

Vote Nov. 3



Fall 2009

CITY OF INDEPENDENCE NEWS

A letter from the Mayor



What a beautiful late summer and fall! I don't know that I can ever remember of so many consistently nice days as we had during the State Fair and going to the end of September. Of course the mid summer rains saved the day for us and provided enough moisture so that we could have new growth and green lawns - especially new growth in our hay fields and pastures.

The circus performances at Pioneer Park were not as well attended as hoped, but a very respectable turnout. However, the temperature was perfect and the show was well done and enjoyed by all who attended. Three years ago when the circus was here we had temperatures in the high 90s and no breeze.

Any one been paying attention to the University of Minnesota Gophers football team? Well Gopher Linebacker, Nate Triplett, a senior, is a Delano High School graduate and an Independence resident. We wish

Nate well in his final games with the Gophers and we're glad he is able to play in the new stadium. Some of the local papers wrote a nice story about Nate in their Sept. 18 issue.

Tuesday, Nov. 3 is Election Day in Independence. We have two council seats up for election - a four year term. Both incumbents have filed and two other people have filed as well. Orono and Westonka school districts have an election too. Rockford School district has a continuing levy referendum vote on the ballot. Study your candidates and issues so you can be an informed voter. Independence residents vote at City Hall on one ballot for both the City election and school issues.

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Planning Commission

Chair Mario Crespo
Greg Gardella
Robert Gardner
Carl Phillips
Keith Triplett

City Council

Mayor Marvin Johnson
Lynn Betts
Lance Gyllenblad
Lindsay Wallace
Norm Wenck

Parks Commission

Chair Carole Peter
Leroy Kowalke
Lisa Phillips
James Rick

COMMUNITY CORNER

Continued from page 1

A former Independence Council Member, Robert Meyer, just passed away. He served on the City Council from 1968 till 1980. Bob was one of the original Wayzata Meyer Bros. Dairy Owners and the last surviving brother. Bob lived on a farm on Pagenkopf Road and milked cows for many years. He and his wife Eleanor, who preceded him in death, raised five children. Bob was nearing his 95th birthday.

The Highway 12 detours have ended for this year. I have been amazed at how well the traffic has moved on County Road 6 to Highway 12 after the first day of the detour.

The biggest problem was the traffic on County Road 83, especially going south. I think some people think that it is faster going that way, but they were also driving over the speed limit. Maple Plain businesses wanted that route to be the official detour, but fortunately Minnesota Department of Transportation and Hennepin County felt County Road 6 was the appropriate route. There will be lots of discussion as to what changes need to be made before the detour begins next spring till October 2010.

A proposed tax levy was submitted by the City to Hennepin County 5.6% below last year's levy. The Council on Dec. 8 must determine what the final levy will be for 2010. It can still be lowered, but not increased. Some factors leading to that decision will be how much below the 2009 budget our income and expenses have been. My biggest concern is the increase that the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners is proposing and maybe some of the special taxing districts. We also know that valuations have continued to drop and next year we will have to make more cuts. Fortunately, the City presently has a six-month fund balance, as recommended by the Secretary of State and the State Auditor. Business owners and agriculture land owners are now being hit the hardest with valuations. Commercial/Business/Second Home Lake Owners tax is a state tax with only a small amount coming to the City.

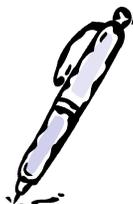
Staff has been working with Metropolitan Council Staff on final details of our newest Comprehensive Land Use Plan. It is hoped that it will be before the City Council for final approval by the end of the year. It will be nice to have the finished product done and lay that additional work aside for eight to ten years. If necessary, amendments can be made to the Plan.

Remember, all you "snowbirds," to fill out your Census information here in Minnesota before heading south for the winter.

Winter will probably be here before the next newsletter. Therefore, I want to wish you a wonderful and safe fall and a great Thanksgiving! Be sure to vote!!!

Your Mayor,

Marvin D. Johnson



COMMUNITY CORNER

October is Choose To Reuse Month

Going green has never been so much fun!

In an effort to encourage more reuse, Hennepin County has partnered with businesses and organizations that provide opportunities to rent, repair, resell, consign, trade, sell bulk and exchange used goods to offer discounts during October. When residents choose to reuse instead of buying new they can reduce their carbon footprint, save money and support the local economy.

The County has partnered with 83 local earth-friendly retail partners with 131 locations including: Cartridge World, Costume Rentals, Hymie's Vintage Records, Jerry's Hardware, Knight's Formalwear, Look Again Consignment, Once Upon a Child, Paperback Exchange, Rags to Riches, Savers, Steeple People and Whole Foods.

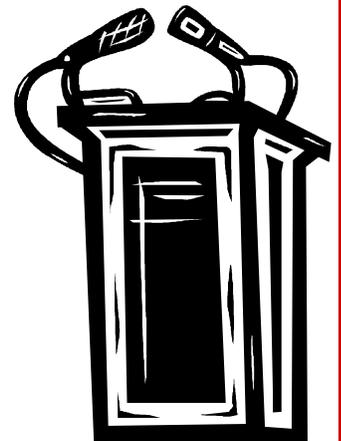
Customers may pick up a "Choose To Reuse" coupon book at Independence City Hall, participating locations, Hennepin County Services Centers and all Three Rivers Park District locations, or download a copy at www.hennepin.us/choosetoreuse.

CHOOSE TO
reuse
month

City Council to hold a Truth In Taxation hearing

The City Council approved a preliminary 2010 General Fund Budget and tax levy at its Sept. 8 meeting. The City's 2010 Proposed General Fund Budget is \$2,307,369, which represents a \$137,014, or 5.6 percent, decrease from 2009. The proposed 2010 tax levy is \$2,074,86, a decrease of \$313.671, or 13.1 percent. The Proposed General Fund Budget can be reduced, but not increased, by the Council prior to Dec. 29.

A public discussion of the City's proposed budget and tax levy will be held at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 8 at Independence City Hall.



ELECTION CONNECTION

Campaign Materials at the Polling Place

When you head out to City Hall to vote, please remember that no one may display campaign material, post signs or in any manner try to persuade a voter within 100 feet of the polling place.



These restrictions will be in place for Independence City Hall during absentee voting Oct. 2 through Nov. 2 and on Election Day, Nov. 3.

2009 City Council Candidates

The City of Independence will have two City Council seats on the ballot on Nov. 3. Each Council term is 4 years.

Four people have filed for City Council:

- Linda R. Betts, 6050 Pagenkopf Road
Incumbent
- Lance Gyllenblad, 4465 Lake Sarah Road
Incumbent
- Brad Spencer, 4510 Shady Beach Circle
- Chris Stephan, 3775 County Road 92

How to Register to Vote

Eligible voters may register to vote up to 20 days before the Nov. 3 election. Remember, people who have changed their name or address need to register using their new information. Registration cards are at Independence City Hall, or on the Secretary of State's website, www.sos.state.mn.us.

Voters may also register to vote on Election Day if they have acceptable identification:

- A Minnesota Driver's License, Learner's Permit, Identification Card or Tribal ID with your current address.
- A "Notice of Late Registration" received from your City Clerk.
- One of the following picture IDs: MN Driver's License, Learner's Permit, Identification Card or Tribal ID AND a utility bill that contains your name and current address that is due within 30 days of the election.

Questions? Call City Hall, 763-479-0527.

Absentee Voting Available at City Hall

For those who can't make it to the polls on Election Day, absentee voting is available beginning Oct. 2. Absentee voting is available to people who will be unable to vote on Nov. 3 because of illness, absence from their precinct, a religious holiday or serving as an election judge in another precinct.

To receive an absentee ballot, pick up an absentee ballot application at Independence City Hall, 1920 County Road 90, or visit <http://independence.govoffice.com> to download one. Applications should be returned to City Hall.

To make absentee voting more convenient, City Hall will be open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 31 and will stay open until 5 p.m. on Monday, Nov. 2.

ENVIRONMENT

Clean Water Resource Fair a Success

On Thursday, Sept. 17 over 300 people attended the Clean Water Resource Fair that assembled many vendors, agencies and associations connected with clean water together in one place. The fair was hosted by the Wright Hennepin Clean Water Resource Association.

The Wright Hennepin Clean Water Resource Association was formed to be a central source of information for lake associations and lake shore property owners by gathering information on clean water resources, lake associations, vendors and agencies, and holding Clean Water Resource Fairs for education and seminars.

Attendance was free, and although anyone could attend, the list of invitees was aimed at western Hennepin and Wright county shore line owners, including Lake Minnetonka, Independence, Sarah, Medicine and Wright County lakes. There is a huge need for stakeholders to have one place to find out what is available to enjoy their lake to the fullest. A variety of booths were available in the following categories:

- Watershed Management Commissions
- Weed Removal
- MN DNR
- Rain Gardens/Landscaping
- Weed Control
- Lake Aeration
- Phosphorous Free Products
- Lake Shore Restoration
- Lake Associations
- Prairie and Land Restoration
- Lake Planning
- MN PCA
- Boat Ramp Surveillance
- Shoreline Plants
- BWSR
- Hennepin County Environmental Services
- 3 Rivers Park District
- Soil & Water Dist

There were educational presentations made hourly throughout the day and evening on topics such as: Winter Maintenance for Homeowners: Reducing Environmental Impacts, Controlling Invasive Lake Weeds, Storm Water Pollution Prevention, Stopping the Spread of Aquatic Invasive Species, River Clean Up, Rain Gardens: Planning and Building, Responsible Management of Aquatic Invasive Species, Natural Shores Using Native Plants and Vegetation, True Story on Phosphate Fertilizer Run-off, Storm Water Management: Three Things Homeowners Can Do, and Managing Your Own Shoreline.

Food was available allowing families a night out to visit with the many vendors/agencies that were available to answer questions and give out information. Lake Association officials were able to share ideas and talk about consolidation. Thanks to all the vendors and agencies for the many, many door prizes that were awarded throughout the event.

Next year's event promises to be bigger and better. If you have something to offer or know of an organization or company that has something to offer to the lakeshore owners or you want to reserve a booth for September 2010, please contact Jerry Wise, 763-479-2228, cleanwater@frontier.com or Toni Hirsch, 763-479-0513, thirsch@ci.independence.mn.us.

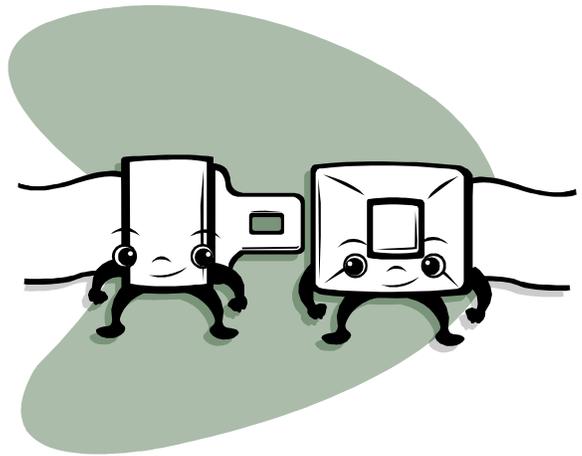
PUBLIC SAFETY

CLICK IT OR YOU COULD RECEIVE AN AUTUMN-MATIC TICKET

Seat Belt Enforcement Campaign Kicks Off October 9

Several Police Departments in western Hennepin County are combining their efforts in traffic enforcement through a federal grant known as Safe & Sober.

Police Departments from Mound, Minnetrista, Wayzata, Orono, Medina, Corcoran, Rogers, along with the South Lake Minnetonka Public Safety and the West Hennepin Public Safety Department have been awarded the grant from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety for 2009-2010. The Safe & Sober grant will provide the departments with supplemental funding for several waves of traffic enforcement from October 2009 through September 2010. These enforcement waves will target violations such as speeding, impaired driving, seatbelt use, under aged drinking and driving, and aggressive driving.



The first wave of enforcement is the enhanced *Click It or Ticket* seat belt patrols Oct. 9–22. It's the state's first full-scale seat belt enforcement effort since Minnesota's primary seat belt law became effective June 9.

The primary law requires passengers in all seating positions, including the back seat, to be buckled up or seated in the correct child restraint. Law enforcement officers can stop and ticket motorists solely for seat belt violations, including unbelted passengers. A seat belt citation is \$25 but can run as much as \$115 with court and administrative fees.

Minnesota Department of Public Safety (DPS) reports during 2006–2008 1,097 motorists were killed in crashes, 539 were unbelted, and another 1,152 unbelted motorists were seriously injured.

"These deaths and injuries are not only tragic reminders of the lives lost in our communities, but should serve as a reminder to all citizens that traffic deaths due to seat belt non-use are preventable," said Officer Rick Denneson of the West Hennepin Public Safety Department. "The state's primary seat belt law is intended to boost belt use compliance to prevent these needless tragedies."

Law enforcement will further focus their enforcement efforts toward special nighttime seat belt enforcement patrols. DPS 2006–2008 data reports 277 motorists were killed during nighttime hours (9 p.m.-3 a.m.) and of those killed 178 (64 percent) were not belted.

"Our Police Departments are also concerned about belt use among teens and young adults - the groups least likely to buckle up and who are overrepresented in traffic deaths" Denneson said.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Statewide each year, motorists ages 15–29 account for 45 percent of all unbelted deaths, yet this group represents only 25 percent of all licensed drivers. Of these unbelted deaths, 80 percent occur in greater Minnesota. This same age group accounts for 55 percent of all unbelted serious injuries — 70 percent occur in greater Minnesota.

The child safety seat law was also enhanced this summer to include booster seats. Minnesota's new child passenger safety law requires a child who is both under age 8 and shorter than 4 feet 9 inches to be fastened in a child safety seat or booster. Under this law, a child cannot use a seat belt alone until they are age 8 or 4 feet 9 inches tall, whichever comes first. It is recommended to keep a child in a booster based on their height, rather than their age.

Boosters are seat lifts that help raise a child up so a seat belt fits properly. Kids that are shorter than 4 feet 9 inches aren't ready to use a seat belt alone. Poor belt fit can contribute to death or serious injury, including ejection, internal decapitation and serious abdominal damage. A sign a belt does not fit properly is if it rubs against a child's neck, or the child tucks the belt behind their back. It also needs to ride across their pelvis area, not across their stomach.

"Our Officers understand the importance of seatbelt and child safety seat use," Denneson said. "They are the ones that respond daily to crashes and see the injuries and fatalities needlessly caused by not buckling up. That is why we are taking a zero tolerance stance on seatbelt use and will be issuing tickets to violators – this is your warning!"

These departments, along with 400 other law enforcement agencies statewide, will participate in the effort coordinated by DPS as a component of the state's Toward Zero Death (TZD) initiative. TZD is a multi-agency approach to address traffic issues regionally through enforcement, education, engineering and emergency trauma care.

Buckle Up — Click It or Ticket

Sign-up for West Hennepin Public Safety Crime Alerts

By: West Hennepin Public Safety Sgt. Gary Kroells

West Hennepin Public Safety is developing a crime alert network. This crime alert network will immediately notify residents and local business of crimes in the area and will protect our citizens and their property.

In an effort to quickly notify residents, West Hennepin is asking all residents and businesses to call 763-479-0500 or email crimealert@westhennepin.com to sign up.

Once WHPS have received your information, crime alert notifications will be sent to you. Examples of notification include incidents of motor vehicle theft, burglary information, sex offender notification, counterfeit money being passed at local businesses and monthly crime prevention tips. WHPS will not use this information for solicitations.



City of Independence
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Independence, MN 55359

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Drop off Toys For Tots at City Hall

Looking to give back this holiday season? Drop off new and unwrapped toys from Nov. 2 to Dec. 11 at Independence City Hall for Toys For Tots. The toys will be distributed to needy children in our community.



CITY OF INDEPENDENCE

1920 County Road 90
Independence, MN 55359
Phone: 763-479-0527
Fax: 763-479-0528
<http://Independence.GovOffice.com>

City Hall Office Hours
Monday-Thursday 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Friday 8 a.m. - Noon

City Calendar

October

12 Planning Commission - 7:30 p.m.
13 City Council - 7:30 p.m.
27 City Council - 7:30 p.m.

November

3 City Council Election
9 Planning Commission - 7:30 p.m.
11 Veteran's Day - City Hall Closed
17 City Council - 7:30 p.m.
26 Thanksgiving - City Hall Closed
27 City Hall Closed

December

3 Parks Commission - 7 p.m.
8 City Council - 7:30 p.m.
14 Planning Commission - 7:30 p.m.
22 City Council - 7:30 p.m.
25 Christmas - City Hall Closed