MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

Nick AbouAssaly

This time of year gives us reason to pause and count our many blessings. As we reflect on 2019, our community has cause for celebration and gratitude.

We are witnessing an exciting time in Marion’s history as our city has become a bright spot of growth and prosperity in the state of Iowa. Investors, developers, business owners, and families are recognizing the increased opportunities that Marion offers for all to achieve their goals in business and in life.

Marion’s improved reputation as a place of opportunity has attracted a variety of new residential, commercial, and industrial development. In the past year alone, we have welcomed many new businesses to the community, both small and large, which provide job opportunities and give us more choices and convenient access to the services we desire. I encourage all of us to support our local businesses whenever possible to keep Marion’s economy vibrant and growing.

Our city’s success is not limited to business. By the time you read this message, we will have celebrated the groundbreaking for the new regional YMCA in Marion, a partnership between the City and YMCA to meet the recreational, wellness, and social needs of Marion and the surrounding area. This year we added several other amenities, including the skate park, inclusive playground, and new trails. We also saw a marked increase in programming such as Fireworks & Fireflies, the dog fashion show, and many live entertainment options in various venues, all free to the public, giving us even more opportunities for community building and enjoyment.

And I would be remiss if I didn’t mention the impact of Prospect Meadows in its inaugural season, bringing 450 traveling teams from 16 states, over 300 local play games and millions of dollars of direct spending in Marion and the region. In addition, dozens of children with special needs now have the opportunity to enjoy America’s favorite pastime on the Kiwanis Miracle Field at Prospect Meadows.

These were just the latest in a series of positive achievements this year, which are made possible through your support and the collaborative efforts of our business community, community volunteers, city leaders and staff, and our economic development partners.

In the recent citizen survey, 93 percent of residents rated Marion as an excellent or good place to live. This level of citizen satisfaction is a testament to the high-quality services our City provides and the increased opportunities we all have to achieve the goals we have for ourselves and our families and enjoy an unequalled quality of life.

I am grateful for our community’s forward momentum and the benefits that will be enjoyed by future generations. I am thankful for our businesses who believe in the amazing potential of Marion and are investing in its future. I am thankful for our City leaders and staff who love our town and work hard every day for Marion residents. Most of all, I am grateful for you, the residents who choose to call Marion home and share in the vision of making our city the best place to live, raise a family and grow a business.

Marion is a great place because of its caring people and the sense of community we all value and enjoy. This holiday season will offer us many opportunities to express our gratitude and show compassion toward those who depend on our generosity. I encourage all of us to do our best to spread kindness and goodwill so that everyone may enjoy the spirit of the season.

Best wishes for a wonderful holiday season.

Let’s continue reaching higher, together.
Join in Marion’s annual holiday celebration, Christmas in the Park, on Friday, Dec. 6 from 4-8 p.m. in City Square Park. Santa and Mrs. Claus will make a grand entrance, escorted by the Marion Fire and Police Departments.

**2019 Schedule of Events**

**Friday, Dec. 6 | 4-8 p.m. | All activities are FREE**

**Arrival of Santa Claus | 4 p.m. | Don’t miss the grand arrival of our special guests by fire truck! Santa and Mrs. Claus will visit with children from 4-8 p.m.**

**Peace Tree | 6 p.m. | Officially kick off the festivities with the lighting of the Marion Community Peace Tree.**

**Fun in the Library | 4-7 p.m. | Craft activities, holiday music ensembles, and a holiday book sale round out the fun at the Marion Public Library.**

**Holiday Music, Hot Cocoa and Popcorn | 4-8 p.m. | Enjoy hot cocoa and fresh popcorn (while supplies last) and listen to classic holiday tunes.**

**Horse-Drawn Carriage Rides | 4-8 p.m. | Create a special memory with your family by taking a horse-drawn carriage ride around City Square Park.**

**Keep Your Neighbors Warm | 4-8 p.m. | Bring donations of new hats, gloves or blankets. Look for the Peppermint Express and help our conductors fill the caboose! Items donated will be distributed to area families in need through the Marion Holiday Giving Project.**

**Peppermint Walk | 4-8 p.m. | Visit participating Uptown Marion merchants, restaurants, and businesses during this special holiday open house. The holiday lights, decorations, and music make this a great complement to the park activities. Present a receipt from a purchase made during the event at any Uptown Marion business and be registered to win one of two $50 gift certificates to participating Uptown businesses. Fill a Holiday Passport by Dec. 19 for a chance to win $50 Uptown Dollars. For a list of participating locations, please visit marioncc.org or uptownmarion.com.**

**Christmas with Mrs. Claus | Dec. 14 | Experience a fun morning with Mrs. Claus while helping Keep Your Neighbors Warm. The event will take place on Saturday, Dec. 14 at the Granger House in Marion. While Santa is busy helping the elves prepare, Mrs. Claus will make a special trip to Marion. She will share fun facts from the North Pole while children enjoy cookie decorating, crafts, and a tour of the Granger House, learning about the holidays in the late-19th century. Then sit in the parlor while Mrs. Claus shares a story about giving during the holiday season. Participation is limited and registration is required. The cost will be a donation of a NEW cold weather item for each child attending. Items can be hats, mittens/gloves, or blankets. Children ages 4-10 are eligible to attend and a parent or guardian must remain on-site. Find more information or register online at bit.ly/2019mrsclaus. Donated items will benefit the Marion Holiday Giving Project, which provides clothing, non-perishable foods, and winter items and gifts to over 142 Marion families in need. Special thanks to the Granger House & Museum and Hills Bank & Trust for sponsoring this event.**

Christmas in the Park and the Peppermint Walk is presented by the Marion Chamber of Commerce and Uptown Marion Main Street. It remains a free community event thanks to the Marion Chamber Platinum Community Partners – Farmers State Bank, Fosters Heating and Air Conditioning, ImOn Communications, MercyCare Community Physicians, and Townsquare Media.

For more information, please visit marioncc.org.
SHOP LOCAL THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

Luminaries & Last Minutes - Uptown Holiday Open House | Dec. 12, 2019 | 5-8 p.m. | Join us for a night of shopping and wish list-making at Uptown retailers and boutiques.

Shop Small this Holiday | Find gifts in Uptown this holiday season. Buy tickets to a show at The Giving Tree Theater or discover one-of-a-kind gifts at shops like SCOUT or The Iowa Magic Shop. How about a gift card to Goldfinch Tap + Eatery or Shorts Burger & Shine? When you support Marion businesses by shopping local this holiday season, you support your neighbors and the community!

Uptown Holiday Passport | Between Small Business Saturday (Nov. 30) and Dec. 19, shoppers have the opportunity to fill an Uptown Holiday Passport by visiting participating businesses that have decked the halls for the holidays. Passports will be available at each participating store, as well as at the Uptown/Chamber booth at the Peppermint Walk (Dec. 6). Return your filled Holiday Passport by Dec. 19 to the Uptown/Chamber office in City Hall for a chance to win $50 in Uptown Dollars.

Uptown Dollars | Struggling to find the perfect gift for that someone special? Consider giving Uptown Dollars! With 30 businesses participating in this certificate program, your special someone is sure to have fun as they shop, eat, and explore Uptown Marion. Certificates may be purchased at both Marion Hills Bank & Trust locations or the Uptown/Chamber office (1225 6th Ave, Ste. 100). View participating businesses here: UptownMarion.com/discover-uptown/gift-certificates.

Support your neighborhood businesses in Uptown Marion

SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY | NOV 30

GET YOUR SHOP SMALL CANVAS BAG WHILE SUPPLIES LAST & ENTER TO WIN UPTOWN DOLLARS

SHOP SMALL

CHRISTMAS IN THE PARK & PEPPERMINT WALK | DEC 6 4-8pm

Carriage Rides
Hot Cocoa & Popcorn
Prizes

Santa & Mrs. Claus

For a full list of event activities, visit www.MarionCC.org
This summer, the City of Marion contracted with National Research Center, Inc. to conduct The National Community Survey™ (The NCS™). The survey was mailed to a representative sample of 1,700 Marion residents.

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, 93 percent of residents rated the community as an excellent or good place to live and 88 percent rated the overall quality of life positively. According to the NCS Community Livability Report, how residents rate their overall quality of life is an indicator of the community’s overall health.

Marion’s ratings were compared to national benchmarks included from over 600 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.

Marion ranked well above the national and peer benchmarks with 94 percent of respondents indicating that Marion is an excellent or good place to raise children. K-12 education also ranked higher than both benchmarks, and 9 in 10 residents positively rated the overall feeling of safety in Marion. Nine in 10 respondents would also recommend living in Marion to someone who asked.

The holistic look at the community also identified some areas for improvement, particularly related to streets/infrastructure and code enforcement.

“These survey results reaffirm our status as the best place to raise a family and much of that has to do with the quality of life that we’ve made positive strides in a number of areas and recognize where there are opportunities for improvement. The City will use this data to inform our strategic plan, the budget process, and department work plans.”

— LON PLUCKHAHN, City Manager

continued on next page
we enjoy,” noted Marion Mayor Nicolas AbouAssaly. “There’s still work to be done, but with a dedicated staff and Marion’s collaborative nature we will continue on in a positive direction.”

Overall, ratings in Marion remained stable. With this being the second time the NCS was administered in Marion, meaningful differences of more than 6 percentage points were noted from 2017 to 2019.

Evaluations of ease of travel by bicycle and by public transportation, opportunities to attend cultural/art/music activities, and opportunities to participate in social events and activities increased from 2017 to 2019. Ratings for the overall quality of businesses and services in Marion and the availability of affordable quality food decreased during that time.

Assessments of recreation centers or facilities improved from 2017 to 2019. Additionally, more residents gave positive reviews to government performance for the overall direction the City is taking, the government welcoming resident involvement, and treating all residents fairly. Respondents assigned less positive reviews to street cleaning, snow removal, storm drainage, power utility, code enforcement, and public libraries in 2019.

From 2017 to 2019, levels of participation for most items remained stable in Marion. In 2019, fewer residents reported they had carpooled instead of driving alone; conserved water; voted in local elections; campaigned for an issue, cause or candidate; or read or watched the local news. Additionally, more respondents observed a code violation in 2019 compared to 2017.

“Within a two year period, it can be challenging for a government entity to move the needle,” said City Manager Lon Pluckhahn. “We’ve made positive strides in a number of areas and recognize where there are opportunities for improvement. The City will use this data to inform our strategic plan, the budget process, and department work plans.”

The five-page survey was administered during July/August 2019 to a random sampling of 1,700 households. Five hundred nine responses were received, achieving a +/- 4 percent margin of error. The data was then weighted to reflect the demographic characteristics of the community. Toward the end of data collection, a web-based survey was available to all residents and 526 residents opted to complete the survey online.

Civil Rights Commission announces Grant Program

The Marion Civil Rights Commission (MCRC) is pleased to announce the approval of the Marion Low & Moderate Income Housing Assistance Grant to be awarded in 2020. The Marion City Council has approved up to $20,000 to be used in this grant program.

The grant will help non-profit, charitable organizations or other entities interested in addressing housing instability in the community. In the inaugural year of the program, funding was awarded to Willis Dady Homeless Services and Waypoint.

“The Marion Civil Rights Commission is thrilled to be able to offer this grant to help make an impact on homelessness in the community,” said Bret Nilles, chair of the commission. “As we’ve seen in the first year, this funding is making a real difference in the lives of those impacted by housing instability.”

The official application window will open on Nov. 26, with a deadline of Jan. 10, 2020. The application can be accessed at www.cityofmarion.org. The target date for awarding the funds is March 2020. The commission will make funding recommendations to the City Council based on a defined set of criteria to provide maximum assistance to as many proposals as possible.

Learn more by contacting Bret Nilles, MCRC chair, at banilles26@hotmail.com or Amal Eltahir, assistant to the city manager, at aeltahir@cityofmarion.org.

CONTACT CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mayor Nicolas AbouAssaly
1225 6th Ave. | (319) 743-6305
marionmayor@cityofmarion.org

At-Large – Randy Strnad
1820 Agate Circle | (319) 377-3276
marionatlarge1@cityofmarion.org

At-Large – Paul Draper
4670 Fairways Ct. | (319) 377-8393
marionatlarge2@cityofmarion.org

Ward One – Colette Atkins
1070 Creekbend Ct. | (319) 213-8075
ward1@cityofmarion.org

Ward Two – Steve Jensen
3830 Monarch Ave. | (319) 360-7009
ward2@cityofmarion.org

Ward Three – Will Brandt
2745 4th Ave. | (319) 389-9918
ward3@cityofmarion.org

Ward Four – Rene Gadelha
3476 Barnsley Circle | (319) 538-7888
ward4@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. All meetings are held at Marion City Hall.
Marion Youth Center Opens

Marion Youth Coalition was formed in May 2018. It now includes representatives from nearly 30 community organizations and agencies. Its four subcommittees include Parent/Community Education, Accountability/Community Initiatives, Student Activities/Programming, and the Marion Youth Center.

If you have an interest in participating in the Marion Youth Coalition, please contact Michelle Wilson, mwilson@marion-isd.org. If you would like to volunteer at the new Marion Youth Center, please contact Angie Brown, abrown@bgccr.org.

**The programming includes five core areas:**

1. Education, Career Development & Technology
2. Character & Leadership
3. Health & Life Skills
4. The Arts
5. Sports, Recreation & Fitness

MEDCO was proud to join the Marion Chamber to celebrate the completion of Freund-Vector Corporation’s new global laboratory. This renovation and 2,000 square foot expansion includes a large conference room to support seminars for customers, additional meeting space, a break room, new office for lab personnel, and additional process rooms to demonstrate new products. Customers from around the world will now have the opportunity to work in this first-class environment as they test and develop new products within the Freund Vector laboratory.

**Timberline Manufacturing** celebrated the completion of its new Marion facility. The new location is nearly double the size of the previous facility. Marion Economic Development Corporation provided project support by securing tax-based financial assistance from the Iowa Economic Development Authority’s High-Quality Jobs Program as well as a local financial match from the City of Marion.

Community leaders gathered to celebrate the groundbreaking of a runway expansion project at the Marion Airport. The runway will be expanded from 23 feet to 60 feet wide. In 2017, MEDCO partnered with the City of Marion to secure a $425,000 grant from the Iowa Department of Transportation to partially fund the project.
Kitsmiller sworn in as Marion’s New Police Chief

The City of Marion is pleased to introduce Mike Kitsmiller as its next chief of police.

Kitsmiller is a 32-year law enforcement veteran who spent 12 years with the Memphis Police Department and 20 years with the FBI. Chief Kitsmiller has extensive management experience and spent the bulk of his career with the FBI in eastern Iowa.

“I am honored and very excited about the opportunity to work for the City of Marion and lead the men and women of the Marion Police Department,” said Kitsmiller. “Marion is one of the safest cities in Iowa due to the exemplary service provided by the department in conjunction with the broad support of the community including the City Council, Mayor, and City Manager. I look forward to leading the efforts to build on those successes.”

Kitsmiller will be responsible for the administration, coordination, and direction of all Marion Police Department activities. The department employs 45 sworn officers and 15 civilian employees. The agency houses the patrol, investigations, support services, and public safety communication divisions.

He anticipates spending his first few months on the job getting to know the department and City personnel, as well as the community.

---

**Kitsmiller sworn in as Marion’s New Police Chief**

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
Having a fire in your home is a scary thought, but if you have an escape plan for your family to get out safely, you’ll be better prepared if the unimaginable occurs. Your ability to get out depends on advance warning from smoke alarms and advance planning. The key to your family’s safety is planning and practicing a home fire escape plan.

This year’s Fire Prevention Week campaign, “Not Every Hero Wears a Cape. Plan and Practice Your Escape!” works to educate everyone about the small but essential actions YOU can take to keep yourself and those around you safe.

The Marion Fire Department and National Fire Protection Agency offer this guide to creating a home fire safety plan:

1. **DRAW** a map of your home, including all doors and windows.
2. **DISCUSS** the plan with everyone in your family.
3. **KNOW** at least two ways out of every room.
4. **MAKE** sure all doors and windows leading outside open easily.
5. **HAVE** an outside meeting place (like a tree or neighbor’s mailbox) that is a safe distance from your home.
6. **TEACH** children how to get out on their own, in case you can’t help them.
7. **ASSIGN** someone in the family to assist infants, seniors, or anyone else that would require help getting out.
8. **PRACTICE** your home fire drill during the night AND during the day.
9. **PRACTICE** using a different way out.
10. **CLOSE** doors behind you when you leave.

Fire safety education isn’t just for school children. Teenagers, adults, and the elderly are also at risk, which makes it important for all ages to practice fire safety.

During Fire Prevention Week in October, the Marion Fire Department visited all kindergarten, 1st grade and 3rd grade classes in the community. They also hosted several events at the Marion Public Library, preschools, and daycares to educate children on fire safety.

In addition, all 3rd graders participated in a Fire Safety Poster Contest. This annual tradition encourages students to have fun drawing while learning about the fire safety message. Members of the Marion Fire Department select the best poster from each school along with one overall winner.
The U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) reminds consumers of simple steps you can take to prevent the loss of life and property resulting from electrical fires.

**Home Electrical Fire Prevention**

Electrical fires in our homes claim the lives of 280 Americans each year and injure 1,000 more. Some of these fires are caused by electrical system failures, but many more are caused by incorrectly installed wiring and overloaded circuits and extension cords.

During a typical year, home electrical problems account for 26,100 fires and $1 billion in property losses.

December and January are the most dangerous months for electrical fires. Fire deaths are highest in winter months, which call for more indoor activities and increases in lighting, heating, and appliance use. The bedroom is the leading area of fire origin for residential building electrical fires. However, electrical fires that begin in the living room/family room/den areas result in the most deaths.

Most electrical distribution fires result from problems with “fixed wiring” such as faulty electrical outlets and old wiring. Problems with cords (such as extension and appliance cords), plugs, receptacles, and switches also cause many home electrical fires. Light fixtures and lamps/light bulbs are also leading causes of electrical fires. Many avoidable electrical fires can be traced to misuse of electric cords, such as overloading circuits, poor maintenance, and running the cords under rugs or in high traffic areas.

Finally, having a working smoke alarm dramatically increases your chances of surviving a fire. And remember to practice a home escape plan frequently with your family.

**SAFETY PRECAUTIONS**

- Routinely check your electrical appliances and wiring. Replace all worn, old or damaged appliance cords immediately. Do not try to repair them.
- Buy only appliances that have the label of a recognized testing laboratory.
- Major and small appliances should be plugged directly into a wall outlet. Never use an extension cord. Unplug small appliances when not in use.
- If an appliance has a three-prong plug, use it only in a three-slot outlet. Never force it to fit into a two-slot outlet or extension cord.
- Replace any electrical tool if it causes even small electrical shocks, overheats, shorts out or gives off smoke or sparks.
- Use only surge protectors or power strips that have internal overload protection and have the label of a recognized testing laboratory.
- Keep clothes, curtains, and other items that can catch fire at least 3 feet from all portable electric space heaters.
- Use light bulbs that match the recommended wattage on the lamp or fixture.
- Avoid putting cords where they can be damaged or pinched by furniture, under rugs and carpets, or across doorways.
- Extension cords are for temporary use only. Have a qualified electrician determine if additional circuits or wall outlets are needed.
- Electrical work should be done only by a qualified electrician. Call an electrician if you have any of the following:
  - Recurring problems with blowing fuses or tripping circuit breakers
  - A tingling feeling when you touch an electrical appliance
  - Discolored or warm wall outlets or switches
  - A burning smell or rubbery odor coming from an appliance
  - Flickering lights
  - Sparks from a wall outlet
  - Cracked or broken wall outlets

**Keep Snow Away from Furnace Intake Pipes**

Marion’s Building Inspection Division is reminding homeowners to be safety-minded and remember to clear drifted snow away from your furnace intake pipes.

Keeping snow and ice away from a furnace’s fresh-air intake pipes is vital to guard against the possibility of carbon monoxide poisoning. Fresh-air intake pipes are typically the two white plastic pipes that come out of the side of a house. Check these pipes regularly to ensure proper operation and clear any drifted snow.

Snow can also build up on flat or low pitched roofs. Fresh-air intake pipes are typically located on the roof of a mobile home, so it is important also to monitor this area.
DEPARTMENT SERVICES

WATER

Meter Upgrade Program

The Marion Water Department is nearing the completion of a multi-year project of upgrading all old water meters to radio read meters. The new meters provide a more uniform and accurate meter reading system. For the few meters yet to be upgraded, the department will contact the homeowner for an appointment to change the meter. Homeowners must make sure both valves are working properly before and after the water meter installation. Homeowners can call 743-6310 to set up the appointment. The meter swap takes about 15 minutes.

Causes of Low Water Pressure

If you are experiencing a sudden change in low pressure in your house, it could be one of two things. First, if you have a water softener unit, put the unit on Bypass mode by pushing a button or turning the lever to Bypass mode. If the pressure is restored, the issue lies within the water softener. If you have a whole-house water filter, remove and replace the filter, or simply remove the filter if a new one is not immediately available. Nine out of 10 times, one of these situations is the cause of low water pressure.

Winter Water Tips

As winter approaches, the Marion Water Department offers these tips for homeowners to help prevent winter water freeze-ups.

1. If you have an irrigation system, make sure it's serviced and drained.
2. Remove any hoses from outside faucets. Even if you have “frost-free” faucets, they will freeze up if an attached hose is left with water in it. Remove the hose and store it indoors for the winter – the hose will also last longer.
3. Seal any foundation cracks, especially around outside faucets and where water pipes are located in the basement.
4. Wrap pipes using foam tubes (available at most hardware stores) anywhere that water pipes are in proximity to outside walls.
5. Turn off valves to outside faucets. There is usually a control valve in the basement to each individual outside faucet.
6. If you notice water temperature getting extremely cold, consider opening a door below the sink, particularly if the sink is located on an outside wall of the home. This will allow heat to the piping. On really cold nights, one can leave a small trickle of water run, which allows the warmer water to flow through the underground pipes.

A few preventative measures could prevent the potential damage and inconvenience of frozen water pipes in your home this winter.

Take the time to do it now.

Yard Waste Drop-off Facility

Marion residents that receive municipal solid waste collection can utilize the Yard Waste Drop-off Facility located at 195 35th Street. Yard waste items such as leaves, grass clippings, and brush less than 4 inches in diameter are accepted at the facility free of charge. Extended hours for the yard waste facility through the end of November (weather permitting) are as follows:

- Monday – Friday: 7 a.m.-3:15 p.m.
- Tuesday: 7 a.m.-5:45 p.m.
- Saturday: 8 a.m.-4:15 p.m.
- Sunday: noon-4 p.m.

Please contact the Marion Public Services Department at 319-377-6367 for additional information.

Curbside Yard Waste Facility

Curbside yard waste will be collected from Marion residents until the last week of November, unless it snows prior to that date. Residents must place their yard waste in a 32 gallon can marked with a “Y” or a biodegradable bag.

Sticks, limbs, and brush, larger than 1 inch in diameter and no greater than 4 inches in diameter, must be bundled at the curb. Bundles should not measure more than 3 feet in length or width. Grass clippings must be placed in biodegradable bags.

Please call the Marion Public Services Department at 319-377-6367 with any questions.

Private Snow Plow Licensing Requirements

City ordinance requires that all private snow removal contractors need to obtain a snow removal permit for any work within the city right of way. The cost for the permit is $25. Permit applications will be accepted now through Dec. 22, 2019. Applications may be obtained at the Public Services Department located at 195 35th Street between 7 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Please call the Public Services Department at 319-377-6367 with any questions.

2019 HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

Date                  Pick Up Schedule

Thanksgiving Day      Pickup on Friday
Nov. 28 – Thursday

Day After Thanksgiving Pickup on Saturday
Nov. 29 – Friday

Christmas Day         One day late Wednesday-Friday
Dec. 25 – Wednesday

New Year’s Day        One day late Wednesday-Friday
Jan. 1 – Wednesday
Please note the Dec. 20, 2019 registration deadline for the following programs:

**LITTLE STARS BASKETBALL**
**CHILDREN AGE 4**
Players meet for five classes to work on fundamental ball-handling, shooting, and passing skills. Parents participate with their child or children for this program as recreation staff instructs and demonstrates the drills.

**FEE:** $39, includes team shirt (+$10 after deadline)

**DAYS/DATES:** Saturdays, Feb. 1-29

**TIME(S):** Saturday mornings – Times vary

**LOCATION:** TBD

**SHOOTING STARS BASKETBALL**
**CHILDREN GRADES K-1ST**
This instructional program works on the basic skills of dribbling, passing, and shooting. Players spend the first two meetings working on skills and practicing with their team and coach(es), then scrimmage the remaining three meetings. There are no additional practices. VOLUNTEER COACHES NEEDED!

**FEE:** $39, includes team shirt (+$10 after deadline)

**DAYS/DATES:** Saturdays, Feb. 1-29

**TIME(S):** Saturday mornings – Times vary

**LOCATION:** Teams rotate times and locations on Saturday mornings

**INDOOR BLASTBALL CAMP**
**CHILDREN AGE 3**
Blastball helps prepare players for organized baseball/softball in a fun, non-competitive environment. Children will be introduced to the fundamentals of throwing, hitting, and fielding while fostering the values of teamwork and good sportsmanship. A limited number of spots available. VOLUNTEER COACHES NEEDED!

**FEE:** $39, includes team shirt (+$10 after deadline)

**DAYS/DATES:** Saturdays, Feb. 1-29

**TIME(S):** Saturday mornings – Times vary

**LOCATION:** TBD

**NOTES:** Teams are co-ed (boys & girls)

---

**Parks & Recreation Program Guide – Coming to a Mailbox near You**
2020 will bring changes to the way you receive information from the Marion Parks and Recreation Department. We are no longer printing an annual brochure and mailing it to past program participants. We are excited to announce that we will publish two inserts within this publication, the Marion Messenger. A Spring/Summer insert will appear in the February issue, while our Fall/Winter information will appear in the September issue. With this change, we are saving on printing and postage costs while expanding our distribution to reach every household within Marion.

**Online Recreation Registration Software**
Marion Parks and Recreation is getting close to implementing new online recreation software. The new system will offer many user-friendly features such as online pavilion reservations, participant registrations, a coach’s information corner, and enhanced program notifications. Look for further updates in our monthly Parks and Recreation eUpdate. To request to be added to the list, email khummel@cityofmarion.org.

**2020 Practice Field Reservations**
The Parks and Recreation Department will begin accepting reservations for ball diamonds for 2020 on Tuesday, Jan. 7, at 7 a.m. All reservations for baseball/softball diamonds will be taken at the Recreation Office at Lowe Park. Reservations must be made in person and all fees must be paid at the time of the reservation. The Marion Parks and Recreation Department has priority of all fields and facilities and predetermines the time slots that are available for rental. Rental slots are available in 90 minute intervals. Weeknight intervals are 5-6:30 p.m. and 6:30-8 p.m. Weekend times are flexible. Rentals are $15 for each 90-minute time slot.

**Employment Opportunities**
The Marion Parks and Recreation Department is a great place to work as a part-time or seasonal employee! Stop by our office to apply for one of the following positions:

- Recreation Assistant
- Seasonal Parks Maintenance
- Lifeguard
- Water Safety Instructor (WSI)
- Concessions Attendant
- Pool Manager
- Swim Lesson Instructor
- Pool Cashier

Seasonal lifeguards and swim lesson instructors are needed for the Marion Municipal Swimming Pool during the summer months. Applications for pool positions are due by Feb. 14.

---

**Snow and Ice Removal Reminder**
Property owners are required to maintain the sidewalks adjacent to their homes. In inclement weather, snow and ice shall be cleared within 12 hours after the snow or ice has been deposited on the sidewalk. The entire sidewalk along the property must be cleared, including any corners leading into the street. If the snow/ice is not removed by the date and time stated above and a complaint is received, the City will clear the sidewalk. The resulting charges will be 85 cents per square foot, plus a $25 administrative fee.

If you have any questions, please contact the Parks Department at 319-447-3580.
Coffeehouse Nights

Don’t miss these upcoming Coffeehouse Nights at the Lowe Park Arts and Environment Center hosted by the Marion Arts Council. The musical performances feature talented local acoustic artists in a relaxed coffeehouse type atmosphere. Admission is free and coffee, cocoa, and pastries are available for purchase. Performances run from 7-8:30 p.m. and doors open at 6:30 p.m.

Friday, Dec. 6 | Classic bluegrass and gospel music by Banjoy
Friday, Feb. 7 | Irish Jam led by Carlis Faurot
Friday, Mar. 6 | Folk duo Tara McGovern & Keith Reins
Friday, April 3 | Kelly Montijo Fink, singer-songwriter of Native American music

The Gallery at Lowe

The front portion of the Lowe Park Arts & Environment Center features an inviting gallery for Marion Arts Council exhibits. Approximately every eight weeks a new exhibit is displayed in the gallery, featuring works by local and regional Iowa artists. This is an excellent opportunity for the residents of Marion and visitors to enjoy a variety of quality works of art.

The pottery and paintings of artist Karen Sands are on display now through Jan. 31.

The gallery is open Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. - 4 p.m. and the first Saturday of the month 1-3 p.m.
Please join us for our regularly scheduled programming, as shown below. Check our website for more information about clubs, groups, and monthly programs: marionpubliclibrary.org.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday Morning Meet-Up</td>
<td>Toddler Time</td>
<td>Preschool Story</td>
<td>Music &amp; Movement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encore Café</td>
<td>Preschool Story Time</td>
<td>Toddler Time</td>
<td>Thursday Morning Drop-In</td>
<td>Encore Café</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pajama Storytime</td>
<td>Pathfinder Club</td>
<td>Pathfinder Club</td>
<td>Baby Time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teen Programming</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Highlights**

**Food for Fines**

We’re proud to be a participating library with the Food for Fines program, which allows library fines to be paid off with food donations. Through Nov. 30, for every non-perishable box, our patrons are receiving $1 off their fines. Donations are also welcome.

**Barnes & Noble Book Fair**

We’ll be over at Barnes & Noble on Dec. 13 and Dec. 20 for our holiday book fair. Stop by and get some shopping in—remember to mention the Marion Public Library at checkout to gift a portion of the proceeds to us.

**Holiday Hours**

- Wednesday, Nov. 27: Library closes at 5:30 p.m.
- Thursday, Nov. 28: Library closed
- Friday, Nov. 29: Library closed
- Tuesday, Dec. 24: Library closed
- Wednesday, Dec. 25: Library closed
- Tuesday, Dec. 31: Library closes at 2 p.m.
- Wednesday, Jan. 1: Library closed

**Giving Tuesday**

This year, Tuesday, Dec. 3 marks Giving Tuesday, a global day of giving. We encourage you to get involved by donating your time or resources.
Library Launches Early Bird Hour

Marion Public Library piloted an extended access hour in September. Based upon feedback from staff and patrons regarding the pilot program, Library staff made a recommendation to the Board that this hour become an ongoing feature of library services. As of Nov. 1, the Library is now open at 8:30 a.m. each weekday for “Early Bird Hour.”

This self-service hour increases access to valuable services like picking up holds, browsing, using the self-check machine, returning materials, accessing the public computers with a library card and using the library’s printer/copier/fax machine/DOT kiosk.

Marion Public Library is currently the only library in the state to offer this service.

Upcoming Special Events

December
Senior Safety: Roundabouts 101
Monday, Dec. 2 | 1:30-2:30 p.m.
Adult

Teaching Tech: Maximize your Gifts
Tuesday, Dec. 3 | 6:30-7:30 p.m.
Adult

Christmas in the Park Festivities
Friday, Dec. 6 | 4-7 p.m.
For Everyone

Surviving the Holidays
Tuesday, Dec. 10 | 6:30-7:30 p.m.
Adult

Gift Wrap Party
Tuesday, Dec. 17 | 6-8 p.m.
Adult

Krampus March Teen Program
Friday, Dec. 20 | 4:30-8 p.m.
Ages 10-18

Noon Year’s Eve Party
Tuesday, Dec. 31 | 11 a.m.-noon
For Everyone

January
Backyard Lock-In for Teens
Friday, Jan. 17
5-7 p.m. | Middle School (5th-8th Grade)
7:30-9:30 p.m. | High School (9th-12th Grade)

1000 Books before Kindergarten Graduation/Kickoff
Saturday, Jan. 18 | 10-11a.m.
Children & Families

February
Un-Valentine’s Day for Teens
Thursday, Feb. 20 | 4-5 p.m.
Teens
Community Calendar

November
28/29 Thanksgiving Holiday | City Offices Closed
30 Small Business Saturday
10 a.m.-2 p.m. | Uptown Marion

December
6 Christmas in the Park & Peppermint Walk
4-8 p.m. | Uptown Marion
6 Coffeehouse Night featuring Banjoy
7-8:30 p.m.
Lowe Park Arts & Environment Center
12 Luminaries & Last Minutes
5-8 p.m. | Uptown Marion
14 Christmas with Mrs. Claus
Granger House (RSVP required)
24/25 Christmas Holiday | City Offices Closed
31 New Year’s Eve | City Offices Closed

January
1 New Year’s Day | City Offices Closed
23 State of the City Luncheon
11:30 a.m. | Cedar Rapids Marriott

February
7 Coffeehouse Night featuring Carlis Faurot
7-8:30 p.m. | Lowe Park Arts & Environment Center

Take Advantage of these Winter Amenities

Thomas Park Ice Rink | Dust off the skates, it’s almost time for ice skating! As soon as the weather allows, the Parks and Recreation staff will get the ice rink flooded for your use. Watch for details on our website for the opening date. Lights will be on daily from dusk to 10 p.m.

Cross-Country Skiing | Once the snow flies and settles in to a desirable depth, a groomed cross-country trial will be developed at Lowe Park. Staff will create the trail along our existing walking trails as well as a few other sweeps around the park.

Trails Maintained Year-Round | Winter, spring, summer and fall…. did you know that Marion Parks and Recreation maintains the city’s trail system year-round? Pet owners, please be courteous and pick up after your pets while enjoying Marion’s parks and trails.