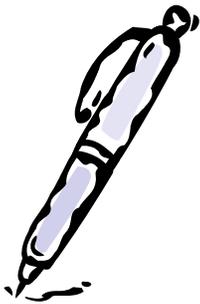




Summer 2008

CITY OF INDEPENDENCE NEWS

A letter from the Mayor



It has been awhile since our last newsletter. New life and changes are all around us. Spring seemed like it was winter remaining with slightly higher temperatures.

The legislature has adjourned, but campaigning for another cycle of electorates is in full swing. We will have to elect a representative (Steve Smith has the seat now), a new county administrator and congressmen to replace Penny Steele and Jim Ramstad, who have announced they are not running again, a state senator and a U.S. president. All candidates will want and deserve our attention. I hope you plan on voting in November. We do not have a City election.

At City Hall we have a new employee. Christina Scipioni replaced Mollie Little, who recently retired. Scipioni comes highly qualified, lives in Eden Prairie and has always had an interest in government. She previously worked for Community Action Partnership of Suburban Hennepin in Hopkins.

This was the year the circus was due to come back to the park. Because of high fuel costs, the company decided not to travel this far north this year. Also, because we had no one to volunteer to chair the Heritage Fest, the decision was made to cancel that event this September, but please feel free to go out and enjoy the park for a hike or picnic.

This has been a year with lots of meetings dealing with our comprehensive, long-range plan for the City. Unfortunately, only a small percentage of our residents have attended those meetings, while others have attended every meeting. This plan needs to be finalized by the Planning Commission and the Council soon. It will then be forwarded to our neighboring cities and then to the Metropolitan Council for final approval.

Continued on page 2

Planning Commission

Chairman Brad Spencer
Mario Crespo
Greg Gardella
Robert Gardner
Carl Phillips

City Council

Mayor Marvin Johnson
Lynn Betts
Lance Gyllenblad
Norm Wenck
Lindsay Wallace

Parks Commission

Chair Carole Peter
Leroy Kowalke
David Lieberman
Lisa Phillips
James Rick

COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Continued from page 1

This June marks the end of my tenure on the League of Minnesota Cities Board of Directors. I started as a board member serving for three years. After a year off, I was elected second vice president and have now gone through the ranks as first vice president, president and immediate past president. What an experience and what a wonderful support organization for Minnesota cities. I continue to serve on a National League of Cities Energy, Environment and Natural Resources Steering Committee on behalf of the League of Minnesota Cities. Just recently we met in Cleveland, Ohio. What an interesting city!

Our annual Board of Review went fairly well. Our overall City value dropped by 3.4 percent and that figure dates back to October 2007. We are well aware of what has happened in the housing market this past year, so I anticipate another drop next year unless we have a rush of building permits. The figure would have been greater, but agriculture land values were increased during that same period of time as a result of a complicated equation created by the Legislature using out state farm sales in southwest Minnesota as the comparison value for farm land in our City. With higher state and sales tax, higher fuel costs, continued high expectation for quality services and legislature establishing levy limits, this will be a challenging year for prioritizing our City budget needs.

Hopefully this fall we will see the opening of the new Highway 12 to the east of us. Final work is scheduled to be done in 2009. Work to the west in Delano will continue. As those projects are finalized, work will begin at the railroad bridge just east of County Road 90 on Highway 12. That detour is scheduled for a short time in the fall of 2009 and summer of 2010 and will create major traffic concerns for County Road 90 South and County Road 6 as detour route for Highway 12. The bridge desperately needs to be replaced and has had years of delays.

We have recently reviewed our annual City financial audit. It is public information, so if you are interested in that type of information, be sure to ask staff for a copy.

Enjoy the summer!

Your Mayor,

Marvin D. Johnson

Delano Senior Center Events

Senior Center Forum - 8:30 a.m.-Noon, July 30 - Share information and discuss issues of concern with Wright County and Delano officials.

Pie Day - 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m., Aug. 14 - Enjoy a slice of pie, ice cream and coffee or juice for \$3.50.

Garage Sale - 8 a.m.-4 p.m., Aug. 14 and 8 a.m.-2 p.m., Aug. 15 - Donate to the garage sale after Aug. 4 or stop by and shop.

**For more information and events, call 763-972-0574
or stop by the Center, 234 Second St. N, Delano.**

COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Plan now for the November Election

While November seems like a long way off, before we know it, the general election will be upon us. Here are some tips to help make the voting process easier:

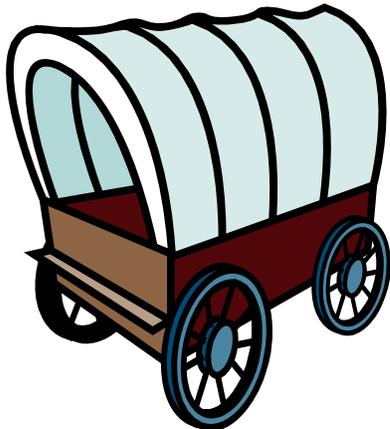
- By registering to vote at least 20 days before the election, your name will appear on the roster at your polling place. You can pick up a voter registration card at City Hall.
- You can find your polling place online using the Hennepin County website. Visit www.co.hennepin.mn.us and click on "Where To Vote/Polling Place Finder." Simply type in your address and click "Search Records."
- Absentee ballots are available for people who cannot vote on election day because they are absent from their precinct on election day, ill or disabled, observing a religious holiday or serving as an election judge in another precinct. To receive an absentee ballot, you must submit an application to the City. Applications can be picked up at City Hall or you can call 763-479-0527 to have an application mailed to you. You can vote by absentee ballot at City Hall up to 30 days before the election.
- The City now has a handicap-accessible machine available to help voters read and mark their ballots. Stop by City Hall after Oct. 6 for a demonstration.

For more information on voting and elections in the City of Independence, call 763-479-0527.

2008 Heritage Fest canceled

The 2008 Heritage Fest, an annual event that celebrates the heritage of Independence, has been canceled.

The decision was made to cancel the event after the City was unable to find a volunteer to chair the event.



City hires new Administrative Assistant

Christina Scipioni recently began work as the City's new Administrative Assistant. She replaces Mollie Little, who retired at the end of March.

Scipioni earned her Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of St. Thomas. Before coming to Independence, she worked as a communications coordinator at Community Action Partnership of Suburban Hennepin. Prior to that, she worked in the Communications Department at the City of Edina.

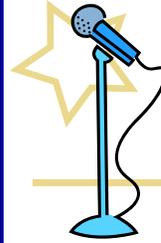
"I'm looking forward to serving the residents and businesses in Independence," she said. "I'm excited about the opportunity to help this City continue to be a great place to live and work."

PARKS

ATV use is not allowed in City parks

According to City Code, the use of all-terrain vehicles is not allowed in City parks. Using ATVs in parks tears up grass and creates ruts.

If you see ATVs being used in City parks, call West Hennepin Public Safety at 763-479-0500.



Calling all singers and musicians

Entertain your neighbors this fall with your musical gifts! The City is looking for singers and musicians interested in performing in a Citywide talent show in September. Call 763-479-0527 for more information.

Fun abounds at Independence area parks

As summer heats up, there are plenty of parks in and around Independence where residents can catch some rays, relax by a creek or enjoy a picnic.

Pioneer Creek Park

This park, located at 2055 County Road 90, sits on the edge of Pioneer Creek. It boasts lovely places to have a picnic lunch by the creek and a large field for playing all types of games. Pioneer Creek Park is a great place to spend a relaxing afternoon.



Tamarack Park

This City-owned park, located at 4740 South Lake Sarah Drive, is a charming neighborhood park full of play equipment for kids. Stop by and check out this wonderful amenity.

Lake Rebecca Park Reserve

Three Rivers Park District manages this park, which can be accessed at 9831 County Road 50, Rockford. This 2,200-acre park reserve offers outdoor activities and opportunities for glimpses of wildlife. Lake Rebecca Park Reserve's gently rolling Big Woods landscape, with numerous wetland areas provides a haven for wildlife. This park reserve is one of the sites for the trumpeter swan restoration program. Several overlooks along hiking trails provide glimpses of these swans, the world's largest waterfowl. For more information, call 763-694-7860.

Baker Park Reserve

Located on Lake Independence, Baker Park Reserve's 2,700 acres offer diverse outdoor activities in natural surroundings. You can enjoy a round of golf at Baker National Golf Course, explore the creative play area, picnic and swim, or bicycle on paved trails that wind through meadows and a Big Woods forest. The entrance to Baker Park Reserve is located at 2301 County Road 19, Independence. For more information, call 763-479-2473.

Luce Line Regional Trail

This trail runs on a former railroad line and is available for hiking, biking, horseback riding and mountain biking. The trail runs through the southern part of Independence. For a trail map, visit www.LuceLine.com.

ENVIRONMENT

Funds to improve water quality now available to more residents

The State of Minnesota, through the Board of Water and Soil Resources, has granted \$410,000 to the Pioneer-Sarah Creek Watershed Management Commission to fund animal waste control work in the Lake Independence watershed. The Commission received the funds through the Clean Water Legacy Act approved by the State Legislature in 2006.

The Commission developed a docket of practices that are eligible for grant funding to livestock and horse owners in the Lake Independence watershed. These include construction of manure storage facilities, hauling services to dispose of manure, feedlot management, pasture management, buffer strips and cropland nutrient management.

In May 2008, the Commission was granted approval to expand its Clean Water Legacy Grant funds into other areas of the Lake Independence Watershed. These areas include residential and agricultural sites where the funds can be used to install best management practices that will help contain and treat runoff water before it flows into the lake. Rates for cost sharing are 75 percent funding from the grant money and 25 percent funding by the landowner. Funds are available until June 2009.

For more information or to apply for a grant, call Judie Anderson, 763-268-1777.

Get the lead out! Exchange your lead tackle

Help prevent lead poisoning of loons, eagles and other wildlife. Choose non-toxic weighs and jigs.

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency will be holding a free tackle exchange from 1-6 p.m. on Friday, June 27 at the Eden Prairie Gander Mountain, 12160 Technology Drive. Quantities are limited, so stop by early.



Area stores begin recycling programs

Menards and Best Buy recently announced that they will begin taking certain products and recycling or disposing of them for free.

Consumers can drop off computer processors, computer monitors and televisions with screens up to 32 inches to be recycled at participating Best Buy stores. Console televisions, air conditioners, microwaves and other large appliances will not be accepted. Customers may bring in up to two items per day. For Best Buy locations, visit www.BestBuy.com.

Menards stores are also offering a new recycling service. Customers can now drop off compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) at Menards service desks. Only household CFLs will be collected; straight fluorescent lamps will not be accepted. For Menards locations, visit www.Menards.com.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Discuss personal protection with your children

By Sgt. Gary Kroells, West Hennepin Public Safety

As we welcome in summer, it is vitally important we remind our children about personal safety. Sit down and talk with your children about protecting themselves, no matter how old they are.

Here are some topics to discuss with your children:

- Never talk to strangers.
- Hang out with groups of friends, never go alone.
- Don't answer the door unless you know who it is.
- Always know where your kids are going and when they will be back.
- Don't give out any personal information on the Internet.
- Report all suspicious activity to the police.

For a more successful conversation, talk with your kids, not at them. Find out what they are doing and listen to them when they talk.



Most crimes against people are crimes of opportunity. If you reduce the opportunity, you lessen the risk of being a victim. You and your children should be observant and pay close attention to your surroundings.

If you observe anything that "doesn't feel right," trust your instincts and call 911. Please report all suspicious activity to the West Hennepin Public Safety Department at 763-479-0500 or call 911 immediately.

West Hennepin Public Safety activity report

The West Hennepin Public Safety Department has had a busy first half of the year. Highlights from January to May 2008 include:

- Incident case numbers were assigned for 7,456 crimes, reports, citations, warnings and other specific actions.
- 329 criminal cases were investigated.
- The West Metro Drug Task Force seized area drugs with a street value of \$18,737,861 and criminal charges were made on 74 suspects.
- Staff completed 721 hours of training.
- Received 1,599 volunteer service hours from Police Reserves.

For more information, visit WestHennepin.com.

Solicitors required to carry a City permit



Recently, a resident reported a solicitor who was polite, but didn't have a permit. Police investigated and found that the solicitor had an outstanding warrant from another state. The solicitor was arrested and taken to Hennepin County Jail.

The cities of Maple Plain and Independence require solicitors to have a city-issued permit. Permits should be visible at all times.

Residents should report solicitors who don't have a permit visible or questionable activity to West Hennepin Public Safety, 763-479-0500.



MAPLE PLAIN TRAFFIC SURVEY

The Maple Plain City Council is working to identify short- and long-term public transportation needs for the community. Independence residents are encouraged to fill out the following survey and return it to Independence City Hall, 1920 County Road 90. All results will be tabulated by Maple Plain staff. You may also download the survey from the Maple Plain Web site, www.mapleplain.com. Your feedback is extremely important.

1. Are you able to drive?

- Yes No

2. Do you own or have access to a car?

- Yes No

3. Do you work outside of your home? If so, how do you normally get to work?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Retired; do not work | <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not working/unemployed | <input type="checkbox"/> Carpool |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Telecommute/work from home | <input type="checkbox"/> Ride the bus |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drive alone | <input type="checkbox"/> Some other way |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Walk | |

4. On average, how many minutes does it take you to get from home to work?

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0-5 | <input type="checkbox"/> 31-45 | <input type="checkbox"/> Work from home. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6-15 | <input type="checkbox"/> 46-60 | <input type="checkbox"/> Retired; do not work. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15-30 | <input type="checkbox"/> 60+ | |

5. What is your final destination?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Maple Plain | <input type="checkbox"/> Northwest metro suburbs
<i>(i.e. Maple Grove, Rogers, etc.)</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greater Maple Plain area | <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern metro suburbs.
<i>(i.e. Oakdale, Woodbury, etc.)</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wright County | <input type="checkbox"/> Southern metro suburbs.
<i>(i.e. Chanhassen, Bloomington, etc.)</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Minneapolis | <input type="checkbox"/> Northern metro suburbs
<i>(i.e. Anoka, Blaine, etc.)</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> St. Paul | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> St. Cloud | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Retired/work from home. | |

6. If you work outside your home, how likely are you to take advantage of the following public transit options for commuting to and from work? (Check all that apply.)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Walk/bike to work | <input type="checkbox"/> Commuter rail |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carpool | <input type="checkbox"/> Dial-a-ride shuttle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Park & Ride | <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer drivers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commuter bus | <input type="checkbox"/> Retired/work from home |

7. If you had access to public transportation in Maple Plain, how likely are you and/or your family to use transit to get to and from work?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not likely | <input type="checkbox"/> Very likely |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Slightly likely | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fairly likely | <input type="checkbox"/> Retired/work from home. |

8. If you had access to public transportation in Maple Plain, how likely are you and/or your family to use transit to get to and from shopping or appointments (i.e. medical)?

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not likely | <input type="checkbox"/> Very likely |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Slightly likely | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fairly likely | |

9. If public transportation were available, what times are you most likely to use it? (Check all that apply.)

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> AM & PM rush hour only | <input type="checkbox"/> 2-5 PM |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6 AM-11 AM | <input type="checkbox"/> 5-9 PM |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 11 AM-2 PM | <input type="checkbox"/> 9 PM-12 AM |

10. Are you male or female?

- Male Female

11. What is your age range?

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under 21 | <input type="checkbox"/> 31-40 | <input type="checkbox"/> 56-60 | <input type="checkbox"/> 71+ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 22-30 | <input type="checkbox"/> 41-50 | <input type="checkbox"/> 61-65 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under 21 | <input type="checkbox"/> 50-55 | <input type="checkbox"/> 66-70 | |

12. Including yourself, how many people are in your household?

- | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 6+ |

13. What is the age range of the others in your household. Please indicate the number in each category

- | | | | |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| _____ 0-16 | _____ 22-30 | _____ 41-50 | _____ 51-65 |
| _____ 17-21 | _____ 31-40 | _____ 51-60 | _____ 65+ |

14. Which of the following best describes the race/ethnicity of your household? (Check all that apply.)

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> White/Caucasian | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian/Asian American | <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic/Latino |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black/African American | <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

15. What was your total, combined household income before taxes in 2007?

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$25,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50,000-\$75,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100,001-\$150,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25,001-\$49,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$75,001-\$100,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> More than \$150,000 |

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Independence, MN 55359

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CITY OF INDEPENDENCE

1290 County Road 90
Independence, MN 55359
Phone: 763-479-0527
Fax: 763-479-0528
Independence.GovOffice.com

City Hall Office Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Wednesday 8 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Friday 8 a.m. - Noon

City Calendar

June

- 5 Parks Commission - 7 p.m.
- 9 Planning Commission - 7:30 p.m.
- 10 City Council - 7:30 p.m.
- 24 City Council - 7:30 p.m.

July

- 4 Fourth of July - City Offices Closed
- 7 Planning Commission - 7:30 p.m.
- 8 City Council - 7:30 p.m.
- 10 Parks Commission - 7 p.m.
- 22 City Council - 7:30 p.m.

August

- 7 Parks Commission - 7 p.m.
- 11 Planning Commission - 7:30 p.m.
- 12 City Council - 7:30 p.m.
- 26 City Council - 7:30 p.m.