



Hills

March / April 2025

Newsletter

Musings from the Mayor...

Well, I'm certainly not going to use any words that begin with F in this Musings. I don't want the media to get all hysterical again.

As we look to the arrival of spring, there is a lot coming up in the months ahead. While many in town will be sprucing up their yards with plantings and shrubbery, the City will be doing the same. Make sure to mark April 22, Earth Day, on your calendars as we will be holding a Dedication Ceremony for Songbird Sanctuary Park. The park was made possible by a DNR grant as well as contributions by Louie Luers of Louie Luers Trucking, who donated soil, and Dave Dickinson of Dickinson Excavating and Hauling, who graded the lot. Hopefully between spring and autumn you will be able to sit down and enjoy the park's atmosphere.

We also have our Music in the Park Concert Series returning in June. It will kick off Thursday, June 5 with the Deja Blue Band, followed by Dave Zollo and the Body Electric June 12, Royce Johns June 19, the Detour Band June 26, and The Dogfathers July 3. It should be an enjoyable summer of music with something for everyone: county, blues and rock and roll music.

The City is also in the process of looking at replacing several pieces of playground equipment in the parks this summer that are past their prime. We were approached by the ICCSD, asking if we would mow their property and insure their playground equipment. We were not interested in doing either of these. (I am pretty sure they do not ask any other municipalities to mow district property.) Since we did not want to mow their property, they said they would remove all the playground equipment. This is unfortunate since they told us last August that they would leave all

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Community Calendar

HCC: Hills Community Center – 110 E Main Street

March

- 3/9** Daylight Saving Time Begins **2:00am**
- 3/10** City Council Meeting **7:00pm** – HCC
- 3/11** Senior Dining **Noon** – St Joseph Church Hall
- 3/12** Planning & Zoning Meeting **6:00pm** – HCC
- 3/14** Hills Town & Country Meeting **5:30pm** – HCC
- 3/19** St Joseph's Day Coffee and Pastries **9:15am** – Atrium Village
- 3/19** Yoga **7:00pm** - HCC
- 3/20** Utility Bills Due
- 3/24** City Council Meeting **7:00pm** – HCC
- 3/28** March Birthdays Party **10:30am** – Atrium Village
- 3/31** Meter Read

April

- 4/1** Open Burning Begins
- 4/8** Senior Dining **Noon** – St Joseph Church Hall
- 4/9** Planning & Zoning Meeting **6:00pm** – HCC
- 4/10** Community Center Board Meeting **6:00pm** – HCC
- 4/11** Hills Town & Country Meeting **5:30pm** – HCC
- 4/12** Easter Bonnet Parade **11:00am** – Atrium Village
- 4/14** Volunteer Event **6:30pm** – Atrium Village
- 4/14** City Council Meeting **7:00pm** – HCC
- 4/15** Hills Access Reopens
- 4/15** April Birthdays Party **10:30am** – Atrium Village
- 4/16** Yoga **7:00pm** – HCC
- 4/18** Last Day to File Nomination Papers **5:00pm** – Johnson County Auditor's Office
- 4/20** Utility Bills Due
- 4/22** Park Dedication **10:00am** – Songbird Sanctuary Park
- 4/26** Bulky Waste Clean Up **7:00am** – Hills City Park
- 4/28** City Council Meeting **7:00pm** – HCC
- 4/30** Meter Read
- 4/30** Open Burning Ends

Vacancy on City Council

Council Member Guy Sommers submitted his resignation from the City Council at its February 10th meeting, with an effective date of March 31, 2025. The Council voted at its February 24th meeting to fill this seat with a special election to be held on Tuesday, May 13th. The winner of this election will begin service at the May 27, 2025, council meeting and serve until the conclusion of Mr. Sommers' term, December 31, 2027.

Interested persons must satisfy the following to file for candidacy:

- Must be an eligible elector at the time of filing nomination papers and at the time of election
 - An eligible elector meets all the requirements to register to vote, but does not have to be registered to vote and:
 - Is a citizen of the US
 - Is a resident of Iowa
 - Is at least 18 years old
 - An eligible elector may not:
 - Be a convicted felon (unless voting rights have been restored)
 - Be currently judged incompetent to vote by a court
 - Claim the right to vote in any other place

Interested candidates must file nomination papers with the Johnson County Auditor. The affidavit of candidacy and nomination petition must be filed together, or they will be rejected. Copies of nomination papers are available at the Johnson County Auditor's Office, the Secretary of State's website: sos.iowa.gov/elections/electioninfo/CityElections.html, or the City Office, 201 N 1st St. Note that City staff cannot notarize the affidavit. A minimum of 10 signatures is required on the nomination petition. The deadline for filing nomination papers is 5:00 pm on April 18, 2025.

City Council meetings are held at 7:00 pm on the second and fourth Mondays of the month. Additional planning meetings are occasionally scheduled. Councilors are paid \$40 per meeting attended.

We wish Guy the best and thank him for his service to the City of Hills.

Community-Wide Bulky Waste Clean-Up Day

Saturday, April 26, 2025

7:00 am – 10:00 am

**Hills City Park Parking Lot
201 W Main St**

N & N Sanitation will be accepting residents' bulky waste items at the spring bulky waste clean-up day April 26th. As always:

- This clean-up day is for residents only – no businesses.
- Residents will need to transport their bulky items to the parking lot and remain there until N & N accepts their items.
- Residents must provide proof of residency.
- Except for appliances, this event is free for residents. There will be a \$10 charge for each household appliance, e.g., washing machines, televisions, computer monitors, etc., which must be paid that day, directly to a City staff.
 - Please, no \$100 bills – unless you're bringing 10 appliances.

Items that will **not be accepted:**

Waste from Construction Jobs · Shingles
Paint or Toxic Waste · Commercial Appliances
Yard Waste · Household Garbage · Tires
Recyclables, e.g., Carboard

Remember: All trash and recycle customers can have their bulky items picked up on a regular Wednesday trash day. Call LRS – Iowa (formerly Johnson County Refuse) at 319.665.4498 the week before and describe your item(s); they will tell you how many garbage stickers you will need to affix to each item. Stickers are available at the City Office, 201 N 1st St, for \$3 each.

Notice

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

Trash and Recycle Service Provider to Change

At the February 10th meeting, the Hills City Council voted to pursue a 7-year contract with N&N Sanitation to provide trash and recycle services to the City's residents beginning July 1, 2025.

The current contract with LRS Iowa, formerly Johnson County Refuse, expires June 30, 2025. The City requested proposals for the service and received five bids by the January 31st deadline. City staff reviewed the bids and checked references. N&N Sanitation was the low bidder, and their references were excellent. In addition, the City has been quite satisfied with the service N&N Sanitation has provided for the past few bulky waste clean-up days.

The cost of trash removal service will increase from \$16.50 to \$17.00 per month for residents with a 35-gallon trash cart, and from \$18.50 to \$19.50 per month for residents with a 65-gallon trash cart. Recycle will remain free, and yard waste bags and garbage tags will cost \$1.75 and \$3.00 each, respectively. The costs for these services and supplies will remain the same throughout the duration of the 7-year contract.

More information will be forthcoming as the date for the changeover approaches.

Dedication Ceremony for Songbird Sanctuary Park

**Earth Day 2025
(Tuesday, April 22, 2025)**

**10:00 am
200 Main St**

The public is invited to the dedication ceremony for Songbird Sanctuary Park on April 22nd at 10:00 am. There will be brief remarks by Iowa DNR REAP (Resource Enhancement and Protection) Coordinator Michelle Wilson and City staff, and light refreshments will be served.

Musings continued...

the playground structures for the community to use.

In other news, I want to give a big SHOUT OUT to Councilman Guy Summers!! You may have heard that Guy has resigned his council seat, effective March 31, as he will be moving out of town later this spring. Guy has been an excellent council member as he has worked to help make Hills a better place to live and do business, by being involved and committed to his work. He will be missed as a dedicated council member. We will be holding a special election to replace Guy on May 13. His term runs until the end of 2027. You'll see more information about the special election elsewhere in the newsletter.

By Tim Kemp

Bookmobile Winter/Spring 2025 Schedule

Tuesdays March 4th – 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. 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**.

Fire Chief Matt Pantel and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) would like to remind you to replace your smoke alarm batteries when you change your clocks for daylight saving time (Sunday, March 9th), and to check your batteries monthly thereafter.



Open Burning

April 1st – April 30th, 2025

10:00 am – 7:00 pm

Fire Chief Pantel has set the open burning of yard waste **to begin Tuesday, April 1st and last through Wednesday, April 30th, 2025.** Per City Code Chapter 105.21, open burning of residential yard waste is permitted within the rear portion of the residential lot in accordance with the following:

- Open burning is limited to yard waste only (and possibly marshmallows) (and maybe hotdogs)
- Open burning is allowed between the hours of 10:00 AM and 7:00 PM, or the onset of darkness, whichever occurs first
- Have a water source nearby, and never leave your fire unattended
- All fires must be at least 25 feet from any buildings
- Open burning is not allowed on City streets
- Open burning is not allowed on windy days

Reminder: Burning of yard waste is allowed only during designated open burning periods, which occur for one month in the spring and the fall. Outside of these designated open burning periods, or anytime for residents that prefer not to burn their yard waste, residents may dispose of yard waste in bags that can be purchased at the City Office for \$1.65 each.

City Receives Grant for a Habitat for Pollinators

The City has received a Wildlife Diversity Program Habitat Management grant from the Iowa DNR to plant a pollinator garden in Songbird Sanctuary Park this summer.

The City will replace an approximately 14' circle of lawn with native pollinator-friendly plants and add a sunning rock and a water source to create a pocket prairie habitat for butterflies and bees. This is similar to Johnson County's Pocket Prairie Program for unincorporated areas; this pocket garden will become part of the pollinator corridor being created in Johnson County.

Host plants (a plant that caterpillars eat to grow into butterflies) for species of greatest conservation need, including the monarch, and special concern butterflies will be planted; however, several selections are also host plants for common butterflies and moths. For nectar, plants known for their broad appeal to pollinators, including the keystone (a plant that's vital to an ecosystem's health and stability) New England aster, will be planted. Overall, the plant choices will support several butterfly species throughout their life cycle; the availability of caterpillars should attract more native birds to the park.

The City has chosen to forego the use of Roundup to prep the area for planting, and instead use the smother method. The glyphosate in Roundup has a half-life in soil of 2 – 197 days; nontarget plants can absorb the glyphosate, resulting in glyphosate residues in the consumable portions of the plant. Even these sublethal doses have been shown to negatively impact pollinators; examples include impaired navigation and impaired wing morphology in butterflies.

The smother method requires the existing lawn be mowed, covered in 15–20 layers of newspaper, thoroughly wetted down, and thickly covered with organic mulch. With frequent watering, in 6–8 weeks, the area will be ready for planting. We ask that owners keep their dogs off this area as tears or displacement of the newspapers can disrupt the smothering and biodegradation process.



Become a Storm Spotter – Free Training Offered

Wednesday, March 26, 2025

6:30 pm – 8:30 pm

**The Kirkwood Regional Center at
The University of Iowa Center Coralville
2301 Oakdale Blvd**

Emergency Management of Johnson County is hosting free **Storm Spotter Training**, with instruction provided by National Weather Service instructors. Training will be held in the Main Atrium in the Kirkwood Regional Center on March 26, 2025, from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm.

Per the Joint Emergency Communications Center (JECC), real-time reports are critical in issuing warnings and saving lives. Storm spotters provide real-time ground-truth of local conditions – such as hail size, wind speed, tornado development, and local damage – to help warn the public. Even as new technology allows the National Weather Service to issue warnings with greater lead time, spotters will always serve as a critical link between radar indications of severe weather and what's happening on the ground.

Seating is limited to 125 participants and is available on a first-come, first-serve basis. To reserve your seat, email your name to:

RSVP@jecc-ema.org

By Golly, It's True – Lottie's Turning 102!

Lottie Yeries is turning 102 this March 12th, and friends are planning a card shower to mark this occasion. If you would like to send a card to Lottie, her address is:



Alexander Elementary

Infinite Campus Parent Portal

Dear Falcon Families,

It's hard to believe we are halfway through February already! Our round of Winter testing is complete, instructional shifts have been made, and your students continue to learn each and every day! Thank you for your continued flexibility with the somewhat unpredictable Iowa winter weather! I appreciate everyone's patience during arrival and dismissal, especially on days where it is an early release or late start.

At this time of the year, we make a point to double-check the contact information for each family in Infinite Campus. Ensuring your details are correct is a vital part of our comprehensive school safety plans.

Please take a moment to verify (by accessing Infinite Campus Parent Portal at **<https://iowacityia.infinitecampus.org/campus/portal/parents/iowacity.jsp>**):

- Your personal contact information, including phone numbers and email addresses.
- Emergency contact details, ensuring they are accurate and up to date.
- Approved individuals who can pick up your child from school.

Communicate any necessary changes or additions to your Infinite Campus information to our Front Office Team (Oscar and Melissa) at **319.688.1095**.

As always, thank you for taking the time to read through this letter, and thank you for trusting us with your child(ren) each day!

Katie Thompson
Alexander Principal



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

Website: stsmarijoseph.com

Facebook: [Facebook.com/stsmariandjoseph](https://www.facebook.com/stsmariandjoseph)

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

Wednesday Holy Hour Eucharist Adoration

5:00 pm St Joseph Church (Hills)

First Saturday of the Month Healing (Spiritual, Physical, and Emotional) Mass – Beginning March 1st

9:30 am Confessions/Rosary St Joseph Church (Hills)

10:00 am Healing Mass St Joseph Church

Followed by hospitality

Season of Lent and Easter

“Lent is a time of truth. Christians, called by the church to prayer, penance, fasting, and self-sacrifice, place themselves before God and recognize themselves; they rediscover themselves.”

– Pope St. John Paul II

Our Three Parish Cluster

continued...

Ash Wednesday Mass, March 5th

~ with distribution of ashes ~

8:30 am Atrium Village Chapel

6:30 pm St Joseph Church (Hills)

Thursdays during Lent – Beginning March 13th

6:00 pm Stations of the Cross with Mass

St Joseph Church (Hills)

Followed by soup supper

Holy Week Triduum Schedule:

Holy Thursday, April 17th

6:30 pm Mass with Adoration Church of St Mary (Nichols)

Good Friday, April 18th

3:00 pm Stations of the Cross St Joseph Church (Hills)

6:30 pm Service of Christ's Passion and Death St Mary Church (Lone Tree)

Holy Saturday Vigil Mass, April 19th

8:30 pm St Mary Church (Lone Tree) and St Joseph Church (Hills)

Easter Sunday Mass of Resurrection, April 20th

8:00 am Church of St Mary (Nichols)

9:00 am St Mary Church (Lone Tree)

10:00 am St Joseph Church (Hills)

We invite and welcome individuals and families from all faiths to worship with us at any of our services!



ATRIUM VILLAGE

One Semi-Private Room (Female) in the Care Center

One Semi-Private Room (Male) in the Care Center

Hospice/Respite Suite

One-Bedroom Apartment, Remodeled

Currently Available

Call or stop in to visit:

319-679-2224 | 117 S. 3rd Street Hills, Iowa

www.AtriumVillageHills.com

Community News

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!

Ash Wednesday Service
Wednesday, March 5, 2025
7:00pm

There will be imposition of ashes.

Crafting Weekend
Thursday, March 6, 2025, at 9:00am until
Saturday, March 8, 2025, at 9:00 pm
Please bring food to share.

Appalachian Service Project Fundraiser
Smorgasbord Brunch
Sunday, March 9, 2025
9:00am – 11:00am

Interested in volunteering? See contact information above.

Lenten Study
Mondays of Lent, March 10th – April 14th, 2025
7:00pm – 8:00pm

Everyone is welcome to attend.

Blood Drive
Wednesday, March 12, 2025
2:30pm – 6:30pm
Fellowship Hall

To book an appointment, you can contact Jackie Gibbs at 319.330.4467 or Dawn Allen at 319.594.9018.

Sharon Center UMC continued...

Game Night

2nd Wednesdays (March 12th and April 9th)

6:00pm – 6:45pm Potluck

6:45pm – 8:00pm Games

Fellowship Hall

Bring a dish to share, dinnerware, and a game, deck of cards, or a puzzle.

Holy Week and Easter Services

Thursday, April 17th – Sunday, April 20th

7:00 pm Holy Thursday Service, April 17th

~with communion~

7:00 pm Good Friday Service, April 18th

6:30 am Easter Sunday Sunrise Service, April 20th

7:00 am Easter Breakfast, April 20th

9:00 am Easter Sunday Regular Service, April 20th

Yoga in the Community Center

Wednesday, March 19th

Wednesday, April 16th

7:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Hills Community Center

110 E Main St



Do you 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, March 19th at 7:00 pm and again on Wednesday, April 16th 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.

Did you know? Mobile homes, vehicles, and underneath a highway overpass* are the worst options for shelter during a tornado.

*Wind speeds can increase dramatically due to a tunneling effect.

Community News

Food Pantry at St Joseph Church

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

The food pantry is for anyone who is food insecure.

- There are no forms to complete.
- No income requirements to meet.
- 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.

Senior Dining

**2nd Tuesdays (March 11th and April 8th)
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. It is open to the entire community and is held at St Joseph because they have plenty of parking in their adjacent parking lot, and an elevator to take you to the hall downstairs. The meal is followed by cards and bingo.

Hills Access to Reopen

Per the Johnson County Conservation Department, Hills Access will be open for camping no later than April 15th.

Scenes from Atrium Village's Valentine's Day Party

Atrium Village hosted a Valentine's Day party for residents and members of the public with music, fellowship, and snacks. Sharon Telephone Co provided goodie bags to all the residents.



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.

Community News

Sharon Telephone Assists Atrium Village in Securing Funding

Atrium Village received funding support for a critical boiler replacement project, made possible by Sharon Telephone Co (STC) and the USDA.

Due to its rural and non-profit status, Atrium Village qualified for a 0% interest USDA Rural Economic Development Grant (REDG) Program loan to finance the boiler replacement project. However, the program requires a 20% funding match and a rural utility provider to sponsor the application. Through grant and sponsorship support from STC and their technology partner Aureon, who provided \$11,667 each in match funding, Atrium Village was able to successfully apply for a \$140,000 loan.

Once the loan proceeds are repaid in full, funding will remain in the community in what is called a Revolving Loan Fund (RLF). The RLF will be administered by STC and will soon be available for other business and community projects seeking gap-funding assistance.



*****ECRWSEDDM*****

P O Box Holder

Hills, Iowa 52235

ATRIUM VILLAGE
NOW HIRING

Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA):
Part-Time
RN/LPN: Part-Time

Please send resume to
atriumv@sharontc.net

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

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