



Hills Newsletter

Musings from the Mayor...

Sometimes things happen in life that just want to make you say what the heck. And sometimes they are bit more troubling, and you want to say what the hell. Then there are those rare occasions where you just need to go a little farther and use that "F" word. I won't use it here but after reading the rest of this you may understand why I wanted to use it.

In early December I had a phone conversation with the ICCSD superintendent. I asked when the demolition of the school would start, and he told me mid-December. It looks like they have been doing some work on the inside of the building, which makes sense, before they start on the exterior. He estimated a couple of months to complete the job.

I then asked where things stood as far as the City of Hills being able to purchase the land. Here is where that "F" word comes in and if you are reading this around small children, just think the word, don't say it out loud. He told me that they were thinking they may hold onto the land for the time being as Hills was growing as a community and they may need to build a school down here in the future. In the words of AC/DC I was thunderstruck!

Here is a district that just said last spring they are not going to build a new building in Hills and in fact recommended tearing down our school, because we weren't a growing community. Now a few months later they want to keep the land because Hills is growing?

Apparently the ICCSD school board has no competent or coherent plan of what they are doing. They recommend closing our school the same night they approved spending hundreds of thousands of dollars to buy land for a new elementary. They recently bought another building

that they seem unsure of how to use or at least aren't all in agreement on. You would think that a district that is cutting things due to budget constraints might be interested in selling an asset to recoup some money. Trust me, they have no intention of building a new school in Hills and if they do, then it just shows you their lack of long-range planning.

Their gutless decision to close Hills shows they take the path of least resistance. Hills as a smaller school was not going to have the huge public outcry against its closing. Though I will say we did show up at board meetings to voice our objections and concerns in good numbers. They would never try that with an Iowa City school because they know how much pushback they would get. Look how quickly they back tracked on the pairing schools for a K-2, 3-5 combination when the community voiced concerns.

So yeah, the "F" word came to mind when I was told they wanted to keep the land right now in case they needed to build a new school in the growing community of Hills. If ever we reached a point where we could no longer trust the ICCSD, this just might be it.

By Tim Kemp

Community Calendar



HCC: Hills Community Center – 110 E Main Street

January

- 1/1 Happy New Year!** – City Office Closed
- 1/1** No Trash and Recycle Pick Up
- 1/2** Trash and Recycle Pick Up
- 1/8** Christmas Tree Pick Up
- 1/8** Planning & Zoning Meeting **6pm** – HCC
- 1/10** Hills Town & Country Meeting **5:30pm** – HCC
- 1/13** City Council Meeting **7pm** – HCC
- 1/14** Senior Dining **Noon** – St Joseph Church Hall

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Christmas Tree Disposal



Johnson County Refuse will pick up Christmas trees on **Wednesday, January 8th**. Note, this is for real trees only. All decorations need to be removed. Please place your tree by the street next to your garbage and recycle carts.

Snow Policies



Snow and Ice Removal:

All property owners are responsible for removing snow from sidewalks within 48 hours of any snowfall. Any ice accumulation must also be removed or salted/sanded for the protection of pedestrians within 48 hours of the event.

Snow Emergency Declaration:

1. Snowfall of 2 inches or more; however, any amount of snow combined with ice, rain, and/or wind can also require a snow emergency declaration.
2. Emergency is declared by the Mayor, City Administrator, or Public Works Director.
3. An emergency may be declared: in advance of an anticipated storm; to start at a specific time; or during or after a storm.
4. Announcements are given to:
WMT AM 600 · KCJJ AM 1630 · KCRG AM 1600
KCRG TV9 · KGAN TV2
KHAK FM 98.1 · KNRA FM 94.1 · KXIC FM 100.7

Sequence of Service:

1. Residents need to move their vehicles off city streets to accommodate emergency snow and/or ice removal.
2. A resident may file an appeal at the City Office for a special exception to the parking prohibition.
3. Snowplows will normally operate between 3:00 am–9:00 pm; however, trucks may be called off the road if snow and blowing snow reduces visibility to make hazardous working conditions.
4. Initial removal will focus on getting all routes open to one-lane traffic as soon as possible and/or practical.
5. It is not the policy of the City to provide a “dry” pavement condition. The entire width of the road may not be cleared of all snow, ice, or frost.
6. The City will not clear snow from private drives.
7. The City will clear snow from alleys after all paved street snow removal operations have been completed.
8. Per Chapter 135.12 of the Hills City Code, **it is unlawful for any person to throw, push, or place snow from their sidewalks and driveways onto the street or alley.**

Bookmobile Winter/Spring 2025 Schedule

Tuesdays January 7th – May 27th, 2025

2:45 pm – 3:15 pm

Atrium Village

117 S 3rd St



Hills residents may get a library card from the Iowa City Public Library (ICPL) with full access to the library's services. For convenience, the ICPL Bookmobile makes a stop at Atrium Village on Tuesdays. It returns for its winter/spring schedule on January 7th.

The Bookmobile is stocked with new and popular books and DVDs. You may also place a hold on any item in the ICPL's collection and request pickup via the Bookmobile, as well as return library items to the Bookmobile.

For more information, or to get your library card, visit <https://www.icpl.org/> or call **319.356.5200**.

Reminder

Per City Code Chapter 69.07.4, it is prohibited to stop, stand, or park a vehicle (except when necessary to avoid conflict with other traffic or in compliance with the directions of a peace officer or traffic control device) on or across a sidewalk.

Violators will be given a warning, then may be ticketed, and then subject to municipal fines of up to \$750. The maximum fine increases to \$1,000 for subsequent violations.



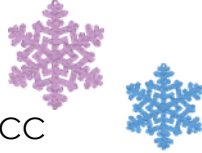
Community Calendar continued...

January

- 1/15 Yoga **7pm** – HCC
- 1/20 City Office Closed – Martin Luther King Jr Day
- 1/21 Utility Bill Payments Due
- 1/24 Orphan Train **10am** – Atrium Village
- 1/27 City Council Meeting **7pm** – HCC
- 1/31 Meter Read

February

- 2/10 City Council Meeting **7pm** – HCC
- 2/11 Senior Dining **Noon** – St Joseph Church Hall
- 2/12 Planning & Zoning Meeting **6pm** – HCC
- 2/12 Yoga **7pm** – HCC
- 2/14 Hills Town & Country Meeting **5:30pm** – HCC
- 2/17 Presidents' Day – City Office Closed
- 2/20 Utility Bills Due
- 2/24 City Council Meeting **7pm** – HCC
- 2/28 Meter Read



Please note: Payment for the December City utilities will be **due January 21st**, not January 20th.

Volunteer Opportunity

Planning and Zoning Commission

A seat is available on the City of Hills' Planning and Zoning Commission. Meetings are held as needed (which is infrequently – there was one meeting in calendar 2024). This is a volunteer position, with a term of three (3) years. If you are interested, please call the City Office at **319.679.3197**.

A Common Check Writing Error

A frequent check writing error we see for water utility payments is a disagreement between the money box and the legal line. **We are legally required to process your check for the amount written on the legal line.** In the example below, the payment would be processed for \$100.61, and the account holder would have a balance of \$15 left on their account.



City Receives Grant for Hills Hometown Pride Mural

The City of Hills was recently awarded an Art Project Grant in the amount of \$3,633 for a Hills Hometown Pride Mural project. Grant support is provided by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Iowa Arts Council, which exists within the Iowa Economic Development Authority, with a generous grant match contribution provided by Hills Bank in the amount of \$1,000.

The Hills Hometown Pride Mural project is a collaboration between Hills Hometown Pride, a program through Keep Iowa Beautiful, and the University Office of Community Engagement. The Hometown Pride Committee will commission an artist through the UI Community-Engaged Art program to paint the mural on panels, which will be installed on the exterior wall of the Hills Fire Department facing the new Songbird Sanctuary Park located on Main Street downtown. The mural installation is planned for the Spring of 2025.



Legal Line

Since an account with a balance greater than \$10 on the day after the utility bill due date is charged a late penalty fee of \$20, the deputy city clerk will attempt to make a courtesy call in these instances to give the account holder an opportunity to correct their error and avoid the late penalty fee.

Notice

Minimal spot-spraying of weeds on City properties using over-the-counter herbicides may occur around the first of each month.

Our Three-Parish Cluster *Sts Mary & Joseph Catholic Churches* Lone Tree, Nichols, Hills

St Mary Church

216 W Jayne St, Lone Tree 319-629-4225

Church of St Mary

201 Short St, Nichols 319-330-5324

St Joseph Church

209 Brady St, Hills 319-679-2271

Rev David O Paintsil, Pastor
email: paintsild@diodav.org

Carol Kaalberg, Pastoral Associate
email: kaalbergc@diodav.org

Nancy Waldschmidt, Director of Faith Formation
email: nwaldschmidt@gwaea.org

Rev Lou Leonhardt, Retired
PO Box 454, Lone Tree, Iowa 52755

Cluster Website: stsmarijoseph.com

*We invite you to join us for the celebration
of the Holy Eucharist!
We hope you find our parishes
Welcoming and Belonging!*



Saturday Mass Schedule:

4:00 pm St Mary Church (Lone Tree)

Sunday Mass Schedule:

8:00 am Church of St Mary (Nichols)

10:00 am St Joseph Church (Hills)

Daily Mass Schedule (Tuesday – Friday):

8:00 am Rosary Atrium Village Chapel

8:30 am Mass Atrium Village Chapel

Sunday, November 24th, Bishop Dennis Walsh installed Fr David Paintsil as our cluster pastor at a beautiful Mass of Installation. Fr David's vision for our cluster parish community is **evangelization**, or a missionary character. Our mission should be: 1) bring people to Christ; 2) form disciples; and 3) send them to transform the world.

Together, we strengthen our bonds of faith, deepen our sense of community, and make our parishes a beacon of love and service to our area that makes a difference in our community and beyond.

Stay Safe While Staying Warm at Home

Heating equipment is the second leading cause of home fires and fire injuries, and the third leading cause of home fire deaths.

Nearly half (46%) of home heating fires occur in the months of December, January, and February.

Nearly half (46%) of home heating fires are caused by space heaters and heating stoves.

Space heater and heating stove fires are especially dangerous, too, accounting for nearly eight out of ten (76%) of deaths and more than seven out of ten (72%) of injuries from home heating equipment fires.

Safety Tips:

- Have a (minimum) three-foot "No Zone" around heating equipment – *No kids, No pets, No flammable materials.*
 - This also means placing portable space heaters on level, *non-flammable* surfaces.
- Heating equipment includes the furnace, fireplace, heating (wood) stove, and portable space heater. It does not include the oven. Never try to heat your home with your oven.
- Use portable space heaters that automatically shut off when tipped over.
- Turn off portable heaters when leaving the room or going to bed.
- Plug heaters directly into a wall outlet; never use extension cords.
- All fuel-burning equipment should be vented to the outside to avoid carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning.
 - Install and maintain CO alarms to avoid the risk of CO poisoning.

Source: National Fire Protection Association

Symptoms of CO Poisoning May Include:

- Dull headache · Weakness · Dizziness ·
- Nausea or Vomiting · Shortness of breath ·
- Confusion · Blurred vision · Loss of consciousness

If You Suspect CO Poisoning: Get to fresh air immediately and get emergency medical care.

Source: Mayo Clinic

Sharon Center United Methodist Church

**2804 520th St SW, Kalona
319-683-2564**

Rev Olympia Muller, Pastor
Email: olymarmuller@gmail.com
Misty Christner, Secretary
Email: sharoncenterumc@gmail.com

Website: sharoncenterumc.wordpress.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/Sharon-Center-UMC-631969050162157/

Sunday Service Schedule

First Sunday of the Month:

9:00 am Combined Service
10:00 am Adult and Youth Sunday School

All Other Sundays of the Month:

8:30 am Casual Worship Service with Praise Band
9:30 am Adult and Youth Sunday School
10:30 am Traditional Worship Service

Upcoming Events – Please Join Us!

Game Night

2nd Wednesdays (January 8th and February 12th)
6:00pm – 6:45pm Potluck
6:45pm – 8:00pm Games
Fellowship Hall

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United Women of Faith...

...is a non-denominational group of women who meet monthly, usually the third Tuesday of the month at noon. Activities vary, including potlucks, quilting, making Valentine boxes for college students, devotions, etc., depending on the interests of the group.

For more information, call the church office at 319-683-2564 and ask to be included on our monthly email invitations.

Please Note: Cancellation Policy

- Pastor will make decision when services or activities need to be cancelled.
- If Mid-Prairie School activities are cancelled, any church activity/meeting is cancelled.
- Check the KCRG website for closings:
kcrg.com/weather/closings/

Food and Utility Assistance

The winter months can be especially difficult financially. The following organizations are available to help:

CommUnity Crisis Services and Food Pantry

Crisis Text/Phone: 988 – Available 24/7/365

Food Bank

**1045 Highway 6 East Iowa City
319-351-0128**

Financial Support

**1121 S Gilbert Court Iowa City
319-569-6393**

website: builtbycommunity.org

Provides a variety of crisis assistance to Johnson County residents, including food and financial assistance for housing, utilities, prescription medications and more.

Hawkeye Area Community Action Program (HACAP)

**367 Southgate Avenue Iowa City
319-337-5765**
email: energy@hacap.org
website: hacap.org

Offers a variety of services and administers the federal Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). The LIHEAP application can be downloaded or complete online.

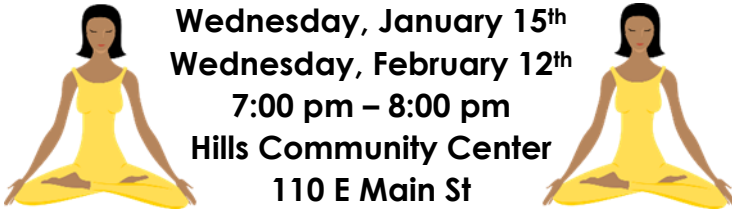
Food Pantry at St Joseph Church

Wednesdays 10:00 am – Noon
East Door, St Joseph Church, Hills
209 Brady St

The food pantry is for anyone who is food insecure. There are no forms to complete, no income requirements to meet, and no appointment is necessary.

Just pull up to the east door and tell the volunteers your household size. You will receive a week's worth of food. Pre-packed boxes containing either frozen chicken, pork, or beef, plus canned vegetables and fruits, as well as other goods, will be loaded into your car.

Yoga in the Community Center



Wednesday, January 15th
Wednesday, February 12th
7:00 pm – 8:00 pm
Hills Community Center
110 E Main St

Want to have some bendy fun? Join Megan Palmer, certified yoga instructor and former Hills resident, for a FREE monthly yoga class in the Hills Community Center on Wednesday, January 15th at 7:00 pm and again on Wednesday, February 12th at 7:00 pm.

Yoga has many physical and mental health benefits, including improved flexibility, strength, balance, and mood. Megan designs her classes to be appropriate for all levels, including those with no yoga experience at all.

Come join in the camaraderie! All are welcome and encouraged. Participants are required to sign a liability waiver and bring their own yoga mat.

Hills Elementary Demolition Update

The demolition contractor began removing salvageable equipment from Hills Elementary School the week of December 30th. The structural demolition will start on January 13th, 2025.



ATRIUM VILLAGE

NOW HIRING

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Dietary Aide: Part-time
Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA):
Part-Time
Laundry/Housekeeping: Part-Time

Please send resume to
atriumv@sharontc.net

Or call (319) 679-2224 to inquire
about current opportunities



Join us for an
an educational
program
by **Joan Morgan** on
Orphan Trains
Friday, January 24
at 10:00
Main Dining Room

Atrium Village Earns Excellent Survey Result

Atrium Village was declared Deficiency Free following its annual recertification survey in December. This is a significant achievement as the Department of Inspections, Appeals, and Licensing is meticulous in their desire for substantial regulatory compliance. Stephanie Kronlage, Admin, stated, "The Atrium Village team strives for excellence, doing the right thing, all the time. The results show we provide outstanding care."



ATRIUM VILLAGE

One Semi-Private Room (Female) in the Care Center
One Semi-Private Room (Male) in the Care Center
One Private Suite in the Care Center
Two One-Bedroom Apartments, Remodeled
Currently Available

Call or stop in to visit:
319-679-2224 | 117 S. 3rd Street Hills, Iowa
www.AtriumVillageHills.com

Johnson County Livable Community (JCLC) Survey

The Johnson County Livable Community (JCLC) Policy Board is conducting a survey of Johnson County residents about the county as a livable community and various factors that impact individuals' ability to age successfully. A livable community is one which provides safe, walkable streets; age-friendly housing and transportation options; access to needed services; and opportunities for residents of all ages to participate in community life.



The poster features the Johnson County logo in the top left. The main title is "LIVABLE COMMUNITY FOR SUCCESSFUL AGING" in bold black letters. Below this is "Community Survey" in a large, bold, black font. The central text reads: "Tell us what you think! Are you age 45+? Complete the Johnson County survey to make a livable community!". To the right is a circular diagram titled "THE 8 DOMAINS OF LIVABILITY" with eight segments: "OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS", "TRANSPORTATION", "CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT", "COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION", "RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION", "SOCIAL PARTICIPATION", "HEALTH SERVICES AND COMMUNITY SUPPORTS", and "HOUSING". The diagram is surrounded by "BUILT ENVIRONMENT" and "SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT" labels. Below the diagram is a QR code. Three bullet points are listed: "We want to hear from you to understand what YOU need to age successfully", "Your answers will help influence policy decisions at the county level", and "The survey on takes 15 minutes of your time and can have a huge impact".

The survey is designed to ask county residents, aged 45 years and older, questions related to the eight American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) Domains of Livability and important topics pertaining to disaster planning.

Your responses to the survey will provide valuable information about the AARP livability domains by exploring the experiences & perceptions of county residents. The JCLC will use the survey results to assist in its strategic planning efforts in making recommendations for an action plan on how Johnson County can improve the livability for all ages.

To participate in this survey, scan the QR code above or go to the following website to access the survey:

www.johnsoncountyiowa.gov/departments-of-livable_community

Participants that complete the survey can enter a drawing for a chance to win a \$20 gift card. The survey is available in multiple languages.

If you have question about the survey or prefer a paper copy of the survey to complete and return, please call **319-335-1664** or email: **livablecommunity@johnsoncountyiowa.gov**

COUNCIL MEMBERS

EMILY HUDACHEK
CATHY KNEBEL
MICHELLE RUMMELHART
GUY SOMMERS
TERESA VOLK

CITY OF HILLS

201 N 1ST ST / P O Box 345
HILLS, IOWA 52235-0345
PHONE 319-679-3197
WWW.HILLS-IA.ORG

MAYOR

TIM KEMP

CITY ADMINISTRATOR

ADRIANE SEDLACEK

DEPUTY CLERK

TAMARA FREMBGEN KESNER

The city office is open from 9am – 4pm, Monday through Friday, except holidays.

Senior Dining

2nd Tuesdays (January 14th and February 11th)

Noon – 2:00 pm

St Joseph Church Hall

209 Brady St

Senior Dining is a potluck, so bring a dish to share, and your own table service. Drinks are provided. The meal is followed by cards and bingo.



Bird Flu

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) believes that bird flu is widespread in migratory birds statewide. Human infections are rare but possible. Per the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there are three ways for humans to contract bird flu:

- Direct contact;
- Touching contaminated surfaces; and
- Through the air (in droplets or dust).

Direct contact (the most common method of bird-to-human transmission) and through the air infections of the virus are highly unlikely if you have backyard feeders. (They are possible if you have backyard chickens, however.)

Of the three, then, touching contaminated surfaces (and subsequently touching your eyes, nose, or mouth prior to washing your hands) is the only likely scenario for infection if you have backyard feeders. Thorough handwashing with soap and warm water can prevent transmission.

It should be stressed that most reported cases of humans infected with bird flu have been mild.

Cats can contract the virus from infected birds and then get quite sick and even die in a matter of a few days. For this (and many other reasons), it's best to keep your cat indoors. (FYI, the risk of cat-to-human transmission is very low.)

Signs of bird flu in cats include decreased energy and appetite, and neurologic signs, i.e., lack of coordination, tremors, seizures, and inability to stand.

If you would like more information on bird flu, visit:

<https://emerging-public-health-issues-johnsoncounty.hub.arcgis.com/>

City of Hills
P O Box 345
Hills, Iowa 52235-0345

*****ECRWSEDDM*****

P O Box Holder

Hills, Iowa 52235