m.
Best for ages 6-12. Registration requested.

**Seed Bombs**
March 17 | 1 p.m.
Kid-friendly. Registration requested.

**Choose your Destination (High School)**
March 17 | 2-5 p.m.
Registration requested.

**Sting Ray Touch Tank Visit**
March 18 | 1 p.m.
Registration requested.

**Teen Sting Ray Touch Tank Visit**
March 18 | 2:30 p.m.
Registration requested.

**Choose your Destination (Middle School)**
March 19 | 2-5 p.m.
Registration requested.

**Box Build**
March 20 | 1 p.m.
Fun for the whole family! Registration requested.

**Yours in Sisterhood Documentary Night**
March 24 | 7-8:30 p.m.
Adult program.

**Brain Break: Origami**
March 25 | 4 p.m.
Best for elementary-aged children.

**Red Cedar Chamber Music Concert**
March 28 | 12-1 p.m.
Open to everyone.

**All Iowa Reads Book Discussion**
March 31 | 7-8 p.m.
Adult program.

**April**

**Learn to Play Bridge**
April 2 | 5-7 p.m.
Adult program.

**One 2 Read Author Visit**
April 6 | 6-7 p.m.
Child-friendly, open to all ages and especially geared toward second grade students.

**Hardwood Log Mushroom Cultivation**
April 7 | 6:30 p.m.
Adult program.

**Antique Appraisal with Mark Moran**
April 16 | 5-8 p.m.
Open to everyone.

**Brain Break: Challenge to Change Yoga**
April 29 | 4 p.m.
Best for elementary-aged children.
Highlights

Sensory Friendly Browsing

The fourth Sunday of the month from 12:30-1:30 p.m. We will open early for individuals of all ages on the autism spectrum or with other sensory processing needs, along with their families and caregivers. This is a trial program that will run from January-May 2020. After that point, the program will be evaluated, and next steps will be determined.

Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library

The Friends of the Marion Public Library is pleased to announce that this program is now in Marion. Children ages 0-5 who live in the 52302-zip code are eligible to register. Once registered, they will receive one book by mail per month until they age out of the program. This program is currently supported by the Friends of the Marion Public Library, the Alliant Energy Foundation, the Marion Independent School Foundation & Alumni Association, and the John A. & Elise M. Nelson Fund of the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation.

You can sponsor one child annually with a donation of $25. You can learn more and donate at https://marionpubliclibrary.org/friends-marion-library and donation cards are also available at the library.

All Iowa Reads

The 2020 selection is The Mothers by Brit Bennett. Set within a contemporary black community in Southern California, Bennett’s mesmerizing first novel is an emotionally perceptive story about community, love, and ambition. It begins with a secret. A book discussion on this title will be held at the end of March.

Ask Hollie Anything

Q. Can you offer an update on the new building project and tell us what the next steps look like?

A. Sure, I would love to! As we see signs of spring, you’ll also see signs of progress with the library building project. There are two phases to this project. We are currently in the 12-month planning phase. This will be followed by 8-12 months of the construction phase.

We have a steering committee in place and primed to manage this project along with me. This committee is composed of Brooke Prouty, Kelly Dybvig, Kim Rose, Lianne Cairly, Mike Barkalow, Renee Nelson, Ross McIntyre, Sally Reck, Steve Jensen, Tom Treharne, and Will Brandt.

To stay updated on this project, please check out our website and Facebook pages. Supporters are invited to join the Advocacy Committee. Simply reach out to Norah at nhammond@marionpubliclibrary.org if interested. The MPL Advocates Facebook Group is also a great resource for updates and information.

Here’s a timeline for reference, beginning with City Council’s approval of the project this past summer:

- 6/6/19: Resolution passed by City Council, supporting and directing staff to proceed with the design and planning of a new library building.
- 8/22/19: Contract to approve Engberg Anderson as the architectural firm approved by City Council.
- 8/26/19: An RFQ (request for qualifications) to find a Construction Manager released by Library Director Hollie Trenary.
- 10/7/19: Bush Construction selected as the Construction Manager for the project.
- 12/5/19: City Council makes a unanimous decision to support the building project with a commitment of $7 million to be paid for through bonds.
- 12/19/19: Contract to approve Bush Construction approved by City Council.
Coffeehouse Nights
March 6, April 3 at 7 p.m.

Enjoy acoustic performances in a relaxed coffeehouse type atmosphere at Lowe Park. Admission is free and coffee, cocoa and pastries are available for purchase. Presented by Marion Arts Council.

Be a Force of Nature
March 10 at 6:30 p.m.
and April 22 at 5:30 p.m.

This educational series is for those who want to learn how to be environmentally conscious in their home, yard, and community. These events are for everyone — whether you’re an environmental expert or simply want to find ways to keep your garbage from overflowing, you’ll learn practical easy-to-follow steps.

Marion Meeple Meetup
March 20 at 5:30 p.m.

Calling all board game lovers! Join us for this free activity where you can teach your favorite board game or come learn a new one at the Lowe Park Arts & Environment Center.

Uptown Marion Real Estate Showcase
April 2 from 5-7 p.m.

Whether you are a business owner, real estate professional or entrepreneur, join us for a look at the opportunities in Uptown Marion. The showcase will begin with a short program followed by a properties tour.

Ladies Day Out
April 25 from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Grab your girlfriends and enjoy a fun day of shopping, food, and entertainment. Enjoy in-store specials throughout the day!

Marion Farmers’ Market
May 2-Sept. 26

Visit your neighborhood farmers’ market each Saturday through the summer. Find produce, baked goods, meats, wine and more between 8-11:30 a.m. each week.

City Showcase
May 2 from 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Join in the fun as the City of Marion hosts its fourth City Showcase event in and around City Square Park. Big trucks, hands-on activities, and City staff will be on hand to visit with residents and share information about upcoming projects.

The Fez
May 15 at 6:30 p.m.

Eastern Iowa’s own Steely Dan tribute band, The Fez, is set to take the stage at Klopfenstein Amphitheater. The concert is free and open to the public.

Marion Arts Festival Half Marathon, 5K Run & Fun Walk
May 16 at 7:30 a.m.

It’s back! This competitive Half Marathon and 5K is a favorite for serious amateurs and recreational runners alike!

Marion Arts Festival
May 16 from 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

This one-day event showcases 50 high caliber artists from across the country. Specialty food vendors are also featured. Admission is free to the public.

Moonlit Movie Series
May 29, July 17, Aug. 14

Join the Marion Parks and Recreation Department and GreenState Credit Union for free outdoor family fun. Bring your blanket or lawn chair and enjoy kids activities starting at 7 p.m. before the movie at 8:30 p.m.

Marion by Moonlight
June 4, 11, 18, 25 from 6:30-9:30 p.m.

Gather your people, a cooler and some lawn chairs and kick back in City Square Park to enjoy live music compliments of Farmers State Bank. Food vendors open at 6 p.m.

Sunrise Yoga
June 6-Aug. 29 from 7:30-8:30 a.m.

Enjoy free outdoor yoga each Saturday morning at the Klopfenstein Amphitheater at Lowe Park. Participants should bring a yoga mat or towel and water.

Music Under the Moon
June 13, July 11, Aug. 22 at 7 p.m.

Enjoy live music at the beautiful Klopfenstein Amphitheater at Lowe Park thanks to the Marion Parks and Recreation Department and Veridian Credit Union. Bring a blanket, cooler, and lawn chair.

Picnic on the Prairie
June 20, Aug. 15 at 7 p.m.

Come be inspired by music, art, and the beautiful outdoors at the Klopfenstein Amphitheater at Lowe Park thanks to the Marion Arts Council. Bring your picnic basket, blanket and lawn chair. The events are free and open to the public.

Tiny Fair
June 20, July 18, Aug. 15 from 2-4 p.m.

Family-friendly summer fun in the Uptown Artway! This free miniature fair, presented by Hills Bank, takes place on the 3rd Saturday of the summer months.

Fireworks & Fireflies
July 3 at 6 p.m.

Don’t miss this patriotic celebration, sponsored by Hanna Plumbing & Heating. Bring your lawn chair, blanket and cooler. Enjoy live music, food trucks, and family-friendly activities leading up to the fireworks at dusk.

Eat. Drink. & Be Marion. Food & Pub Crawl
July 9 from 5:30-9:30 p.m.

Enjoy a fun night on the town while supporting the Uptown Marion Main Street Program. This adult-only event showcases local restaurants and establishments. Watch for more information on tickets for this event.

Uptown Getdown
Aug. 6, 13, 20, 27 from 6-9 p.m.

The best way to wind down the dog days of summer! Grab your chairs and coolers and meet your neighbors for music and food in the park.

Uptown Marion Market and Uptown Getdown are made possible thanks to Marion Chamber Platinum Community Partners: Farmers State Bank, Fosters Heating & Air Conditioning, ImOn Communications, MercyCare Community Physicians, Summit Pointe Senior Living and the Marion Hotel/Motel Grant Program.