

Pleasantville Community News

Over 200 registered for Little League

There are 207 children registered for Pleasantville's Little League this year. Practice for the season starts on April 1. Before that, on March 29 at 10 a.m., Rec Director Jordan Flaws will host a field cleaning event. All are invited to assist.

City of Pleasantville notes

The following actions were taken at the most recent Pleasantville City Council meeting.

- Approved a street closure of Monroe Street from Washington, east to the alley, on July 19 from 4-10 p.m. This is to accommodate a celebration of Checkerboard Restaurant's 50th anniversary celebration.
- Council is seeking an appraisal of a piece of land the City owns across from the Adkins Development. City Manager Rachel Reed plans to work with local Realtor Michelle Greene to help determine a fair market value.
- Approved a sewer adjustment for 702 S. Columbia. The homeowner's outdoor spigot reportedly froze and broke off.
- Hired part-time police officer William Daggett.

Daggett also serves as the Chief of Police for the City of Mitchellville.

- Accepted work on the West Pleasant and Highway 5 improvement project.
- Tabled bids for city trash services. Council members wanted more information.
- The council is seeking input from the community to name roads to be built in the Adkins Development.

Possible new developer for Pleasantville project

The Pleasantville City Council is expecting developer Jamie Adkins and his representation at the April 15 council meeting in an update to a commercial/residential project west of Highway 5.

The City invested in infrastructure for the development and were owned \$600,000 by the developer by a specific deadline. When the deadline was missed, the City filed a lawsuit. The trial is tentatively scheduled for Oct. 7 at 9 a.m.

City Manager Rachel Reed reports that the council will welcome a potential new partner in the development at the next meeting.

Signs must be placed in specific zones

As previously reported, Pleasantville High student Sophia Rollins has spearheaded a project to improve signs around her hometown. Because the signs will have sponsorship advertising, the Iowa Department of Transportation has reportedly restricted where they may be placed.

"If we're going to advertise with commercial businesses on the sign, it has to be the signs have to be located in a commercial or industrial zoned area, even though it'll be on private property," City Manager Rachel Reed explained. "We've got a couple options we've been looking at, so we're

working with her on trying to figure out what the best options are for placement of those signs."

The City will also have to complete a permit application and pay an annual fee to the DOT because the signs will have advertising.

Knoxville Middle School students improving

According to a presentation by Knoxville Middle School staff members at Monday's school board meeting, the students are reducing the amount of time they spend on "inappropriate talking".

The school tried new ways to keep students on task. Between November and February, the amount of such behavior decreased from 42 percent to 8 percent. "Inappropriate talking" includes outbursts, side conversations, etc. Visitors to classrooms made the observations and reported their findings.

The district's new language arts curriculum is also working. Student writing and reading level proficiency has increased from 53-83 percent between fall and winter assessments. Superintendent Cassi Pearson said there is also higher percentage of students who have exceeded the standards for proficiency.

"We are very excited about the growth that our students are showing between fall and winter with this new curriculum. And we're very proud of our students and our teachers, because it's a lot of work to do something new, and it's definitely providing some great, great achievement growth," Pearson said.

Other school board notes:

- No comments were received regarding the proposed maximum tax levy during a special hearing prior to the regular meeting.
- Approved early graduates.
- Certified special election results. Jyl DeJong was sworn in for the remainder of the term she was elected to complete.
- Approved the purchase of new track equipment from Dannco in the amount of \$21,545. Dannco was not the low bidder, but the company pledged to deliver the equipment, including hurdles and starting blocks, would arrive fully assembled. Activities Director Ryan Paulsen said the vendor has stated the equipment should arrive in "a couple weeks" and should be here before the Panther Relays.
- Appointed board members to various subcommittees.
- Selected 21 community members, including those who do not currently have students in school and a male/female balance, to invite to join a committee to help determine the future of Northstar Elementary. Invitations were going out Tuesday, confirmation of those who will be part of the committee was unavailable.

And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. Romans 5:5

As a hospital chaplain, I find that the subject of hope surfaces in every conversation. People express hope about test results, about going back home, about their family, and about recovery. Hope sits at the bedside of Hospice patients, both those with faith, and those without. Hope colors the imagination, and it makes painful journeys bearable. Everyone places their hope in someone, or in something. The attitude of hope is consistent across all types and classes of people regardless of faith backgrounds or depths of suffering. We all hope. We all look forward to something good.

The motivation of hope is our current condition. If we were perfect, living in paradise with no pain, worry, or separation from those we love, we wouldn't feel the need to look forward to something better because we already have it. Why hope for a good outcome when our situation is already the best it can possibly be?

How many of us can say our lives are perfect, and all of our problems are resolved? Probably none of us. How many of us are living in hope today? How many of us live with pain or loneliness or an unknown future?

Hope implies that how things are right now aren't what they should be. There's a gap between our current experience of reality and what God has designed. We

Foundations of Hope

are made aware of this gap all the time. Scripture says we are made to live forever, and yet we deal with aging, weakening bodies that seem to drag us down instead of lift us up.

We see extreme weather conditions, the destruction of tornadoes, floods, and fires. And yet we know that creation is God's. He made it and designed it to work in a balanced order. We see the gap in relationships too. We know we are all made in God's image, loved and valued by him. And yet we see conflict, envy, strife, and violence.

We could blame this gap between reality and wholeness on sin, and that is partially true. But none of us are doing anything on purpose to make our lives harder. In those moments when we are facing crisis and uncertainty, our minds are more focused on disruption than they are on sin. We can be going along just fine enjoying reasonable health, doing what we like with a measure of independence. And then, for whatever reason, something happens to interrupt our lives and introduce all sorts of mayhem into it. This is disruption, when things no longer go smoothly. At these times, we find ourselves in a place where we need something or someone to pull us through.

By default, hope kicks in. If we've done the work of building a relationship with God, then our hope is in him. He is the one who pulls us through disruption. This new chaos and pain in our lives might be temporary, so that after it's over we can return to our regular state.

Or, it might not. The disruption may launch a person on a whole new journey, and it might be one filled with real struggles and suffering. What motivates us to have patience, or to see the good, or to expect God's care and his love? Romans 5 shows us that hope does. Hope in God pulls us through disruption.

When talking of foundations to our hope, Paul mentions four of them in this passage. The first one is our suffering. We wouldn't expect that necessarily, but suffering has a direct contribution to hope. The second one is God's magnanimous love. I use that long word to help us imagine how big, kind, and generous God's love is. The third foundation is Christ's sacrifice. Jesus' death is expression of God's big love, and it accomplishes something very important and permanent for us. The last one is the glory we will share with God someday.

At that time, the gap between reality as we experience it, and God's intended design will no longer exist. God will close it at the end of time when all is made right and his glory is fully revealed. Suffering is temporary but valuable. It works for us so much strength of character and it grows our hope. Hope does not disappoint. We can live each day in full confidence that we are justified, we are at peace with God, and we have gained access to God's grace by our faith in him.

Michelle De Bruin is the chaplain at Pella Regional Health Center and an author of inspirational historical fiction.

Council comfortable with facility projects included in budget

The Pella City Council appeared to be comfortable with including long-term facilities projects, including the rec center and community center, in the proposed budget for the year beginning July 1, 2025. Council also seemed comfortable with leaving the tax levy at the same rate.

The council held budget sessions Monday and Tuesday nights that included presentations from every City department. Presentations included anticipated expenses and revenues, as well as a look at the five-year capital improvements project plan for each department.

Prior to Tuesday night's budget presentations, the council held a special meeting to establish its maximum tax levy. Required by State Code, the council established its maximum levy at \$10.75,

though when the budget is adopted, the levy rate per \$1,000 of taxable valuation will likely be less. It cannot be over \$10.75 when the budget is formally adopted.

The amount of information presented at the meetings could not be encapsulated into a news article before our print deadline. Look for it next week and at www.marioncountyexpress.net.

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