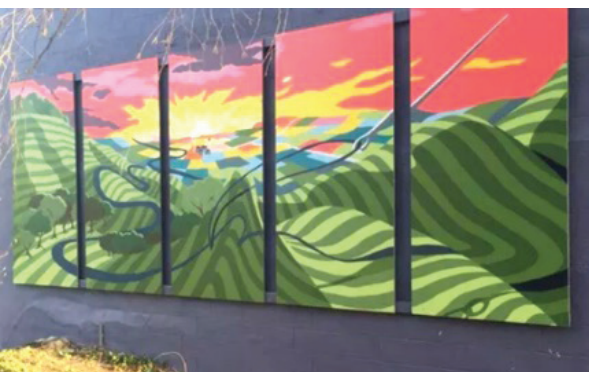


## Lamoni's Walls Tell A Story



Pictured: Student artists – Rian Bevan, Grace Moores, Justin Severson, and GU art teacher Karen Gergely apply the finishing touches to the mural.



Pictured: Downtown mural adjacent to the Linden Street Coffee House.

With a new nature scene added in the spring of 2024 on Teri Foster's The Glass Shack Studio at 114 East

Main Street, Lamoni is becoming a colorful tapestry of murals. This mural displays prairie scenes with native flow-

ers, resonating with the local community and showcasing the talent of Graceland students, artists, and local volunteers.

Another of the murals dotting the city was created in 1990 by Lamoni students and brightens the corner of Main Street just south of Linden Street. This colorful artwork depicts a classic farm scene complete with a cornfield, reflecting the town's agricultural roots. A collaborative project spearheaded by Karen Gergely, a Graceland University art professor, resulted in the creation of a mural in April 2017. At the corner of Chestnut and Main Streets, a colorful mural depicts a vintage car at a gas station transporting observers back to the bustling era of Jefferson Highway.

In 2018, another attractive mural with the Jefferson Highway logo celebrates this historic highway at the corner of Chestnut and Main Streets. The Graceland

Community Development Club members created a mural in downtown Lamoni in 2021 to transform the garden space next to Linden Street Coffeehouse. Their efforts resulted in a surreal interpretation of Iowa's landscape showcasing Iowa's fertile fields stitched together in a patchwork quilt motif.

"Our goal was to utilize the power of art along with GU students and community volunteers to beautify and draw attention to this area of town and make it a focal point that draws people in," Graceland University Associate Professor of Art Karen Gergely said of the Glass Shack Studio work. "This project benefits the landscape of the area and gives back to our environment as well as bringing people together with a common goal."

## Hit the Road: Explore Jefferson Highway



Pictured: Volunteers work on a Jefferson Highway-themed mural of a vintage car and gas station scene at the corner of Chestnut and Main Streets in 2017.

Once a bustling thoroughfare, now a nostalgic journey, the Jefferson Highway invites exploration with a visit to Lamoni where a piece of this historic artery and two commemorative murals await. The Highway offers a glimpse into a bygone era. Crisscrossed by modern interstates that prioritize speed over scenery, the Jefferson Highway has transitioned into a charming route for those seeking a more relaxed and historic driving experience. Originally dedicated in 1916, the Jefferson Highway wasn't the typical highway of today. While "hard surface" meant little more than avoiding mud bogs, this innovative north-south route stretched from Winnipeg, Canada, all the way down to New Orleans, Louisiana, making it the nation's first long-distance international highway. Nicknamed "The Pine to Palms Highway" (or "Palms to Pines" depending on your starting point), the Jefferson Highway connected travelers with diverse landscapes, from the towering pines of the north to the sun-kissed palms of the south. "While Jefferson Highway may no longer be the fastest route from one location to another," Mayor Douglas Foster said, "it continues to link small towns and large cities along its 2300 miles from Winnipeg to New Orleans in an era when connections are more important than ever." Traveling the Jefferson Highway today offers a unique opportunity to experience a bygone era of auto travel where travelers can trade the high-speed lanes of modern interstates for

a more leisurely and scenic journey through America's heartland. The Jefferson Highway between Northwood and Lamoni, roughly along U.S. Highways 65 and 69 has been designated as an Iowa Heritage Byway to be called the Jefferson Highway Heritage Byway. The purpose of the highway was to encourage travel and commerce between cities along the way and promote farm-to-market roads. Unlike today's super-highways which maximize speed, bypassing communities large and small, the Jefferson Highway was routed so that travelers 100 years ago passed through as many cities as possible. Lamoni community utility poles were painted with the Jefferson Highway Historical marker along the Lamoni route. The markers are eight feet off the ground with 12 inches of white and the letters JH are centered between two eight inches of blue. "Lamoni has enjoyed many JH activities," City Administrator Barb Stuck said. "These have included Junkin' on Jefferson, sociability caravans, antique car parades, and ice cream socials." In 1916 the Jefferson Highway connected America – that connection takes on an entirely new meaning in the 21st century. "Heritage tourists are rediscovering the Jefferson Highway," Lamoni Mayor Douglas L. Foster said, "and we want Lamoni to be one of the communities along their way." Like the old song says: "If you want to see America from head to toe, The Jefferson Highway is the way to go."

## Enjoy A Good LAFF

As autumn's breath chills the air and foliage ignites in a tapestry of crimson and gold, LAFF, the Lamoni Annual Fall Festival, bursts into life. On the first Saturday of October, a whirlwind of merriment erupts at daybreak, transforming the heart of Lamoni into a grand spectacle that pulsates well into nightfall. While the Community Center Plaza becomes the center of fun, LAFF's energy spills out like overflowing autumn leaves into the streets, community properties, and even along the recreational trail.

Lively storefronts transform into whimsical scarecrows vying for the coveted title in the annual LAFF Scarecrow Contest. Local artisans showcase their talents, with displays featuring unique crafts,

handcrafted Amish furniture, and delectable treats: baked goods, endless rows of pumpkins, fluffy kettle corn, vibrantly painted glass bulbs, charming wooden signs, sparkling jewelry, captivating photographs, and intricately woven baskets. Contestants compete in a chili cook-off.

Past LAFF's offered a fun-filled lineup for kids, kicking things off with a high-energy tractor pedal pull competition. Youngsters have enjoyed bouncing in inflatables, pony rides, zip lines, bean bag toss challenges, hula hooping, and various other crafts & games.

A hayride wrapped up afternoon events. In the evening, participate in cake walk, enjoy the many food vendors and round out the day with live entertainment and a street dance.

## Hy-Vee For The Kitchen Or Medicine Cabinet

Lamoni Hy-Vee serves the community's grocery needs. Its service to the city dates back to August 1932 making Lamoni claim the longest continuous Hy-Vee presence.

HyVee also operates a pharmacy in Lamoni at Main (Highway 69) and North Linden and is dedicated to supporting the community's health needs. Registered pharmacists fill prescriptions for the whole family and Graceland University stu-

dents online or in-store. Hy-Vee ranks among the top 5 most trusted brands and has been named one of America's top three favorite grocery stores.

Not quite as big as metropolitan HyVee stores, Lamoni's provides the community food and pharmacy needs while still adhering to the store's slogan "Where there's a helpful smile in every aisle" which was adopted for the grocery store's first television commercial made in 1963.

## Experience A Step Back In Time



Travelers seeking a break from the highway can discover a unique destination at Exit 4 of I-35 and the junction of US-69. The Amish Country Store offers a delightful blend of Iowan hospitality and handcrafted treasures. For those with a sweet tooth, a bounty of assorted candies, fudge varieties and beverages are available to go along with an Iowa loose meat sandwich at the welcome center / Maid-Rite. For the canine traveler, a dog park was recently built to provide some exercise for our furry friends.

Opened in 2009, the Amish Country Store provides a platform for local Amish families to display their skills. Browse through 15,000 square feet of handcrafted goods, including intricate baskets, delectable jams and jellies, sturdy furniture, playful candies, and charming toys. Quilts sewn with love, handwoven rugs, and practical aprons complete the selection, offering a

glimpse into the traditional craftsmanship of the Amish community.

Afterward, take a few steps to satisfy your hunger at the on-site Maid-Rite. This iconic Iowa franchise, established in 1926, serves mouthwatering loose meat sandwiches that have become an Iowa staple. Generations have savored the unique taste and friendly service reminiscent of small-town diners.

In addition to offering traditional Maid-Rite items like loose meat sandwiches (what they're famous for), they offer hot dogs, hamburgers, a salad bar, broasted chicken, pulled pork sandwich, and pork tenderloins (large & hand made on site). The country store also has a bakery which includes pies, cookies, cinnamon rolls, and several types of bread.

This stop combines the opportunity to support local artisans, discover timeless traditions, and indulge in classic Iowa comfort food.

## Fresh, Local, And Fun For Everyone!



The Lamoni Farmers Market bustles with fresh, local finds on the second and fourth Saturday from June to September. Located conveniently at the corner of South Main and Linden Street, the market is a delightful destination for residents and visitors alike. From 9 am to noon, dedicated vendors showcase a bounty of seasonal delights.

Shoppers can fill their baskets with crisp, locally grown vegetables, juicy fruits, and fragrant herbs at their peak freshness. Bakers offer tempting treats, from flaky pastries and decadent cookies to wholesome breads. Local artisans add a touch of class with beautiful flower bouquets and unique yard art, perfect for sprucing up the home and garden.

The Lamoni Farmers Market offers more than just fresh produce and handcrafted goods. It's a place to connect with the community. Friendly vendors are happy to chat about their products and answer questions about sustainable farming practices. Music fills the air, adding to the festive atmosphere. Families with children can enjoy Linden Street and its friendly atmosphere, making the market a delightful weekend outing.

Whether seeking the freshest ingredients or simply looking for a fun way to spend a Saturday morning, the Lamoni Farmers Market has something for everyone. It is a celebration of local agriculture, a vibrant community gathering place, and a delightful sensory experience.

## ROCCS Helps Build Little River Playground



Pictured: ROCCS - Restoring Our County, Community and Schools - members Ambrose Savage, Karlee Hamaker, and Cal Martin shown among the many boxes of equipment shipped in to build the Little River Lookout Community Playground.

Volunteers of all ages regularly show up in Lamoni and Southern Iowa to help friends, work on special projects, and raise funds. ROCCS (Restoring Our County, Community and Schools), members are an example of that community spirit. Along with these young

people, over 240 volunteers dedicated their time, and fundraising efforts which garnered support through individual and business donations, grants, and in-kind contributions for the Little River Lookout Community Playground's first all-inclusive playground in the

area. The playground's many features offer safe, outdoor play opportunities for children of all abilities to play alongside their peers.

Its design offers something for everyone encouraging imaginative play, physical activity, and social interaction. Key features of the playground include a tree house and boat

to represent the recreation and nature themes

of the area, a barn and tractor to demonstrate the positive influence agriculture has on our community and those surrounding, a double zip line, orbit spinner, custom made interactive learning panels, many swings, and slides.

The project is built around the community to meet the needs of the youth in the community by volunteers from the community!

