

The Paper

Our Town, Our Paper!



Laurens, Iowa



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February 26,
2025

Local News

A Presentation on the History of Valentines Day to Laurens Women's Club

On February 14, 2025, Evelyn Hakes presented to the Laurens Women's Club at West Iowa Bank a history of Valentines Day. In overview, the origin of Valentines Day was a pagan Roman festival of fertility celebration. In the 3rd century, a priest named Valentine performed secret marriages for young soldiers who were not allowed to marry. This was against the wishes of the pagan emperor. In the 5th century, Pope Gelasius declared February 14 as the Feast of St. Valentine, making it a Christian holiday. In the Middle Ages, Valentines Day was also associated with the bird mating season. By the 18th century, people in America were commonly exchanging Valentine cards to celebrate Valentines Day. In 1913, Hallmark began mass producing Valentines Day cards. Today, about one billion Valentine Day cards are sent world wide.



At the Library
with Glenda Mulder
February 26, 2025

Next Tuesday is our crafty day. The after school kids will be making Leprechaun Lookers. The adults will be making cute Leprechaun decorations. Let us know if you'd like to join the fun so we can be sure to have plenty supplies.

We recently received a few nonfiction selections in memory of Don Beneke by Grace & Don Hertz. *Compassion in the Court: Life-Changing Stories from America's Nicest Judge* by Judge Frank Caprio, *The Let Them Theory: A Life-Changing Tool That Millions of People Can't Stop Talking About* by Mel Robbins, *Memorial Days: a Memoir* by Geraldine Brooks (Large print) and *Source Code; My Beginnings* by Bill Gates (Large Print).

The book *The Sioux Rapids Flood June 22, 2024* was recently donated to our Library. It includes so many pictures and stories of the devastation that occurred so close to our home last summer.

New novels recently include: *Battle Mountain* by C.J. Box, *Back after This* by Linda Holmes, *Famous Last Words* by Gillian Mcallister, *Paranoia* by James Patterson, *To Save the Man* by John Sayles, *Close Your Eyes and Count to Ten* by Lisa Unger, *Deep End* by Ali Hazelwood, *This is a Live Story* (a Read with Jenna pick) by Jessica Soffer and *Far From Home* by Danielle Steel.

This month's Book Club choice is one I've seen on lots of "best of lists, so I've been curious. Deb found us multiple copies, so we will be reading *The Extraordinary Life of Sam Hell* by Robert Dugoni. Here's a synopsis: As he looks back on his life, Sam embarks on a journey that will take him halfway around the world. This time, his eyes are wide open--bringing into clear view what changed him, defined him, and made him so afraid, until he can finally see what truly matters. Sam, a small-town eye doctor, is no longer certain anything was by design-- especially not the tragedy that caused him to turn his back on his friends, his hometown, and the life he'd always known. Running from the pain, eyes closed, served little purpose.

Mark Your Calendar

- March 4 @ 3:45-5:00 p.m. - Kids Make & Take Leprechaun Lookers
March 4 @ 6:30 p.m. - Take it Tuesday Leprechaun Decoration
March 5 & 17 Evening Tot Time @ 5:30 p.m.
March 24 @ 7 p.m. - Book Club *The Extraordinary Life of Sam Hell* by Robert Dugoni
April 8 @ 1:30 p.m. - *Better Not Bitter* by Author Michelle Cowan

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Certified Handlers Course Set for March 12

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Pocahontas County will host a Certified Handlers Continuing Instruction Course (CIC) for Wednesday, March 12, 2025. Preregistration may be required. Walk-ins on the day of the program are not guaranteed admission. The course runs from 9-11:30 a.m. The registration fee is \$45 on or before March 5 and \$60 after March 5. To register or to obtain additional information about the CIC, contact the ISU Extension and Outreach Pocahontas County office at 712-335-3103.

The course will provide continuing instruction credit for certified handlers. Topics covered will include pesticide use and the environment; pesticide labels and comprehension; and pesticide container handling and disposal.

Additional information and registration forms for this and other courses offered by the PSEP program can be accessed at <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/PSEP>.

*This Week at
Bethany Lutheran*

Pastor David E. Klappenbach

Wednesday: February 26, 2025

7:00 PM ~ Confirmation Class

Saturday: March 1, 2025

8:00 AM ~ Men's Group

Sunday: March 2, 2025

Transfiguration of Our Lord

9:15 AM ~ Adult SS

9:15 AM ~ Youth SS

9:30 AM ~ Coffee Fellowship

10:30 AM ~ Worship w/Communion

4:00 PM ~ LCC Service

6:00 PM ~ Bethany Prayer Group

Monday: March 3, 2025

4:00 PM ~ W/M Mtg.

Tuesday: March 4, 2025

8:30 AM ~ Prayer Group

9:30 AM ~ Tuesday coffee at Bethany

Wednesday: March 5, 2025

7:00 PM ~ Ash Wednesday

Communion Service

Worship,

*Love, Accept- Together in
Christ's Name*



Bethany
LUTHERAN CHURCH
North American Lutheran Church

*This Week at
Laurens United
Methodist Church*

Pastor Deb Parkison

Wednesday, February 19:

Confirmation @ 6:30 PM in the
Wesley Room

Saturday, March 1

**NO Laurens United Methodist Men
Meeting today**

Sunday, March 2

Sunday School from 9:15-10:05 AM

Fellowship Coffee @ 9:30 AM

Worship Service 10:30 AM

Holy Communion Sunday

Potluck Dinner Following Worship

Service in Fellowship Hall

Monday, March 3

Town & Country Quilters Club

meeting at UMC @ 2:00 PM in

Fellowship Hall

Wednesday, March 5

UMM "Soup and Dessert" Fundraiser

in Fellowship Hall from 5-7:00 PM.



The
United
Methodist
Church

*This Week at
First Christian*

Pastor Rev. Rita Cordell

Thursday, February 27

2- 5 p.m. - Clothes Closet Open

Sunday, March 2

9:30 a.m. - Sunday School

10:30 a.m. - Worship



*Resurrection
of Our Lord
Catholic Church*

Pocahontas, IA -- Priest:

Father Paul Nguyen

MASS TIMES:

Daily Mass as scheduled in the
weekly bulletin

Saturday at 5:00 PM and Sunday at
10:30 AM

Confessions: Saturday 4:15 pm at
Resurrection

Planning and Zoning Workshops for Local Officials Now Open for Registration

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach is offering Intro to Planning and Zoning for Local Officials workshops this spring to help local leaders navigate zoning laws, understand their roles and make informed land-use decisions.

Three-hour workshops will be held across Iowa to focus on real-world applications of planning and zoning principles. Luke Seaberg, an ISU Extension and Outreach community development specialist, said the sessions are designed to be interactive and practical.

“Planning and zoning decisions affect everything from housing and business development to farmland and public spaces,” said Seaberg. “These workshops provide local officials with useful tools to guide thoughtful, well-informed decisions that serve their communities.”

Workshop dates and locations. Each session includes

a light dinner and networking time, giving local officials an opportunity to connect with others facing similar challenges.

- April 2 – ISU Extension and Outreach Dickinson County Office, Spirit Lake
- April 8 – ISU Extension and Outreach Johnson County Office, Iowa City
- April 16 – ISU Extension and Outreach Webster County Office, Fort Dodge
- April 22 – ISU Extension and Outreach Woodbury County Office, Sioux City
- April 29 – ISU Extension and Outreach Dubuque County Office, Dubuque
- May 6 – Hilton Garden Inn Des Moines/Urbandale, Johnston

Who should attend? This workshop is designed for local decision-makers, including city council members, county supervisors, planning and zoning commissioners, zoning board of adjustment members, municipal staff and regional planners.

“For many attendees, this is their first formal introduction to planning and zoning,” Seaberg explained. “For others, it’s a chance to get a refresher and discuss new trends and legal updates. Either way, participants

leave with practical knowledge they can use in their roles.”

What will you learn? The curriculum covers comprehensive planning, variances, special uses, nonconforming uses, spot zoning, hearing procedures and ethical considerations. Using real-world case studies, participants will see how these principles are applied in local zoning decisions.

“We don’t just talk about zoning rules. We provide local decision makers with the tools and knowledge they need to make well-informed decisions about land use in their communities,” Seaberg said.

How to register. The registration fee is \$65 per participant, with a discounted rate of \$55 per person for groups of three or more from the same city, county or nonprofit organization.

In addition to these scheduled workshops, ISU Extension and Outreach’s Community and Economic Development unit offers customized, place-based planning and zoning training for cities, counties and townships across Iowa as needed.

For more information, contact Luke Seaberg at seaberg@iastate.edu or Esther Crompton, ISU Extension and Outreach communication specialist, at ecrompt@iastate.edu.

Pocahontas County 4-H Workshop Offered

Pocahontas County 4-H members gathered at the ISU Extension and Outreach Pocahontas County Office for an educational and fun "No Bake Charcuterie Board Workshop." This valuable hands-on workshop provided youth with essential skills in preparing healthy meals and snacks without using typical kitchen appliances. As they created their own Valentine's-themed charcuterie boards, participants had the opportunity to explore various ingredients and flavors, fostering teamwork, creativity and an appreciation for nutritious eating.



City Council Minutes

February 3rd, 2025

The Laurens City Council met in regular session at the Municipal Building at 5:00 p.m. on Monday, February 3rd, 2025. Mayor Pro Tem John Jamison called the meeting to order. Present were Council members Hannah Zylstra, Loren Booth, Aaron Christenson, Jean Swanson by phone, Deputy Clerk Joan Hoben, and Public Works Director Julian Johnson.

Booth moved to approve the consent agenda consisting of the amended minutes from the January 20th, 2025, meeting, and the list of claims. Zylstra seconded. All ayes: motion carried.

CLAIMS 02-03-25

A&M SERVICES, INC.	RUGS, RAGS, MOPS	89.36
ALLIANT ENERGY	MONTHLY GAS FEE	943.31
FIDELTY SECURITY LIFE	FEB EYE CARE INSURANCE	190.28
BOLTON & MENK	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	27,364.50
BOMGAARS	SHOP SUPPLIES	227.90
COMMUNITY FIRST AUTO PARTS	PARTS FOR GARBAGE TRUCK	89.24
GORDON FLESCH COMPANY	COPIER MAINT.	200.81
HILARY REED	W2 FORMS & ENVELOPES	321.77
IACMA	RETIREMENT 457	700.00
IRS	FED/FICA TAX	4,260.40
IOWA PRISON INDUSTRIES	GOLF CART/ATV PERMITS	68.00
IPERS	IPERS	6,704.37
IPERS/PD	PROTECTED IPERS	14.90
JULIAN JOHNSEN	CLOTHING ALLOWANCE	223.63
KLATT REPAIR	TREE REMOVAL	1,400.00
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	ANNUAL DUES	67.00
LMPC	MONTHLY PHONE BILL	397.00
LMU	MONTHLY UTILITIES	5,590.73
MICHAEL HAYEK	STATE FIRE SCHOOL	1,146.57
POC CO ECONOMIC DEV	ANNUAL PAYMENT	7,000.00
RSM US, LLP	TECH SUPPORT	505.25
SANTANDER LEASING, LLC	PUMPER PAYMENT	2,922.68
SECURE SHRED SOLUTIONS	PAPER SHREDDING	49.00
TREASURER STATE OF IOWA	STATE TAX	1,042.28
US BANK	OFFICE SUPPLIES	1,292.55
VERIZON WIRELESS	MONTHLY CELL PHONES	124.11
WELLMARK	MONTHLY HEALTH INSURANCE	10,175.92
	TOTAL	<u>73,111.56</u>

PAYROLL		1/20/2025	
001	GENERAL		1,561.26
210	ROAD USE TAX		1,644.50
600	WATER		3,563.79
610	SEWER		2,911.82
670	GARBAGE		2,782.46
	TOTAL		<u>12,463.83</u>
	PAYROLL TOTAL		<u>12,463.83</u>
	PAID TOTAL		<u>85,575.39</u>

001	GENERAL	20,666.55
110	ROAD USE TAX	3,707.44
112	EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	4,667.22
600	WATER	13,690.19
610	SEWER	35,692.67
670	GARBAGE	7,151.32
	TOTAL BY FUND	<u>85,575.39</u>

REVENUES GENERAL

City Council Minutes

	4,538.44
ROAD USE TAX	15,018.85
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	696.88
LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX	14,604.92
TAX INCREMENT FINANCING	67.85
POOL RESTRICTED	120.00
DEBT SERVICE	738.44
HOMETOWN PRIDE	3,150.00
CAPITAL EQUIPMENT	69.25
WATER	44,336.75
SEWER	32,989.28
GARBAGE	19,010.03
STORM WATER	2,903.38
TOTAL	<u>138,244.07</u>

MaryJo Litwiller presented to the council on behalf of Pocahontas Economic Development Commission.

Zylstra motioned to approve Resolution 05-25 – Unpaid Nuisances. Christenson seconded. Roll call vote: Ayes: Zylstra, Christenson, Booth, Swanson, Jamison. Nays: none. Motion carried.

Booth moved to approve Ordinance 01-25 – Cemetery Foundation Fees. Swanson seconded. Roll call vote: Ayes: Swanson, Christenson, Booth, Jamison, Zylstra. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Booth motioned to waive the second and third reading of Ordinance 01-25 – Cemetery Foundation Fees. Swanson seconded. Roll call vote: Ayes: Swanson, Christenson, Booth, Jamison, Zylstra. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Zylstra motioned to approve Resolution 06-25 Cemetery Guidelines Update. Christenson seconded. Roll call vote: Ayes: Zylstra, Booth, Christenson, Swanson, Jamison. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Discussion was held on police matters. Zylstra moved to approve the hiring of Mike Rodriquez after completion of all tests needed. Seconded by Booth. All ayes; Motion carried.

Discussion was held on the pool project. No action was taken.

Zylstra motioned to adjourn at 5:37 p.m. Booth seconded. All ayes; motion carried.

John Jamison, Mayor Pro Tem

Joan Hoben, Deputy City Clerk

City Council Minutes

February 17th, 2025

The Laurens City Council met in regular session at the Municipal Building at 5:00 p.m. on Monday, February 17th, 2025. Mayor Pro Tem John Jamison called the meeting to order. Present were Council members Hannah Zylstra, Loren Booth, Aaron Christenson, Jean Swanson, City Manager Hilary Reed, Deputy Clerk Joan Hoben, and Public Works Director Julian Johnson.

Booth moved to approve the consent agenda consisting of the amended minutes from the February 3rd, 2025, meeting, and the list of claims. Christenson seconded. All ayes: motion carried.

CLAIMS 02-17-25

AFLAC	GROUP INSURANCE	204.38
ALLIANT ENERGY	MONTHLY GAS	38.28
AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES	DVDS & BOOKS	215.95
ASCENDANCE TRUCKS MIDWEST	GARBAGE TRUCK PARTS	530.57
BADGER METER	TECH SUPPORT	54.16
BAKER & TAYLOR	BOOKS	624.71
CENGAGE	LARGE PRINT BOOKS	74.22
CITY OF MOVILLE	NUISANCE ABATEMENTS	1,222.41
CONNECTIONS	GROUP INSURANCE	31.14
DEE JACKSON/ JACKSON MOTORS	SNOW REMOVAL	60.00
FOUNDATION ANALYTICAL LAB	WASTEWATER TESTING	1,042.75
GARTHLENE BELL	CPR CLASSES	468.00
HILARY REED	MILEAGE TO MEETING	23.10
HUBBELL TRUCK & AG SERVICES	TRUCK 360 REPAIRS	35.96
IRS	FED/FICA TAXES	6,079.56
JOHN DEERE FINANCIAL	SPRAY PAINT	36.57
JULIAN JOHNSEN	TRAINING	1,354.41
KEVIN SHANNON	TRAINING	221.00
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	ANNUAL DUES	50.00
LMPC	MONTHLY PHONE & INTERNET	114.32
LMU	MONTHLY UTILITIES	699.20
LAURENS PLUMBING SERVICE	SUPPLIES	162.11
LAURENS SUN	LEGALS	247.31
MACC	TECH SUPPORT	756.76
THE MACHINE SHOP	BRASS ROD	29.20
PETYY CASH	POSTAGE STAMPS	73.00
POCAHONTAS COUNTY SHERIFF	COVERAGE	10,051.85
POCAHONTAS CO SOLID WASTE	LANDFILL CHARGES	7,027.90
PRINCIPAL LIFE GROUP	GROUP LIFE INSURANCE	764.65
PRO COOPERATIVE	MONTHLY FUEL CHARGES	1,740.66
R&D INDUSTIRES, INC.	TECH SUPPORT	18.00
RICHARDSON SERVICE	OIL CHANGE	97.50
RSM US, LLP	MONTHLY IT SERVICES	1,206.00
SHAMROCK RECYCLE	JAN RECYCLING	1,952.05
STORM LAKE TIMES PILOT	ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION	96.00
VERIZON WIRELESS	MONTHLY CELL PHONES	290.92
	TOTAL	<u>37,694.60</u>

PAYROLL		2/3/2025
001	GENERAL	9,150.95
210	ROAD USE TAX	1,890.76
600	WATER	3,306.21
610	SEWER	2,843.85

City Council Minutes

670	GARBAGE	<u>2,533.60</u>
	TOTAL	<u>19,725.37</u>
	PAYROLL TOTAL	<u>19,725.37</u>
	PAID TOTAL	<u>57,419.97</u>
001	GENERAL	26,437.73
110	ROAD USE TAX	2,994.52
112	EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	338.00
600	WATER	7,434.77
610	SEWER	6,020.16
670	GARBAGE	<u>14,194.79</u>
	TOTAL BY FUND	<u>57,419.97</u>

Booth moved to approve the hiring of Dillon Halder as a firefighter. Zylstra seconded. All ayes; motion carried.

Booth moved to approve the Amended 28E Agreement with the City of Menville for the Inspector/Code Enforcement Official. Swanson seconded. All ayes; motion carried.

Swanson moved to approve setting the Public Hearing Date for the Property Tax Levy Hearing for April 7th at 4:45 pm. Christenson seconded. All ayes; motion carried.

After discussion, Booth moved to approve Alex Leu as Police Chief for administrative services only at this time, not in connection with Pocahontas Police Department, individually not as apart of the development of the 28e, pending ILEA approval with keeping track of hours. Zylstra seconded. All ayes; motion carried.

An update was provided with the Ambulance. No inquiries were made in response to the information placed in the paper regarding the optimization of the ambulance stored in Laurens.

No discussions or decisions were held or made regarding the pool project.

Zylstra motioned to adjourn at 5:58 p.m. Booth seconded. All ayes; motion carried.

John Jamison, Mayor Pro Tem

Hilary Reed, City Clerk