



City of RIVER FALLS NEWSLETTER



May 2015 • VOLUME 6 • ISSUE 2

Mayor's Message



I hope this newsletter finds everybody happy and healthy after a long winter. As I write this it is March 10, and I have a lot of hope in my heart that spring has indeed sprung.

Spring is a time of rebirth and on that note, I am very excited to talk about the rebirth of our two local parks, Glen and Hoffman. After months of joint meetings between citizens, City staff, numerous stake holder groups and HKGI (the company that the City hired to help with the Park

Master Plan), a new Park Master plan has been drafted. During the month of May, we will have the new plans available for the public to see. This is a long range plan so it will not all happen overnight, as we will need to determine what needs to be done first, second, third, and on down the line. I will now officially begin the traditional begging of time and money from all of the different organizations in the City to help with the renewal of our two great parks.

As a City, we have begun to look at the rebirth of the river corridor too. The City has begun the process of extending the license for the dams. Our goal is to give us plenty of time to come up with a good plan and determine how we can pay for that plan. Please look for more information on this process and the opportunities for City residents to participate in different groups that will help make decisions.

As the weather gets better and better and summer finally arrives, a lot of other things start to happen in the City for you, your family and friends to enjoy. The First National Bank of River Falls Ball Park reopens. The summer programs at the Parks and Recreation Department start up. The summer Chamber events get going, Music in the Park starts up, kayaking the river, Town 'N' Country Day, and River Falls Days. Check out all of the different things that UW-River Falls has to offer. There are so many great things to do - please check the City's website at www.rfcity.org and the Chamber's website at www.rfchamber.com to see all of the fun and exciting things going on so you don't miss out.

As always, I encourage everyone to reach out to their neighbors, friends, and fellow humans to give support and encouragement on a daily basis. It is those interactions with each other that make this town a great place to live, work and raise a family.

Take care and remember it's your town - so get out there, enjoy it, and be proud of it! GO Pack GO! ~



Dan Toland

State of the City

Each January, the City of River Falls delivers an assessment of the State of the City. As a City, we are happy to report that the state of the City continued to be strong in 2014. At the City of River Falls, we are committed to providing a high quality level of service to the community.

In order to remain focused and driven, the City has a new Strategic Plan that will help guide the development of the City's future work plans over the next few years. The five goals of the strategic plan include:

- Ensuring financial stability;
- Consistently delivering quality municipal services;
- Promoting economic vitality;
- Connecting community members; and
- Considering future generations.

Looking back on 2014, City highlights included:

The City's first biennial budget was passed by City Council for 2015 and 2016. The City Council also passed the City's 2015-2019 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The CIP includes the creation of a new Tax Increment District in Sterling Ponds Corporate Park. Facilitating future growth in the Sterling Ponds Corporate Park is the new Radio Road Interchange. The interchange, which was opened in July, will provide easy access to both of the City's corporate parks.

Also in 2014, the River Falls Municipal Utilities (RFMU) began the LED street light conversion program. RFMU is the first municipality in Wisconsin to receive an incentive from Focus on Energy for LED street light conversion. RFMU is also only one of two communities in Wisconsin chosen by WPPI Energy to pilot a

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Calendar of Events

Through May 30	Creative Kids: The Annual All-School Art Show in Kleinpell Gallery at the library
May 1-September 30	Even/Odd Watering Restrictions
May 2	Water Crafts and Critters, 10 a.m. at library
May 2	Wisconsin Water Watch, 1 p.m. at library
May 2	Flowage: Water for Fishing, Swimming, Boating and Drinking, 2 p.m. at library
May 5	4th-5th Grade Book Discussion Group, 4:15 p.m. at library
May 5	Fishing for Facts, 6:30 p.m. at library
May 7	Canoeing with Cliff: Wild Waters, 7 p.m. at library
May 10	International Migratory Bird Day, time TBA, at City Hall
May 11-16	City's Spring Cleanup at Public Works Garage
May 12	High School Book Discussion Group, 4 p.m. at library
May 14	Coffee with a Cop, 8 a.m. Dish and Spoon
May 18	Emergency Weather Warning Siren Test Date, 1 p.m.
May 19	4th-5th Grade Book Discussion Group, 4 p.m. at library
May 19, June 16, July 21, August 18, September 15	Family Story Hour, 6 p.m. at library
May 23, 24, 25	Library Closed
May 25	City Offices Closed
June 2	Middle School Book Discussion Group, 4 p.m. at library
June 8-July 18	Hello Dollies! in Kleinpell Gallery at the library
June 9, 16, 23, 30	9:30 a.m. Babytime; 10:45 a.m. Toddler Lapsit, library
June 9-pool close in August	Poolside Book Break, 2:30 p.m. Glen Park Pool
June 9	High School Book Discussion Group, 4 p.m. at library
June 10, 17, 24	Wednesday Program, 10:30 a.m. at library
June 11, 18, 25	Preschool Storytime, 10:30 a.m. or 1 p.m. library
June 11	Brush Strokes Paint Party, 6:30 p.m. at Lazy River Bar & Grill
June 14	Town 'N Country Day (see www.rfchamber.com)
June 15, 29	Lego Afternoons, 4 p.m. at library
June 17	Book Club in a Bar, 6:30 p.m. at Bo's 'N Mine
June 20	Antiques with Mark Moran, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at library
June 22	Emergency Weather Warning Siren Test Date, 1 p.m.
June 24, July 29, August 12	Super Movie Night, 6:30 p.m. at library
June 27	A Doll's Tea, 3 p.m. at library
July 1, 8, 15, 22	Wednesday Program, 10:30 a.m. at library
July 2, 9, 16, 23, 30	Preschool Storytime, 10:30 a.m. or 1 p.m. library
July 3	Coffee with a Cop, 8 a.m. South Fork Cafe
July 3, 4	City Offices and Library Closed
July 6, 20	Lego Afternoons 4-5, 4 p.m. at library
July 7	Middle School Book Discussion Group, 4 p.m. at library
July 8	Annual Flower Show, entries due at library by 6:30 p.m.
July 9, 16, 23, 30	Babytime, 10:45 a.m. Toddler Lapsit, 9:30 a.m. at library
July 9-11	Annual Flower Show, on display at library
July 10-12	River Falls Days (see www.rfchamber.com)
July 11	Kiddie Parade, registration at 10 a.m., parade at 10:30 a.m. at library
July 11	Children's Bike Rodeo, 10 a.m. at City Hall
July 12	Car Cruze-ins (see www.rfchamber.com)
July 14	High School Book Discussion Group, 4 p.m. at library
July 15	Book Club in a Bar, 6:30 p.m. at Mel's Midtowner
July 27-August 31	Foreign Film Series, 7 p.m. (Mondays) at library
July 27	Emergency Weather Warning Siren Test Date, 1 p.m.
July 30	Community Appreciation Event, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at City Hall
August 3, 17	Lego Afternoons, 4 p.m. at library
August 4	Middle School Book Discussion Group, 4 p.m. at library
August 6	Preschool Storytime, 10:30 a.m. or 1 p.m. library
August 8	At the Fair: Talent Show, 1 p.m. at library
August 11	High School Book Discussion Group, 4 p.m. at library
August 15	Opening/Dedication of Tri-Angels Park, time TBA
August 19	Book Club in a Bar, 6:30 p.m. at Johnnie's Bar
August 24	Emergency Weather Warning Siren Test Date, 1 p.m.
September 1	Middle School Book Discussion Group, 4 p.m. at library
September 5, 6, 7	Library Closed
September 7	City Offices Closed
September 8	High School Book Discussion Group, 4 p.m. at library
September 15	4th-5th Grade Book Discussion Group, 4:15 p.m. at library
September 19-20	Bacon Bash (see www.rfchamber.com)

State of the City

(continued from page 1)

community solar garden. The solar garden will be placed at the new Sterling Ponds Corporate Park and will be available to customers in the Summer of 2015.



The River Falls Library continues to remain a jewel of the community. In 2014, the Library enrolled 1,000 children in the Summer Library Program. The Library also offered the Poolside Book Break program for the first time in 2014.

In the spring all of the parking meters were removed from downtown. The meters were sold during River Falls Days and the City made \$5,556 from the sale.

River Falls Area Ambulance Service expanded its service territory to the City of Prescott in January. Service changes also took place at the River Falls Fire Department, though the newest member of the Department won't be fighting any fires. "Pluggie the Fire Hydrant" was retired and "Freddie the Fire Truck" entered service and was unveiled at the River Falls Days Parade.

Commercial and residential development fared well in River Falls in 2014. There were 57 new single-family dwelling permits issued for 10 different subdivisions. This was above our 20 year average of 53 single-family dwelling permits per year. There were also 36 additions/alterations permits issued including numerous projects in our downtown business district and in our corporate and industrial parks. These projects included additions at Crystal Finishing and Stratasy's.

The City's Clerk office was also busy in 2014, coordinating and running four elections. In total, the Clerk's office handled over 1,167 absentee voter applications and 6,969 votes were cast by registered voters in River Falls.

In 2014 the City was awarded numerous quality of life designations including continuing to be a Bicycle Friendly Community at the bronze level, being recertified as a Bird City for the fifth year and being recognized as a Tree City USA for the 16th consecutive year.

With a constant eye on the future, the City of River Falls looks back on 2014 with great pride. The State of the City encompasses many of the events and accomplishments that make the City of River Falls a great place to live and work. If you want to view the State of the City video, please visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xLQd92Dklyo>, and watch the complete video today! ~

2015 Emergency Weather Warning Siren Test Dates



The City of River Falls will be doing audible testing of the outdoor warning sirens on the dates listed below. If severe or threatening weather exists on any of the scheduled dates, the test will be the next day (Tuesday) at the same time.

- **May 18, 1 p.m.** - Make-up date – Tuesday, May 19, 1 p.m.
- **June 22, 1 p.m.** - Make-up date – Tuesday, June 23, 1 p.m.
- **July 27, 1 p.m.** - Make-up date – Tuesday, July 28, 1 p.m.
- **August 24, 1 p.m.** - Make-up date – Tuesday, August 25, 1 p.m.
- **September 28, 1 p.m.** - Make-up date – Tuesday, September 29, 1 p.m.

On duty staff at the River Falls Police Department monitor developing weather conditions and initiate activation of the weather sirens based on the following protocol:

- When conditions exist indicating immediate danger of a tornado or severe thunderstorm.
- If the National Weather Service issues a tornado or severe thunderstorm warning, and such conditions are threatening locally.
- When local law enforcement from the area advise of approaching severe weather conditions, sightings of tornadoes or high winds.
- If storm conditions exist, and public sightings of tornadoes or high winds are reported locally.

Please note: the City of River Falls does not sound an “all clear” after an actual activation of the outdoor warning system.

All community members are encouraged to familiarize themselves with safe practices regarding severe weather. Information can be obtained at the National Weather Service website at: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/safety.php> or Wisconsin Emergency Management website at: <http://emergencymanagement.wi.gov> or by calling the River Falls Police Department. ~



The River Falls Police Department, in coordination with local businesses, invites residents to attend “Coffee with a Cop.” This is an opportunity for citizens to have a chance to ask questions, voice concerns and get to know the officers of the Police Department. Upcoming dates include: May 14 and July 3. Please view the calendar of Events on page 2 for the locations/times. Please stop in for a cup of coffee and some pleasant and informative discussion. ~

2015 Trends Report

In March, the City completed the 2015 Trends Report. This is the 14th annual report and is a collaboration of many individuals and departments ranging from community leaders to national organizations. Information included in the document provides a statistical snapshot of the issues and major changes that River Falls has experienced during the previous calendar year. Topics that are explained include: population, housing, education, and finances. The recorded statistics serve as an indicator of the City's growth as well as a measure of progress toward the goals outlined in the City's Comprehensive Plan.

City staff contributes much of the information for this report. They document many of the changes experienced by the City, which allows the ability to compare to previous years for an accurate overall illustration of trends. For example, in 2014 the City's population increased from 15,000 in 2013 to 15,053 (DOA estimate). This is a .35 percent increase in population over the previous year. Perhaps you're interested in other topics such as enrollment figures and recent developments in River Falls' education, or the City's housing composition. The Trends Report contains these and many other statistics.



Each year the document improves the content from the previous report. This Trends Report includes a boast of new developments exclusive to 2014 including advancements of the Sterling Ponds Corporate Park and with that the completion of the Radio Road Interchange. The First National Bank of River Falls Field at Hoffman Park was completed in 2014. The document also includes awards obtained by the City that makes it a unique and inclusive place to visit and live. The City of River Falls Trends Report is intended not only as a tool for guiding future planning decisions, but also as an informative resource for members of the community. Hard copies of the report will be available at City Hall and the River Falls Public Library. Electronic copies will be available to view and download from the City's website at www.rfcity.org/transparency. ~

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City of River Falls

➔ www.rfcity.org/facebook • www.rfcity.org/twitter

Utilities - Stay informed on power outages, water main breaks and other important Utility information.

➔ www.rfmu.org/rfmufacebook • www.rfmu.org/rfmutwitter

River Falls Public Library

➔ www.rfcity.org/libraryfacebook • www.rfcity.org/librarytwitter

River Falls Park and Recreation

➔ www.rfcity.org/parkrecfacebook • www.rfcity.org/parkrectwitter

Channel 16 Sports Scores

➔ www.rfcity.org/sportsscoresfacebook • www.rfcity.org/sportsscorestwitter

Subscribe to the City of River Falls YouTube Channel at rfcity.org/youtube



Library Programs and Events Spring/Summer 2015

Check the library website at www.riverfallspubliclibrary.org/library-events.html or our Facebook page for the most up-to-date information and events not included in this list or call 715-425-0905. Library programs are free of charge. Registration is not required unless noted. Sign up for email notification of our monthly schedule by contacting Katie (katiec@riverfallspubliclibrary.org) or get notices of upcoming events by registering for notifications at the City's website, www.rfcity.org.

Closed Dates

July 3, 4, 5, 6

Drop boxes will be open; renew materials online at the MORE website, www.more.lib.wi.us or by calling telephone renewal 1-866-697-3639.



Wisconsin Waters Week, May 2-8

Water Crafts And Critters-May 2, 10-11 a.m., Smith Meeting Room
Kids learn about Wisconsin's aquatic residents of all sorts and craft a 'critter hat' of their favorite creature to take home.

Wisconsin Water Watch-May 2, 1-2 p.m., Collins Community Room
A project of the Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism, this program explains the mission of Water Watch and touches on various threats to our states many and varied waterways and water sources. Displays with life-size sculptures and interactive touch screens focus on four major Wisconsin water issues.

Flowage: Water for Fishing, Swimming, Boating and Drinking-May 2, 2-4 p.m. Collins Community Room

An overview of the St. Croix and Kinnickinnic flowages, the rivers' current states of health and growing threats to them, trout fishing's future, and the status of our drinking water supply.

Fishing For Facts-May 5, 6:30 p.m.

Accompany an expert on a fact-finding mission to our local river as you learn what makes a good trout habitat and what else lives in these lively waters. Measure of crucial levels of dissolved oxygen and temperature ranges necessary for trout survival. Look for evidence of physical and chemical damage. Meet at the Library, then walk with the group to the river.

Canoeing With Cliff: Wild Waters-May 7, 7 p.m., Collins Community Room

Intrepid canoeing expedition leader and outdoors writer Cliff Jacobson is back to share tips on how to navigate North America's wild rivers.

Children/Youth Programs

Summer Reading Program – June 8-August 21

The main component of our summer reading program will be an independent reading program. Kids from birth to 12th grade will have a chance to read, earn prizes, and participate at any level they choose. The cost of this program is underwritten by the River Falls Public Library Foundation.



Wednesday Programs: All of our Wednesday programs are large-group performances or activity sessions scheduled at 10:30 a.m. in the lower level meeting room unless otherwise noted.

Wednesday June 10: Nature Connection –animal heroes

Wednesday June 17: In Capable Hands – jugglers

Wednesday, June 24: Brian Richards – magician and comedian

Wednesday July 1: Jim Lenz – The magic and science guy

Wednesday, July 8: Superhero Academy – games and activities for superheroes in training

Wednesday, July 15 David Landau – musician and storyteller

Wednesday, July 22: Climb Theater-The Lion and the Mouse

Wednesday, July 29: Local Heroes-police, fire, and ambulance

Summer Story Times

Stories, songs, action rhymes, and lots of fun! Pre-registration required and begins May 25. Class sizes are limited. Held in the Children's Program Room.

- **Babytime** (0-23 months & caregiver) – Tuesdays 9:30-9:50 a.m. Dates: June 9-August 4
- **Toddler Lapsit** (24-36 months & caregiver) – Tuesdays 10:45-11:15 a.m. Dates: June 9-August 4
- **Preschool Story Time** (3-5 year olds) – Thursdays 10:30-11:15 a.m. or 1:00-1:45 p.m. Dates: June 11-August 6
- **Family Story Hour** (geared to up to 5 year olds but open to all) Third Tuesday, 6:00 p.m. Dates: May 19, June 16, July 21, August 18, September 15

The **High School Book Discussion Group** (9-12 Grade) meets the second Tuesday of each month at 4 p.m. in the Board Room. Dates are May 12, June 9, July 14, August 11, September 8.

The **Middle School Book Discussion Group** (6-8 Grades) meets the first Tuesday of each month at 4 p.m. in the Board Room. Dates are May 5, June 2, July 7, August 4, September 1.

The **4th-5th Grade Book Discussion Group** meets the third Tuesday of each month at 4 p.m. This group doesn't meet during the summer. It will meet May 19 and resume September 15.

Legos Afternoons (grades K-5) meets every other Monday from 4-5 p.m. We provide the Legos, you provide the imagination. Call to register. Dates: June 15, 29; July 6, 20; August 3, 17.

Paws to Read – Make an appointment to read with a therapy-trained dog. Visit Children's Desk for details.

1,000 Books Before Kindergarten

This is an independent program that allows you to track books read to your baby or toddler with the goal of reading 1,000 books together by the time s/he starts kindergarten! Registration required. Books read for this program can count for summer reading as well

Poolside Book Break

Tuesdays and Wednesdays at Glen Park Pool at 2:30 p.m. during the lifeguard break. Books available to check-out. Dates are June 9 through pool closing in August.

Adult Summer Reading Program

Adults, ages 18 and up, don't have to miss out on all of the fun this summer at the library! We have a wide variety of programs that will offer the opportunity to have fun, explore new interests, and engage with the community. Stop into the library to fill out book review slips, play summer reading bingo, or test your knowledge with one of our weekly activity sheets for your chance to win prizes.

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Library Programs and Events

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Brush Strokes Paint Party-June 11, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Let's kick off the adult summer reading program with a fun evening of painting. The River Falls Public Library is sponsoring a Brush Strokes painting party for adults ages 21+ at the Lazy River Bar & Grill. Instructor Kayleen of Brush Strokes will help participants paint a blooming floral scene on a canvas covered in book pages. Minimum of 8 (max 30) participants needed to hold the event. Registration and \$10 materials fee due by Friday, June 5, 2015.

Book Club in a Bar

Lively and engaging literary conversations at local River Falls bars. A great way to meet new people and sit outdoors (weather permitting) discussing books!

The Boys in the Boat: Nine Americans and their Epic Quest for Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics by Daniel James Brown-**June 17, 6:30 p.m. at Bo's 'N Mine**

When Pride Still Mattered: A Life of Vince Lombardi by David Maraniss-**July 15, 6:30 p.m., Mel's Midtown**

I Am the Messenger by Markus Zusak-**August 19, 6:30 p.m., Johnnie's Bar**

Events and Programs

Antiques with Mark Moran-June 20, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Antiques appraised by an expert! Please call 715-426-3496 to reserve your slot. There is a \$10 fee to hold your place. Registration deadline June 9.

A Doll's Tea-June 27, 3-4 p.m.

Bring your favorite doll and your best manners to a children's tea.

Annual Flower Show-July 8, 6 p.m.

Sponsored by the Library and the First National Bank of River Falls & Prescott. All entries are due July 8 at 6 p.m. Judging begins at 6:15 p.m. Categories include traditional, miniature, and River Falls Days theme. Cash prizes and ribbons for both adult and youth (14 and under). There will be a flower arranging class offered in mid-June. Check website for more information.

Kiddie Parade at the Public Library and more-July 11, 10 a.m.-12 noon

Cutest parade in town, and certainly the shortest! Registration begins at 10 a.m. Parade steps off at 10:30 a.m. Dress-up categories for kids. Fun and prizes for all! Games and activities will be provided by River Falls 4 Children (RF4C); petting zoo provided by Fantasy Corral on the library lawn from 10 a.m.-12 noon.

Super Movie Night-Wednesdays

June 24, July 29, August 12; 6:30 p.m.; RFPL meeting room

Foreign Film Series-Mondays, July 27-August 31, 7 p.m.

Six Mondays featuring award-winning international films. Free popcorn!

At the Fair: Talent Show-August 8, 1-3 p.m.

Prizes awarded. Fun for everyone!



The Kleinpell Gallery

The River Falls Public Library has a gallery in the lower level that hosts displays of art, quilts, local history, science, and other topics of interest. The gallery recently mounted an exhibit with artifacts on loan from the National Aeronautics and Science Administration (NASA).

The gallery relies on the community for volunteers. There are several ways to get involved:

- Loans of artwork, memorabilia, and other items that fit into the current exhibit
- Idea proposals for gallery displays and exhibits
- Reliable and friendly volunteers to help monitor the gallery, especially evenings and weekends. Volunteers count gallery visitors, answer general questions, and relay information to the event coordinator.
- Help with show set-up, we will train. There are approximately nine shows per year.
- Donate to the River Falls Library Foundation. The Foundation provides funding to bring in exhibits such as the Smithsonian Museums-on-Main Street and NASA, and provide collaborating programs.

Summer Gallery Events

Creative Kids: The Annual All-School Art Show - April 26 – May 30
Artwork by students of all ages from River Falls Schools.

Hello Dollies! June 8-July 18

Dozens of dolls of every ages, size and style, plus dollhouses and accessories.

COME TO THE FAIR! The Showcase of Summer – July 27-September 4

Celebrate this iconic summer festival right here at the library with this fun gallery exhibit and several fair-related events on tap. ~

Spring Cleanup Begins May 11

Spring cleanup is provided for residents in the City of River Falls who are currently billed for city garbage service by Advanced Disposal. Residents bringing items for disposal will be asked to present a form of identification and a copy of a recent invoice for city garbage service from Advanced Disposal. People who do not qualify will not be allowed to dispose of their goods.

Location: City Public Works Garage – 950 Benson Street

- Monday – Friday, May 11-15 (4 p.m. to 8 p.m.)
- Saturday, May 16 (8 a.m. to 1 p.m.)

Advanced Disposal reserves the right to refuse any hazardous materials. For City residents living in Pierce County, Pierce County Solid Waste (715-273-3092) offers a clean sweep program each September for disposal of many hazardous waste products.

Please call Advanced Disposal at 866-983-6542 with questions on what can be discarded or visit www.rfcity.org/cleanup for a list of acceptable and unacceptable items. There will also be a one week fall clean up beginning October 20, 2015. ~





River Falls Days Theme: Viva La Kinni

What started as “Old Fashioned Bargain Days” in 1974, has become River Falls Days. It will be held July 10 – 12 and promises to be another fun, family-friendly weekend for all ages to enjoy. Located along the scenic Kinnickinnic River and just steps from downtown, Heritage Park, Maple Street, Riverwalk, City Hall Plaza and the surrounding areas northeast of City Hall will again serve as the festival ground for this year’s grand community celebration.

As we begin to plan for 2015, we continue to seek opportunities for improvement in every aspect of the event, primarily based on feedback received from community members. While complete details will be available on the Chamber website, www.rfchamber.com, as available, a few changes you can expect to see include the following:

- **Truck and Tractor Pulls.** The truck and tractor pulls have traditionally been held on two separate dates, all within the industrial park on the north end of town. This year, the FFA Alumni will take over these events and incorporate them into one event being held Saturday afternoon/evening.
- **Parade.** The #1 question received is associated with the parade route. NO, it will not be changing anytime soon. If parade crowds are not your “thing”, consider checking out the beer tent instead this year! There are plans in place to stream the parade live and offer happy hour specials from the beer tent, so you won’t miss a thing. Live music is also being planned immediately following the parade, so bring your whole family, grab a bite to eat at the food tent, and enjoy the evening as long as you would like. Are you anxious to sign up as a parade participant? Forms will be available at the Chamber website May 1.
- **Carnival Expanded Hours.** We are excited to bring back Earl’s Rides, a multi-generationally owned carnival. The carnival will again be located in the grassy area northeast of City Hall and adjacent to the river. We hope you are as excited as we are to experience their great rides, games and more! New this year, the carnival will be open Sunday as well!
- **Cover Charges.** There is no charge for friends and family to again gather at the beer/food tent Friday evening, so stop by and check out the great band, Sushi Roll – even if you can only stay for a few minutes. On Saturday evening, the great country bands of Rural Route 5 and Lost Highway will be back with a

\$5 per person gate fee to enter the beer tent. Note: all weekend there is no gate fee to access the food tent when entering via Maple Street.

- **Sunday Family Fun Day.** We are excited to share that in addition to the great family events that will continue to take place under the big tent on Saturday; we are expanding our family focus into Sunday as well. In addition to the carnival being open and the Car Cruze-In taking place on Main Street, the beer tent will also be open during the day. If your organization is interesting in providing family activities at this location, please contact the Chamber office today!
- **Merchant Booths.** New this year, individuals will have the opportunity to have a vendor booth along Maple Street both Saturday and Sunday. Vendor applications will be available soon on the Chamber website.

With a focus on continuing to balance the importance of tradition and new opportunities, we look forward to celebrating our 41st year of River Falls Days. As with all community events, it is the commitment and support of hundreds of volunteers that make it possible. If you are interested in volunteering as part of this celebration or have ideas and suggestions for improvements, please don’t hesitate to contact the Chamber. We look forward to seeing you and your family at our events this summer!

For more information on upcoming River Falls Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Bureau events, visit www.rfchamber.com or call 715-425-2533. ~

Other 2015 Summer/Fall Events

Town ‘N Country Day – June 14

Celebrate River Falls’ agricultural heritage with a free breakfast, interactive kid’s activities, petting zoo and free root beer floats. This event will be held at Dick’s Fresh Market from 8-11 a.m. and at Security Financial Bank from 1-3 p.m.

Sunday Summer Car Cruze-Ins – July 12 and September 20

View classic cars, rat rods and motorcycles while listening to classic tunes. Check out great deals at local shops.

River Falls Bacon Bash – September 19 – 20

<http://www.riverfallsbaconbash.com/>



Celebrate all things bacon at this festival featuring bacon-inspired food booths, cook-offs and pig-themed contests for the entire family. This year’s event has been selected as a Super Qualifier elite event for the World Food Championships exclusively for Wisconsin.

For more information about upcoming events, please visit the River Falls Chamber of Commerce’s website at <http://www.rfchamber.com/index.shtml> ~



Bike Rodeo is July 11

The River Falls Police Department, in partnership with the River Falls Area Hospital, will once again be sponsoring a Bicycle Rodeo. The Bicycle Rodeo is an opportunity for children, ages 5-11, to practice safety skills needed for safe bicycle riding. The Rodeo consists of multiple stations where safety skills are taught, discussed, and practiced. The Bicycle Rodeo will be on Saturday, July 11, during River Falls Days in the upper parking lot of City Hall. The Rodeo begins at 10 a.m. This event is free. Each child should bring their bicycle and helmet to participate. ~

Community Solar Garden

Feeding Your Renewable Energy Appetite!

Actions have shown that River Falls has a big appetite for renewable energy. By purchasing renewable energy blocks in record numbers, River Falls ranks 10th in the nation! Because of that, we are aggressively pursuing more renewable energy options for our customers. Last year your utility beat out many other communities in a competitive process to get a solar garden site in our City. Is the idea of community solar garden new to you? Here are answers to some frequently asked questions:

What is a solar garden? It's a large field of solar panels, owned and maintained by the utility. Customers can purchase shares in the "garden" to reduce their electric bill.

Why not just put solar on my house or business? Because of the economy of scale, a community solar garden can be installed, operated and maintained at a cheaper price. Plus, many people don't have a good "solar window", so it might not work at your home, business or non-profit.

How does it work? Any utility customer can purchase a "share" of the garden, large or small. Every month, for 25 years, your monthly utility bill will include a credit for the amount of energy produced by your share.

What if the sun doesn't shine? Do my lights go out? No, you're still connected to the grid, so you'll always have the reliable power you're accustomed to.

Where is it? You'll see it from Highway 35 in the new Sterling Ponds Industrial Park.

25 years is a long time - what if I move? You can transfer, gift or sell shares at any time.

Do I have to buy a share now? We're building the garden to its fullest capacity - so if you don't buy now, you'll have to wait until a purchased share becomes available. We're not going to expand this site, so there is a sense of urgency to buy now because you might not get a chance later.

What if I don't have the funds for the upfront cost? River Falls Municipal Utilities is offering a loan program to cover the cost of a share. The loan is four percent and will be paid back on your utility bill in the first 12 months.

How much will it cost and how do I apply? For more details on pricing, applications and purchase, visit www.rfmu.org/solargarden or contact Mike Noreen at 715-426-3467.

This is a great way to purchase local, clean, reliable, renewable energy at great price with little risk. We want you to be a part of this historic offering, so don't delay. Contact Mike Noreen at 715-426-3467 or go to www.rfmu.org/solargarden and buy a share today! ~



Tri-Angels Playground Crosses the Fundraising Finish Line

The Tri-Angels Playground committee proudly announces that thanks to the overwhelming, widespread philanthropic support of the River Falls community and beyond, the Tri-Angels Playground has crossed the fundraising finish line. There are a few requests outstanding that, if funded, will go toward any unanticipated construction costs, additional signage.

The project secured four "Pillar" sponsors that will be showcased at the entry way of the playground. Pillar sponsors are those who have donated \$50,000 or more toward the playground. Our Pillar sponsors are the 5K/10K Committee chaired by Samantha Jensen and Hannah Bellrichard; Otto Bremer Foundation; Royal Credit Union; and most recently, Affinity Plus – Federal Credit Union.

Additional support has come from children selling artwork and conducting lemonade stands, family gifts, corporate contributions, service club dedicated funds, and monies raised from hosting an array of events. Local companies have also banded together to donate over \$100,000 in materials and services.

Unlimited Play, the non-profit steering the project, has never seen the level of dedication and determination from a community before. "Together, we did it," says Community Engagement Director, Victoria Babb. "We are way ahead of schedule and now can open the playground later this summer so all children and families can benefit."

The City of River Falls officially designated an area within Hoffman Park as the future building site for the 8,000 sq. ft. universally accessible playground that will honor the lives of the three Schaffhausen sisters. Mother of the girls, Jessica Peterson, as well as her entire family, expresses their gratitude for the love and support that has been continually given to them and especially this labor of love project. A community build will take place in June with the opening/dedication set for August 15.

To learn more about the Tri-Angels Playground, visit the Facebook page where you can sign up to help build during the Community Build or learn the times set for the dedication or check website at <https://www.unlimitedplay.org/tri-angels-playground>. ~

Rain Barrel Program Offered

The City is again offering interested residents the opportunity to participate in the rain barrel program. According to the EPA, a rain barrel will save most homeowners about 1,300 gallons of water during the peak summer months.

The City has 30 gallon pre-assembled barrels available to purchase for \$35 each. The barrels are blue but residents have had success in painting them to suit a particular setting. A \$30 rebate is also available for the purchase of a rain barrel online or at a home improvement store. For more information on the program, please visit www.rfcity.org/barrel or contact Crystal Raleigh at craleigh@rfcity.org or 715-426-3412. ~



Park Master Plan

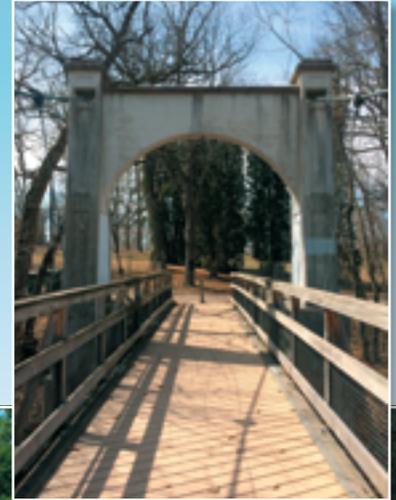
Glen Park and Hoffman Park

In the late summer of 2014, the City of River Falls hired HKGI from Minneapolis to aid our community in creating a Park Master Plan for Glen and Hoffman Parks. The park master plans will coordinate and guide future development within each of the parks for the next 20 years. Glen Park and Hoffman Park have both experienced significant demands from various user groups as the City has grown.

Starting in the fall of 2014, HKGI, city staff, and committee members conducted the preliminary existing conditions analysis of the parks. From there, the plan has developed through a defined planning process that included a variety of public participation opportunities to solicit the community and park visitors input.

With the wide range of activities at each park location, the community's voice was integral in the planning process. A primary component in obtaining the communities input was to conduct a web-based park assessment survey. Over 1,000 direct emails were sent to Park and Recreation Program participants and through our social media campaign, the use of Twitter and Facebook, resulted in approximately 550 survey respondents. The survey helped staff and the consultant gain valuable input regarding specific park uses, activities, expectations and desires the community had for each of the parks.

Additionally, two community open houses were conducted in January and March 2015, with attendees participating from a variety of park user groups and citizens. At the open house, HKGI displayed concepts for each park, ranging from minimal change to enhanced recreation. Each of the concepts explored a variety of activities and design components to present to the public for review. Open House visitors had the ability to



respond to proposed concepts in multiple formats, ranging from verbal interactions with staff/consultant to graphically indicating likes/dislikes. Analysis of the comments/results from the open house and online survey were processed by city staff and HKGI, which are being utilized in the refinement of the preferred park design concepts.

The project is entering into the final stages. Review of the final Park Master Plans by the Park Board and Plan Commission is anticipated to occur in May, with a recommendation to the City Council in June for approval. We encourage anyone, of any age, to join us in the park planning process and discover what the vision of Glen Park and Hoffman Park will be for the next 20 years. For more information and to view the concept plans, please visit www.rfcity.org/ParkMasterPlans.



Camp at Hoffman Park

In 1987, the River Falls Park and Recreation Board decided to use part of Hoffman Park as a City campground. Lorin Frey, City Council member, Park Board Representative, and avid camper, brought the idea to the forefront, and as they say, the rest is history!

Hoffman Park is open, weather permitting, April 15-October 30. The cost is \$15 per site per day. There are 15 sites available on a first come, first serve basis with electricity, shower facilities, and a dump station is available. Hoffman Park offers a quiet, scenic area with hiking and biking trails, ball fields, and volleyball courts. It is located close to the downtown area so it is easy to visit the restaurants and stores.

The campsite's busiest weekend of use is River Falls Days (July 10-12), as Hoffman Park hosts an annual softball tournament. If you have any questions, please call our Recreation Office at 715-425-0924.

Center for Innovation and Business Development Celebrating One Year Anniversary

This month, the Center for Innovation and Business Development (CIBD) at UW-River Falls will celebrate its one year anniversary. Led by CIBD Director Danielle Campeau, the CIBD is dedicated to supporting economic growth and development in the greater St. Croix Valley by offering assistance and resources to businesses in the region. Services provided by the CIBD include connecting entrepreneurs with skilled faculty and students at the University that can offer assistance with resolving issues and completing projects.

Over the past year, the role of the CIBD has evolved to include leading several campus and community economic development initiatives. One current example is Work River Falls. Initiated by Sajan CEO and co-founder Shannon Zimmerman, Work River Falls is committed to increasing awareness that River Falls is the home of a wide range of companies that hire quality, well-paying professional and technical positions.



CIBD Director Danielle Campeau and SBDC Director Steve DeWald met with Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation Chief Operating Officer Tricia Braun (center) during her visit to River Falls in June.

Additionally, Work River Falls will support regional economic development by allowing local employers better access to top talent residing in the area. The Work River Falls initiative will be rolled out this spring.

Given its mission of supporting the regional business community, UW-River Falls wanted



A ribbon cutting ceremony for the new CIBD and SBDC offices in the Municipal Power Plant was held on April 8, 2014.

to locate the CIBD somewhere easily accessible by off campus populations. Recognizing the key role the CIBD plays in benefiting the community, the City of River Falls is generously providing office space for the CIBD and the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) in the decommissioned Municipal Power Plant.

While the renovated office space in the Power Plant has served as a great first home for the CIBD, the goal is for that home to be a temporary one. The City of River Falls, the River Falls Economic Development Corporation, and UW-River Falls are partnering on a grant to the Economic Development Administration that will partially fund the construction of a new St. Croix Valley Business Incubator (SCVBI) in the Sterling Ponds Corporate Park. If funded, the SCVBI will house new start-up businesses, product and services growth for existing River Falls businesses, and office space for regional economic development organizations including the CIBD and SBDC.

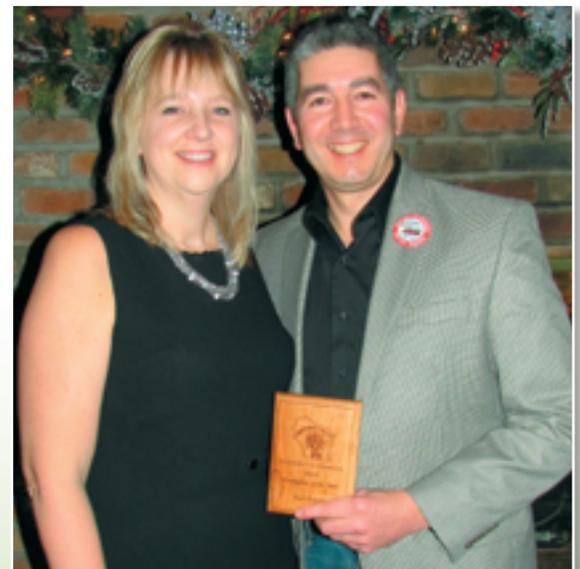
More information on the CIBD can be found online at <http://www.uwrf.edu/CIBD>. Additional information on planning for the SCVBI is available at <http://www.rfcity.org/incubator>.

2014 Firefighter of the Year

The River Falls 2014 Firefighter of the Year was awarded to Neil Engel. A newcomer to the department, Neil was selected from a group of his peers and awarded this honor at the department's Annual Awards Banquet held in January.

"Since becoming a member of the department, Neil has had a positive attitude and has become an informal leader. We're lucky to have him as a member." said Chief Nelson. Neil's leadership qualities came through as he guided the department's truck committee through the process of writing specifications for a new fire engine. His experience as a mechanical engineer helped make the process go smoothly. Neil moved to River Falls six years ago with his wife, Christine, and three children: Masy, Hidee and KCee.

After receiving the award, Neil commented, "I'm very honored to be selected, as the award is chosen by the past 'Fire Fighters of the Year'. Each of the fire fighters on our department bring with them a unique set of skills, and I think that is what makes a volunteer fire department so strong. It's our job, as volunteer fire fighters, to make sure we are stepping forward when our unique talent is needed by the department. I am just trying to do my part."



Neil Engel, 2014 Firefighter of the Year, and wife, Christine

St. Croix Valley Business Incubator Project Update

One of the priorities of City and business leaders for the past several years has been the development of a business incubator to assist new and emerging companies with business development services. As the City Council prioritized the creation of a business incubator in the City's 2013-2015 Work Plan, a working group was established among local economic development, City, and University leaders see how to make the idea a reality.



These efforts have culminated in the formation of the St. Croix Valley Business Incubator (SCVBI). The SCVBI is a collaborative partnership among UW-River Falls, the City of River Falls, and the regional economic development community that will serve as a one-stop location for the coordinated delivery of business development services in the region. In March, these partners submitted an application for a grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration for a grant of up to 50 percent of the costs for constructing this facility in the newly-established Sterling Ponds Corporate Park.

The SCVBI will be owned by the River Falls Economic Development Corporation and managed by UWRP's Center for Innovation and Business Development (CIBD) and Director Danielle Campeau. Other key partners, like the Chippewa Valley Technical College, regional economic development corporations, and the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, have been instrumental in providing guidance on creating successful incubators.

Services provided by the SCVBI will include affordable rental space; business planning; coaching and mentoring assistance; business software; financial advisory services; market development assistance; export assistance; networking opportunities; and access to UWRP resources. These services will be offered to businesses and entrepreneurs located both inside and outside the physical incubator space.

Pending approval of the grant application, the grand opening of the St. Croix Valley Business Incubator is tentatively scheduled for spring of 2016. For more information and updates on the project, please visit <http://www.rfcity.org/incubator>. ~

Pavement Management – Chip Sealing

Each year, the City's streets, alleys, and other pavements are evaluated and inspected. The City seeks the most cost-effective way to preserve and maintain them. Preservation and maintenance practices include: crack sealing; seal coating; curb, gutter and sidewalk repair; and mill and overlays. One of the most effective ways to improve the quality of our streets and delay the need for resurfacing or total reconstruction is through the utilization of Chip Sealing.

What Is Chip Sealing?

Chip Sealing involves the spraying of an emulsified asphalt (asphalt and water) mixture on the surface of the existing asphalt road, immediately followed by the application of a layer of crushed gravel (or chips). The gravel is then rolled and becomes embedded into the asphalt as it cures. After a few days to a week of curing, the remaining loose gravel is swept off the surface.

Why Use Chip Seals?

- A chip seal is about one fifth the cost of a conventional asphalt overlay and saves City taxpayers approximately \$150,000 per year.
- By extending the time between asphalt overlays, chip seals result in lower costs over the long term.
- Chip sealing allows us to keep the roadway open to traffic whereas asphalt-only sealing requires closure to traffic.
- Chip seals provide an effective moisture barrier for the underlying pavement against water intrusion by sealing cracks in the pavement.
- Chip Seals extend the service life of pavements more than twice that of asphalt only sealing.



- Chip seals prevent deterioration of the asphalt surface from the effects of aging and oxidation due to water and sun, extending the life 7-10 years.

Want to see how it works?

Go to www.rfcity.org/rfctv; click on City Informational Videos and look for [Seal Coating City Streets](#) video.

If you have any questions or concerns about this, or any other pavement related issues, please feel free to contact David Keating, Civil Engineer at 715-426-3411 or dkeating@rfcity.org. ~

Union Street Improvements

One of the City's 2013-2015 Work Plan items is to "Complete Safety Improvements at Main/Union." The project location is the intersection of North Main Street and Union Street near the Public Library. The speed limit in this area is 25 MPH. A median pedestrian refuge island was constructed in 2005 to enhance the safety available to pedestrians attempting to cross at this location but driver awareness of the pedestrians remains a concern. Additionally, a number of rear-end accidents involving stopped, turning, or otherwise slowing vehicles are occurring due to inattentive drivers.

The intersection made the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's (WisDOT) "five percent most severe safety needs" list for local roads. For years 2008-2013, there were 13 mainline rear-end crashes, three in which the stopped vehicle was yielding to a crossing pedestrian. There was one accident in which a car being pushed by a pedestrian was struck by a car. A pedestrian fatality occurred at this location on November 5, 2014, one week after plans for these improvements were submitted to WisDOT. A pedestrian fatality also occurred in 2005.

The proposed project will involve the installation of pedestrian and traffic actuated flashing beacons for both directions of North Main Street. A pair of beacons will supplement the pedestrian crossing signs in each direction on North Main Street. Additionally, there will be a "Prepare to Stop" warning sign and pair of flashing beacons connected to an in-pavement detector that will sense stopped traffic and warn southbound traffic of the traffic queue from either the pedestrian crossing or the signal at Division Street. This project proposes to use similar technology to that utilized on Cascade Avenue for enhanced pedestrian crossings including pedestrian detection cameras, push buttons, and rectangular LED flashing yellow beacons for warning purposes.

The State estimates an overall cost \$132,000 for the proposed system at Main and Union including design and construction engineering. On March 25, 2014, the City Council approved a State Municipal Agreement under which the city's cost is estimated at \$13,200. Design work was completed and final plans were submitted to WisDOT on November 3, 2014, and a letting was scheduled for April 14, 2015. Construction of the improvements is anticipated in the summer of 2015.

We believe the proposed improvements will reduce rear-end accidents and hope pedestrian safety will increase. However, much depends on how pedestrians and vehicle operators use the improvements. One problem we are seeing with similar flashers on Cascade Avenue is pedestrians letting their guard down by failing to play a role in their own safety. It is imperative that pedestrians stop, and not step in front of an oncoming vehicle until they have been yielded to. Furthermore, drivers need to comply with their obligation to yield to a pedestrian using a crosswalk if they can safely stop. The enhanced warning signs and flashers are intended to catch a driver's attention and remind them of their obligation to yield, but they cannot protect a pedestrian from an inattentive, impaired or otherwise compromised driver.

In a related matter, changes were made in the Main/Division signal light to reduce queues and delays for southbound Main Street traffic in the PM rush hour. These changes were implemented in December 2014 and appear to have improved the situation without noticeable impacts to other traffic. If you have noticed positive or negative differences with this intersection since December, we would like to hear from you.

If you have further questions regarding these proposed improvements on Main Street near Union Street, feel free to contact Reid Wronski, Director of Public Works/City Engineer, rwrnski@rfcity.org, 715-426-3409. ~

City Construction Updates

The opening of the Radio Road interchange in 2014 was the result of over 20 years of planning and coordination with strategic transportation partners in state, county and local government. While the opening of the interchange was a significant accomplishment, it was just the first step in a series of coordinated transportation improvements planned to accommodate future growth in and around the City of River Falls. Over the next few years, additional projects will upgrade key roadways serving the Radio Road Interchange area.

St. Croix County will reconstruct and upgrade Radio Road between CTH MM and Paulson Road as early as 2015. This current 22'-24' township road will be reconstructed to County Highway standards. On February 17, 2015, St. Croix County held a public information meeting at the Kilkarney Hills Golf Course where they presented preliminary plans to reconstruct the road, adding 5' paved shoulders plus 5' gravel shoulders. If the project progresses as planned and necessary easements are secured, construction could be completed as early as the fall of 2015.

In 2015, the City of River Falls will begin planning and design for improvements to Chapman Drive from the Radio Road interchange east to Huppert Street (Old CTH U). This project would include the paving of a 10' wide multi-modal trail along the south side of Chapman Drive. The base for this trail was constructed by the interchange contractor allowing them to establish an off-road haul road to bring fill to the interchange site. Other anticipated improvements include reconstructing and widening the existing 20' wide roadway to 32' and curb and gutter on the south side.

St. Croix County will reconstruct and upgrade Mann Lane from CTH MM south to CTH M (W. Division St). This current 22' gravel township road will be upgraded to a County Highway with widening similar to Radio Road detailed above. If the project progresses as planned, construction could be completed as early as 2016.

As part of the Radio Road interchange project, County Highway U was rerouted to access State Highway 35 at the new interchange by following Chapman Drive. The county projects noted above on Radio Road and Mann Lane will result in County Highway U being extended to County Highway M.

Feel free to contact Reid Wronski, Director of Public Works/City Engineer (rwrnski@rfcity.org or 715-426-3409), regarding any of these projects. ~

River Falls Waste Water Treatment Facility

At the west end of Apollo Road, you will find the City's waste water treatment facility. Yes, this is where "it" goes when water runs down your sink drain or when you flush your toilet. This facility has and is serving River Falls well. Our facility puts treated water back into the Kinnickinnic River cleaner than the river water flowing past our operation. While things are good at the plant, it is time for some upgrades and maintenance to ensure efficient future operations. MSA Engineering from the Minneapolis area has been hired to assist with the design and engineering of the upgrades. The engineering work will be completed this summer with construction commencing in the late fall or early winter 2015 with completion of the improvements in the spring of 2016. Construction will include new sludge storage facilities, pumps, and screening. You will not have any disruption to your waste water services. We wanted to let you know that your #2 is our #1 priority. ~

Shifting the Focus to the Kinnickinnic River Corridor

In the last community update, we reported that the City was working with community partners to plan for the continued study and federal re-licensing of the two hydroelectric facilities. Throughout the last year, City staff continued to analyze the financial operations and licensing options available to the City. We also received many comments from residents and non-residents, and continued conversations with stakeholders on a path forward.

Two points became abundantly clear: (1) residents, non-residents, and visitors alike all have a strong and differing connection to the Kinnickinnic River; and (2) there a comprehensive vision missing for how the community wants to engage with the river for years to come.

As a result, the City Council has taken a number of important steps forward. First, they adopted the City's first Strategic Plan that identifies enhancing the Kinnickinnic River Corridor as a primary initiative for the coming years. Second, the Council supported a Kinnickinnic River Corridor Planning timeline that put the brake on licensing and establishes a community-wide river corridor planning process. Lastly, the Council adopted additional financial controls to ensure the continued responsible fiscal management of the hydro facilities.



The Kinnickinnic River Corridor Planning process will be a community process similar to the Glen and Hoffman Park Master Planning. It will include community learning and discussions on recreation opportunities, economic development, trails and walking paths, water quality, fisheries, stormwater, and hydro generation, among others. Planning is expected to continue throughout 2016-2019.

This spring, staff met with stakeholders to prepare and submit a hydro license extension request to the federal government. If approved, the City and stakeholders will shift focus from the immediate licensing to the corridor planning. Incorporating the question of hydro generation into the overall corridor plan allows for the community to drive the decision of whether to continue generating power and leave the facilities in place.

Please visit <http://www.rfcity.org/hydro> for more information on the progress of the license extension request. And stay tuned for more information on the Kinnickinnic River Corridor Plan and your opportunities for input and to learn more about this great river! ~

Spotlight on Kinnickinnic Trailway

Did you know that River Falls has beautiful trails along the Kinnickinnic River? Enjoy diverse wildlife and plants along the Kinnickinnic Trail. The trail runs down or alongside the Kinnickinnic River and offers the opportunity to see a variety of species of wildlife and birds. Enjoy the beauty of the river and trails in its purest form. Fly fisherman and kayakers have discovered the trails leading down to the Kinni but for many residents, they are well-kept secret which you need to explore!

Visit <http://www.rfcity.org/kinnickinnictrailsystem> to view a map detailing access points and a trail rating system on the difficulty of trails. ~

Ponds Available for Adoption!

Calling all nature lovers! The City is seeking volunteers for its Adopt A Pond program. Adopting a pond is easy, fun, and educational. All you need to do is set aside two days per year to go out and take a quick walk around the pond, picking up any trash or debris that you can reach without getting wet, and reporting any erosion, clogging, or other issues you may notice. This is an excellent opportunity to expose youngsters to nature, or bring together a group of friends, neighbors, or colleagues for a great cause. We'll even put up a nice sign to thank you! There are approximately 50 ponds around the City that are available to adopt, you may walk or drive past one every day. Detailed information on the program including a map of available ponds is available at www.rfcity.org/adopt. If you are interested in this program or have further questions, please contact Crystal Raleigh (email - craleigh@rfcity.org or phone 715-426-3412), or stop in to City Hall. ~



Call 811 before you dig - it's completely free!

Whatever the tool, whatever the project, Diggers Hotline helps identify costly and dangerous utilities that can be buried just inches beneath your yard's surface. Wisconsin state law requires you to call three working days before digging and have your lines marked so you can dig freely and safely. Homeowners often make risky assumptions about whether or not they should get their utility lines marked, but every digging job requires a call. Digging without calling can disrupt service to an entire neighborhood, harm you and those around you, and potentially result in fines and repair costs. Call 811 or 800-242-8511 before you dig. For more information on the Wisconsin's Diggers Hotline program, visit www.DiggersHotline.com. ~

Pet Waste Impacts Water Quality

Are you a responsible pet owner? You may take your animals to the veterinarian, feed them high quality food, and give them plenty of love and attention. You may not be aware; however, that your responsibility extends to properly taking care of your pet's waste. If waste is left in the yard, sidewalk or in the gutter, it can easily end up in a storm drain and eventually the Kinnickinnic River. Animal fecal matter in the water contains nutrients that encourage weed and algae growth and pathogens, such as bacteria and parasitic worms that can transmit disease to humans. This waste, combined with other pollutants, can close beaches that residents enjoy.

Pet waste is not the largest or most toxic pollutant in waterways, but it is one of the many sources that can add up. Just think about how many pets we have living in this community, and you get an idea of the scope of the problem. Pollutants from pet waste can be washed into storm sewers by rain or melting snow. It also can be a problem for children who play outside or residents who garden. Flies can also spread disease from pet waste.

River Falls has an ordinance prohibiting the deposit of fecal matter on public property, including sidewalks, parks, and streets. However, many people still do not pick up after their pets.

Some have asked "after I pick it up, what should I do with it?"

- Flush it down the toilet after removing any rocks, sticks or cat litter. This water is properly treated by a septic system or wastewater treatment plant.
- Put it in the trash. Many neighborhood parks and walking paths have trash receptacles available.
- Install an underground pet waste digester that works like a small septic tank.
- Dig a hole or trench that is about 5 inches deep. Keep the waste covered and away from vegetable gardens and from any lake, stream, ditch, or well. It also should not be too close to where children play. Don't add the waste to your household compost pile because it won't get hot enough to kill disease organisms in pet waste.

Pet owners can play an important role in protecting the Kinni. Proper disposal of pet waste protects water quality and the health of residents of all ages who are enjoying outdoor activities. ~

Sycamore Water Tower Project



Sycamore water tower, our 300,000 gallon water tank near the center of town that was constructed in 1959, is slated for a complete recondition later this year. The tower will be sandblasted to bare metal and completely repainted. Watch the painting closely because there may be a fun surprise for all to see when completed. The main focus of the project will be to completely repaint the

tank. There will also be some minor hand railing maintenance and other small physical repairs done. This project is expected to be completed by late summer or early fall. There will be communication with the neighborhood prior to the commencement of the project. This is a big project, and we appreciate your patience during this 4-8 week painting project. ~

Changes to the City's Taxi Service



The appearance of our taxis has changed in recent months, but did you know that the City of River Falls Shared Ride Taxi Service has been part of our community for almost 30 years. It was established by Council resolution and began operation in October 1985.

Today the River Falls Shared Ride Taxi Service provides transportation to approximately 27,000 riders per year and has a fleet of three accessible vans. The program is funded through fares, local tax dollars, (City and County) and operational funds provided annually by the State of Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

The City contracts for service providers which are selected through a competitive process every five years using strict guidelines and rules required by the State of Wisconsin Department of Transportation. At the end of 2014, our service provider contract with Top Hat Inc., expired. In August 2014, the City conducted a request for proposals and selected Running Inc., Transit Services as our new service provider. Running Inc. operates approximately 27 shared ride taxi programs in the State of Wisconsin and has over 20 years' experience in the public transportation business.

You may have also noticed that our hours have expanded. In 2014, Council approved a pilot program to increase ridership for employment and social events. The hours of operation were expanded to 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Friday and 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. on Saturday. Sunday hours remain the same 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. The program has been extended into 2015 and will be monitored closely.

The River Falls Shared Ride Taxi Service is here to serve you. If you need a ride please call 715-425-7878. ~

2015 City Revaluation of Real Estate

In 2015, all property located within the City of River Falls will be revalued beginning at the end of April running through June. The City's Assessor, Associated Appraisal Consultants Inc. (phone 1-800-721-4157), will be conducting this revaluation. They will be carrying identification and a letter of introduction from the City. If the owner is not available, a card will be left asking the owner to make an appointment so the interior of the property can be viewed. Associated Appraisal representatives will not enter any property without the consent of the owner.

Each property owner will be notified of any change to their current assessment and the date of the Open Book and Board of Review.

Dates for the 2015 Open Book and Board of Review will be published in the River Falls Journal and posted on the City's web site at www.rfcity.org.

The Wisconsin Department of Revenue's publication the Property Assessment Appeal Guide for Wisconsin Real Property Owners, can be found at <http://www.revenue.wi.gov/pubs/slf/pbo55.pdt>. and are expected to be in late fall.

For more information, Contact the City Clerk's Office at 715-426-3408 or by email at lhecht@rfcity.org. ~

Renewable Energy Options in River Falls

River Falls is committed to bringing you clean energy alternatives. Here are a few options based on your interest level:

Low Commitment

- Renewable Energy Blocks.
- \$3 per month for 300 kilowatt hours a month.
- We rank 10th in the nation for customer participation and we would appreciate your participation too! In 2015, we're including a reward for new and existing buyers. Rewards include LED lights or \$25 bonus incentives.

Medium Commitment

- Buy a share in the NEW Community Solar Garden
- Here's how it works: purchase a "share" of the solar garden and receive a credit on your monthly bill for whatever the solar panel produces for the next 20-25 years. You can move, transfer and gift shares to other RFMU customers. If you need help with the upfront capital, River Falls Municipal Utilities offers a one year loan to be paid back on your utility bill.

High Commitment

- Install renewable energy on your home or business.
- We'll help you through the process and help you receive money back from Focus on Energy. If you produce more energy than you consume, we'll buy that back.



This solar garden in Michigan is similar to the solar garden that will be in River Falls.

For more information or to sign up for any of these Renewable Energy Options, contact Mike Noreen, Conservation and Efficiency Coordinator, at 715-426-3467 or mnooren@rfcity.org.

Water and Sewer Rate Changes



In 2012, the last water rate change occurred in order to properly charge for operating costs. Prior to 2012, the previous water increase was in 1997. The rate increase for water was a relatively minor three percent increase, but other portions of the water revenues were changed, including a reduction in the public fire protection fee and an increase in charges for irrigation. The sewer rates were also amended at that time with an average increase of 8.35 percent.

A review of the City's capital project needs in water and wastewater was completed last year. The revised schedule reduces the scope of future projects to those that can be completed within a 20 year time frame and are likely to be built. In addition, a review of the City's maintenance needs has also been completed to ensure that consistent maintenance procedures and replacement of infrastructure is accomplished.

With these new parameters, the City has hired a consultant to review the existing water and sewer rates and make a recommendation on changes. The draft report was scheduled for review at the end of March, with an application to the Wisconsin Public Service Commission to occur later this spring. The rate change recommendation is not yet known, but the information will be posted on the City's website, processed through the Utility Advisory Board and the City Council once it has been prepared. We will also include any rate change information in the City's monthly utility billing and in future newsletters.

For more information, please contact Julie Bergstrom, Finance Director/Asst. City Administrator jbergstrom@rfcity.org, or Kevin Westhuis, Utility Director kwesthuis@rfcity.org.

Paying Your Utility Bill Shouldn't Take a Lot of Energy...

Two convenient ways to view and pay your utility bill:

Paperless Billing

- View your bill online instead of receiving a paper bill in the mail. No bills to clutter your mailbox or to get lost. Receive an e-mail notification when your bill is ready to view.

Pre-authorized Payment (PAP)

- Automatic monthly deduction through River Falls Municipal Utilities Pre-authorized Payment Program. Your payment is automatically withdrawn from your checking or savings account on the due date of each month's bill. No check to write, no postage to pay and no missed or payment charges.

To sign up for paperless billing, visit www.rfmu.org/ebill. To sign up for pre-authorized payment, visit www.rfmu.org/pap. Contact 715-425-0906 for more information.

Transformer Art

In 2015, you'll start seeing a few of our electrical transformers and electrical control boxes "transforming" from brown and green into displays of public art! The City of River Falls is partnering with the Community Arts Base (CAB) to create an opportunity for local artists to paint selected boxes. We want to share the creative side of River Falls on display for all people to see! People are encouraged to submit their artistic proposals through an application process on the CAB website <http://riverfallscab.org/>.



Transparency Initiatives

The City of River Falls is committed to open government and strives to provide transparency in all its operations. In 2014, the City launched a new website dedicated to providing a one-stop shop for all of the financial statements and reports on operations. You can find it at <http://www.rfcity.org/transparency>.

This website is based on standards from the Sunshine Review, which was a non-profit organization dedicated to transparency in state and local governments. Check out Ballotpedia.org for more information on their efforts.

An important aspect of transparency is being able to measure what's important to residents, elected officials, and stakeholders as the City aims to consistently deliver quality municipal services. City staff is currently developing reports for the high-impact service areas of interest to residents and customers.

You can find the Department Dashboards on the above Transparency page. They are called Department Dashboards because they act like the dashboard of your car by giving you information on how everything is running. There are Dashboards currently available for the Ambulance Service, Building Inspections, and Municipal Utilities.

Measuring departments' performance through the Dashboards will also help inform the City's progress in its newly-adopted Strategic Plan. Throughout the year, the City Council and staff will be preparing the 2015-2017 Work Plan that aligns the Strategic Plan and Dashboards. For more information, check out <http://www.rfcity.org/strategicplan>. ~

City Reduces Outstanding Debt

The City of River Falls has historically been conservative in issuing long term debt, in order to not bind the City's resources to required debt service payments. Issuance of new debt is generally published and included in the City Council information for approval, but the final debt payments are not as apparent.

In conjunction with the closing of the City's electric power plant, a payment stream for capacity payments from the contracted power provider was received. These funds were not used for operating costs, and the City applied them to outstanding electric debt. A prepayment of \$885,000 related to the 2002 electric revenue bonds was paid in October, 2014, three years earlier than anticipated, which saves customers \$43,330 in interest costs. The electric utility has no other revenue debt outstanding.

Another upcoming payment in 2015 will pay off the bondholders for the River Falls Public Library. Debt of \$2,555,000 was issued in 1996 for the construction of the library building. The debt was refunded twice to achieve interest savings without extending the term date of 2015. In May, the final payment will be made, and a celebration of this event is planned at the library. ~

City's Brush/Compost Site

The City's brush/compost facility (yard waste site) is located at 901 W. Locust Street, two blocks west of Winter Street near the River Falls School Bus Garage. This site is for disposal of yard waste and brush. The site is open April through November during daylight hours. Please remember to remove material from plastic and other non-compostable bags. We have provided a dumpster for disposal of such non-compostable bags for your convenience. Compost and woodchips are available at the site for residents on a first come, self-serve basis. Also please remember to put materials into the appropriate pile. For more information or questions regarding the city's brush/compost site, contact Reid Wronski, Director of Public Works/City Engineer, rwronski@rfcity.org, 715-426-3409. ~

May is Historic Preservation Month

Each May, Wisconsin celebrates Historic Preservation and Archaeology Month. This annual event reminds us to discover and celebrate historic places and the important historic resources that give meaning and a sense of place to our communities – and focus attention on how critical it is to make sure they are preserved.

You can't escape history in River Falls. Walk down Main Street and every building you pass has a story to tell. From the slight bounce of the Swinging Bridge to each time we swim, picnic, play ball or simply lay in the cool grass at Glen Park, we share a connection with the past. Ride a bike through the neighborhoods along the Kinni and you'll see history in the architectural details of the many homes that have stood strong and tall for more than 50 years.

When people visit River Falls, they often say what we already know- "this place has a nice, small town feel to it." A great deal of that warmth is generated by the easy accessibility to history through our buildings, homes, and parks. But this kind of attention to historic detail just doesn't happen on its own. It takes the combined effort of citizens and our local government.

River Falls has a Historic Preservation Commission that is made up of citizens whose job is to recognize and designate historic structures and sites. The Commission is also dedicated to educating the public about the vital necessity of maintaining our historic connections to the past. Over the years, the Commission has designated several properties and structures as historic such as: the Junction Mill Smokestack, the Swinging Bridge in Glen Park, Freeman House on 3rd Street, and Knowles House on 4th Street, once home to a governor and a state legislator. On the campus of UWRF, North Hall and South Hall are listed on the National Historic Register, as is the swimming pool in Glen Park.

As the days of summer arrive and you walk the sidewalks and ride the streets of our City, take time to stop and experience the sense of place that you are part of and the history that surrounds you. All you discover may pleasantly surprise you. ~



Community Appreciation Event

July 30 –
11 a.m.- 1 p.m.
City Hall Plaza

Citizens are invited to learn more about the City of River Falls and its services at this free event. There is something for everyone: food, music, entertainment, games, educational booths and much more. All the City Departments on hand answering questions and showing off their most interesting equipment. Receive a prize if you walk, bike, skateboard, kayak or carpool to this very popular event. More information will be coming soon. Please visit www.rfcity.org closer to July 30 for more details. ~

FREQUENTLY CALLED PHONE NUMBERS

General Information
715-425-0900

Utility Questions
715-425-0906

Police Department
715-425-0909

Public Library
715-425-0905

Municipal Court
715-426-3429

Garbage/Recycling
866-983-6542

**Recreation
Cancellation Hotline**
715-426-3422

NEWSLETTER TEAM:

(Please email comments or suggestions to:
newsletterfeedback@rfcity.org)

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City of River Falls Mayor and Common Council – from left: Dan Gulick, Diane Odeen, David Cronk, Mayor Dan Toland, Scott Morrisette, Hal Watson, Peter Anderson, and Aaron Taylor

Mayor and Common Council

Position	Name	Address	Phone	E-mail Address
Mayor	Dan Toland	420 E. Elm Street	715-426-3404	dtoland@rfcity.org
At Large	Daniel Gulick	1746 Southridge Road	715-425-0486	dgulick@rfcity.org
At Large	Scott Morrisette	2137 Rushmore Drive	715-425-8993	smorrisette@rfcity.org
At Large	Diane Odeen	811 Oak Knoll Avenue	715-426-5325	dodeen@rfcity.org
District 1	David Cronk	843 Leroy Lane	715-425-9174	dcronk@rfcity.org
District 2	Peter Anderson	629 Cemetery Road	715-821-7474	panderson@rfcity.org
District 3	Hal Watson	215 7th Street	715-425-1176	hwatson@rfcity.org
District 4	Aaron Taylor	1143 State Street	608-444-2392	ataylor@rfcity.org



Citizen Survey Coming Soon!

Randomly selected households throughout the City of River Falls will be receiving an anonymous citizen survey about our community in early June!

So check your mailboxes and go to www.rfcity.org/citizensurvey for more information. Results will be available online in September. Thank you in advance for your participation! ~