City Office Hours & Updates

The Hills City Office is open, however; due to the Covid-19 outbreak, we are asking visitors to stay behind the plexiglass divider and to not visit the office if you are feeling ill or if you have been around someone who is ill. We are doing our best to keep our employees and our community members safe.

If you need assistance please call our office at 319-679-3197 or email us at cityhills@sharontc.net.

If you need to make a payment on your utility bill, please continue to do so by leaving it in an envelope in the secure drop box outside of the office door.

We encourage everyone to continue to follow the advice of the Johnson County Public Health Department. Frequently wash your hands, social distance when possible and stay home if you are feeling ill.

If you need assistance with transportation, food assistance, in-home services, or other needs, please contact Johnson County Social Services at 319-356-6090. Additional program information is available at www.johnson-county.com/ss.

Musings from the Mayor

By Tim Kemp

Well here we are half way through 2020. It has been an interesting year so far to say the least. At this point, nothing going forward will be too strange, though we do have a Presidential election in November. Don’t the caucuses seem so long ago and the fact they didn’t have an exact count of delegates that night seems such a non-issue now.

We are getting ready to celebrate my favorite holiday... The Fourth of July! I love what it stands for and I love the history of it all. I am currently reading “The Life and Selected Writing of Thomas Jefferson.” It is interesting reading his thoughts about the events that led to writing of the Declaration of Independence and the things taking place in Congress at that time.

The actual vote for Independence was taken on July 2, 1776. Only nine colonies voted in favor of adopting the Declaration. Pennsylvania and South Carolina voted no, Delaware was undecided and New York abstained. It took Congress two more days and over 80 edits to the Declaration before it was finally approved. It took Jefferson about seventeen days to write it.

After the resolution on Independence was passed on July 2, Adams wrote to his wife, “It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shews, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires and illuminations from one end of this continent to the other from this time forward forever more.” He was pretty spot on, so on July 4th we will celebrate in Hills with illuminations (fireworks).

John Adams refused to celebrate Independence Day on July 4th, believing July 2nd was the actual date. He refused all future invitations to celebrate on the 4th. Despite Adams and Jefferson being so closely tied to the cause of American Independence and a friendship that started when they both showed up at the Continental Congress, a feud started between the two when they ran against each other for President. Incumbent Adams was defeated by his Vice President Thomas Jefferson.

They later renewed their friendship after they were both long out of the office. They wrote hundreds of letters to one another as they discussed current affairs of the country. Perhaps the most interesting thing about these two founding fathers and two of the most noted advocates of independence is that they both died on July 4, 1826, which is exactly 50 years after the final approval of the Declaration of Independence. Adams last words were, “Thomas Jefferson still survives.” Unfortunately, it was pre-cell phone and twitter and he was unaware Jefferson has passed away a few hours earlier. If you were writing a script and wrote that, people wouldn’t believe it.

There are so many great stories in history that get hidden or ignored as people focus on the “Big Idea”. The Declaration of Independence, 4th of July Celebrations, fireworks, food, family and friends are all a part of it. To me though just as important is the reason behind the celebration. Despite the issues we have in this country, not only now, but since 1776, I would still rather live here than any other place in the world.

So, enjoy the 4th of July. Enjoy the summer. Enjoy getting together with family and friends. Don’t forget we are all Americans. Let’s find and celebrate the good things we have. Be safe, sane and enjoy life!
**Community Calendar**

**July**
- 7/3 Music in the Park- Dog on Skis - 7pm-10pm
- 7/3 Independence Day Holiday – City Office Closed
- 7/4 Independence Day
- 7/6 First Monday Pick up
- 7/8 Planning & Zoning Meeting 6pm - Hills City Office
- 7/9 Community Center Board Meeting 6pm - Hills Comm. Center
- 7/13 City Council Meeting 7pm – Hills Fire Station
- 7/20 Utility Bills Due
- 7/27 City Council Meeting 7pm – Hills Fire Station
- 7/31 Meter Read

**August**
- 8/3 First Monday Pick Up
- 8/10 City Council Meeting 7pm – Hills Fire Station
- 8/12 Planning & Zoning Meeting 6pm - Hills City Office
- 8/20 Utility Bills Due
- 8/24 City Council Meeting 7pm – Hills Fire Station
- 8/31 Meter Read

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**Music in the Park**

We have two more shows for you to enjoy this summer: **Royce Johns** on 6/25 & **Dogs on Skis** on 7/3. (Shows begin at 7pm)

**Hills City Parks**

Governor Reynolds has allowed public parks to reopen but has asked that visitors practice social distancing whenever possible and be respectful of other people’s space. It is a great time of year to enjoy the outdoors and the City encourages residents to take advantage of our great parks this summer!

**The Splash Pad is OPEN!**

Cool off this summer at the Splash Pad! It is located at the corner of Aspen Lane and Knoll Ridge Drive. Please remember that pets are not allowed on the splash pad.

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**July 4, 2020 Fireworks / No Parade**

Due to the Covid-19 outbreak, Hills Town and Country decided to cancel this year’s 4th of July parade and Kiddie Tractor Pull. These events have been a long tradition in Hills, and this was a difficult decision to make. The City will be hosting FIREWORKS on the 4th at the Hills Ball Park at dusk. People are asked to remain in their vehicles or beside them. Social distance rules apply. Please be respectful of others. Bathrooms and concession stand will be closed.

Tune in to 1630 AM (KCJJ) to listen to music while watching the fireworks.

*The City of Hills does not allow the use of fireworks unless granted by City Council.*
Johnson County Refuse will begin picking up the new trash and recycle carts on **Tuesday, July 7th**. All carts need to be placed at the curb by **7:00 am** on the morning of pick up. Carts need to be placed at the curb with the arrows on the lid pointing toward the street. The lid must be closed and have 4 feet of clearance around the cart so that the truck will be able to pick up the cart.

If you are interested in getting rid of your old recycle bins and/or garbage cans, they will be picked up on **Tuesday, July 7th** with the rest of your trash and recycle. Simply set the containers at the curb for free pick up. All bins and cans must be **EMPTY**. This will be the only time that unwanted bins will be picked up for free by Johnson County Refuse. If they are set out at a later date, they will require a new $3.00 pink trash sticker. If you have a metal cart previously used to divide and sort recycling and wish to discard it, please drop it off outside of the City Garage and it will be disposed of for free.

The new garbage rates will appear on your **August 1st utility bill**. Under the GB line item, it will display a $16.50 fee (35-gallon trash cart) or $18.50 fee (65-gallon trash cart) depending on which size of cart you chose. If at any time you need to change the size of your cart, please contact the City of Hills at (319) 679-3197 and Johnson County Refuse at (319) 665-2298

32-gallon paper yard waste bags can be purchased at the City Office for $1.65 per bag and will be picked up with your trash and recycle.

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**Residential Sewer Rate Reduction**

The City is pleased to announce that sewer rates are being reduced from $45.00 per month to **$40.00** per month. You will notice this reduction on your August 1, 2020 utility bill. This was made possible due to a large sewer loan principle payment that was approved by Hills City Council in December 2019.

**Residential Butterfly Gardens**

Thanks to those of you who participated in the Residential Butterfly Garden Program. We hope to offer this program again next spring and encourage more residents to install pollinator gardens on their properties.

**Grass Mowing**

City Code requires grass and weeds growing on property not exceed a height of **(8) inches**. All clippings and refuse shall remain on the property and not on City streets. Grass clippings in the street can impact our storm drains so please make sure you mow towards your property and away from the street. Please keep our town looking great!

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**Consumer Confidence Report**

The City of Hills recently completed its Consumer Confidence Report which provides water quality information for 2019. This report is available upon request at the Hills City Office and will not be mailed to residents. The report may also be found in the government section of the Hills website: www.hills-ia.org. If you have any questions, please contact the City Office at 319-679-3197.
THANK YOU!

Hills Fire Department
Special Thanks to the members of the Hills Fire Department:

Matt Pantel – Fire Chief
Ken Becker
Brenda Bushell
Jared Bushell
Mark Dull
Steve Harris
Anthony Jones
Lindsey Jones
Bill Knebel
James Malmberg
Michael Malmberg
Mike Monroe

Andy Neuzil
Joe O’Brien
Drew Peebles
Tommy Riley
Dave Septer
Kathy Septer
Libby Small
Nick Smith
Ben Sommers
Travis Treiber
Paul Willson

As first responders, you are on the forefront of protecting and serving our community and surrounding rural areas. We thank you for commitment and dedication especially during this challenging time facing our community!

Hills Elementary School
This has been a difficult time for our children and families! We want to thank the staff at Hills Elementary School for keeping in touch with area families and for providing daily breakfast and lunch to all those in need.

Health Care Workers
We want to thank our sponsors for supporting this wonderful event!

Hills Bank & Trust
ITC
McCreedy-Ruth Construction
Old 218 Tap
Sharon Telephone
Stevens Erosion Control
Stutsman Inc.

We also want to thank the performers for their willingness to visit our community and provide us with some much-needed entertainment!

Music in the Park

Residents of Hills
Thanks to all of you! We appreciate your patience while the Clerk’s Office was closed to the public. We realize that times are tough and we greatly appreciate you staying up to date on your utility bills. We also thank you for watching out for your neighbors and making Hills a great community to call home!
Hills Elementary News

by Lisa TeBockhorst, Principal

ICCSD will start school on August 24th.

School might be in the form of any of the following: remote/continuous learning, on-site and in the school building, or the hybrid approach (a mixture of the two). We will know more about what returning to school on August 24th looks like per the governor's guidance.

Calling all Hills Elementary preschool parents! Hills Elementary still has free full-day preschool openings for students who will be 3 or 4 years old by September 15th, 2020. Families of eligible students must meet the Shared Visions Preschool Income Eligibility Guidelines 2020. Call Hills Elementary School to learn how to apply (319) 688-1105.

And, calling all kindergarten students.... please call the school and leave a message about registration!

Be Safe, practice social distancing, and take care of yourself. Have a great summer!
Solarize
Johnson County

WANT SOLAR FOR YOUR HOME, BUSINESS, OR FARM?

Property owners throughout Johnson County and West Branch, Iowa, may participate in Solarize Johnson County, a group purchasing program to pool their buying power and secure discounts for residential solar.

Regardless of where you live in Johnson County or West Branch, you can participate in any of the free informational Solar Power Hours throughout Johnson County. You’ll learn about the basics of solar, its financial implications for a household, and how the Solarize program works. After the session, get a free, no-obligation site assessment from the Solarize installer. You have until September 30, 2020, to decide whether to get solar through the program.

FREE EDUCATIONAL SOLAR POWER HOURS

Sign up and learn more at SolarizeJohnsonCounty.org

Brought to you by: