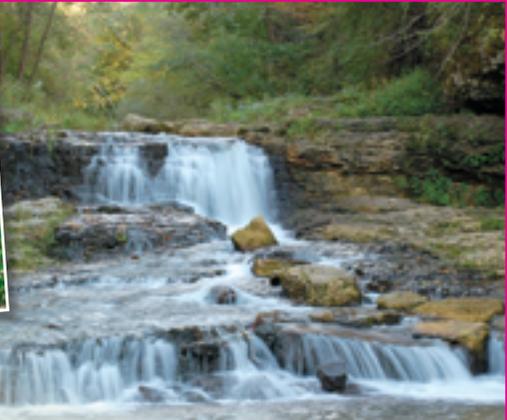




# City of RIVER FALLS NEWSLETTER



September 2015 • VOLUME 6 • ISSUE 3

## Mayor's Message



Cooler weather, football (Go Pack Go!), trees beginning to turn vibrant colors, football (Go Pack Go!), kids back in school (parents everywhere breathe a sigh of relief), and football (Go Pack Go!). Yes, it is definitely fall once again. I hope everyone had an enjoyable summer, and you got to do some things that you wanted to do. Speaking of

football, everyone should take in a local game at the new Ramer field; it turned out great!

Now that we are a real City with a flag, I hope everyone has had a chance to admire it. The flag challenge was fun for me, and thank you to everyone who helped with the challenge (the committee, the Community Arts Base, the artists who submitted their designs, and to Ben Branum who had the winning design). Everyday life can be very stressful and a battle at times which is why I think it's important for us as a city to do fun little things like the flag challenge, and also the newly painted utility boxes that turned out nicely. Thanks to the local artists who shared their creations with all of us. These things help make daily life a little more fun. That's why I always encourage people to get involved with city stuff - it helps relief stress (most of the time).

I would like to climb up on my soapbox for a few minutes. I will try not to annoy too many people. There is a great book by Robert Fulghum called, *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*. We live in a great city, that's in a great state, that's in a great country. I wish people would remember that we are all on this rock together, and we need to be thankful, polite, kind, courteous, and patient with each other. Some folks have become impatient, mean, and rude, and it is hard for me to watch.

In the book, it lists all the important things we learned in kindergarten and we should remember them:

1. Share everything.
2. Play fair.
3. Don't hit people.
4. Put things back where you found them.
5. CLEAN UP YOUR OWN MESS.
6. Don't take things that aren't yours.
7. Say you're SORRY when you HURT somebody.
8. Wash your hands before you eat.
9. Flush.

10. Warm cookies and cold milk are good for you.
11. Live a balanced life - learn some and drink some and draw some and paint some and sing and dance and play and work every day some.
12. Take a nap every afternoon.
13. When you go out into the world, watch out for traffic, hold hands, and stick together.
14. Be aware of wonder. Remember the little seed in the styrofoam cup: the roots go down and the plant goes up and nobody really knows how or why, but we are all like that.
15. Goldfish and hamster and white mice and even the little seed in the styrofoam cup - they all die. So do we.
16. And then remember the Dick-and-Jane Books and the first word you learned - the biggest word of all-"LOOK"

I will jump off of my soapbox now. I know there are lots of people out there who do actually remember all these things and try to live by them, but there are a few (me included at times) who have forgotten the simplest acts of kindness. I only hope we can all get back to being kindergartners when we deal with each other. Well, if there is anybody left still reading this thanks for sticking with me, I will leave you with this quote I love by Robert Fulghum, letting us know that each one of us is important no matter what.

"Without realizing it, we fill important places in each other's lives. It's that way with the guy at the corner grocery, the mechanic at the local garage, the family doctor, teachers, neighbors, coworkers. Good people who are always "there," who can be relied upon in small, important ways. People who teach us, bless us, encourage us, support us, and uplift us in the dailiness of life. We never tell them how important they are. I don't know why, but we don't. And, of course, we fill that role ourselves. There are those who depend on us, watch us, learn from us, and take from us, yet we never know. You may never have proof of your importance, but you are more important than you think. There are always those who couldn't do without you. The rub is that you don't always know who."

As always get out and enjoy your city and each other. Go Pack Go!



Dan Toland



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# Calendar of Events

Friday Fit Lit Club . . . . . Fridays, 6 a.m. Library Lobby  
 Now-Sept. 12 . . . . . From Farm to Fair: A Celebration of Summer Library Gallery  
 Sept. 1, Oct. 6, Nov. 3, Dec. 1 . . . . . Middle School Book Discussion Group,  
 4 p.m. at library  
 September 4 . . . . . Coffee with a Cop, 8 a.m. at the American Legion  
 Sept. 5, 6, 7; Nov. 26, 27, 28, 29; Dec. 11, 24, 25; Jan. 1 . . . . . Library Closed  
 Sept. 7; Nov. 26, 27; Dec. 24, 25; Jan. 1 . . . . . City Offices Closed  
 September 8, October 13, November 10, December 8 . . . . . High School Book  
 Discussion Group, 4 p.m. at library  
 Sept. 8, Oct. 13, Nov. 10, Dec. 8 . . . . . 2nd Tuesday Book Adult Discussion Group,  
 6:30 p.m. Locations to be determined  
 Sept. 8, 15, 22, 29 . . . . . Babytime 9:30 a.m.;  
 Toddler Lapsit 10:45 a.m. at library  
 September 10 . . . . . Lecture on Edgar Allan Poe, 7 p.m. at library  
 September 10, 17, 24 . . . . . Preschool Story Time 10:30 a.m. or 1 p.m. at library  
 September 15 . . . . . Family Story Hour 6 p.m. at library  
 Sept. 15, Oct. 20, Nov. 17, Dec. 15 . . . . . 4th-5th Grade Book Discussion Group,  
 4 p.m. at library  
 Sept. 15, Oct. 20, Nov. 18, Dec. 16 . . . . . Book & Beans Discussion Group,  
 10:30 a.m. at Junior's Bar and Grill Garden Room  
 Sept. 16, Oct. 21, Nov. 18, Dec. 16 . . . . . YA for Adults Book Discussion Group,  
 6:30 p.m. at Junior's Bar and Grill  
 Sept. 16, Oct. 21, Nov. 18, Dec. 16 . . . . . Teens in Power (TIP), 4 p.m. at library  
 September 19-20 . . . . . Bacon Bash and Car Cruze-In  
 September 20-October 18 . . . . . A Cut above the Rest: The Guild of American  
 Papercutters Exhibit at Library Gallery  
 September 21 . . . . . Lego Afternoons 4-5 p.m. at library  
 Sept. 24, 12 noon-8 p.m., and  
 Sept. 26, 8 a.m.-12 noon . . . . . Open Book at City Hall  
 September 28 . . . . . Fire Department Open House 6-8 p.m. at Fire Hall  
 October 4 . . . . . Peter Fletcher, classical guitar, 2 p.m. at library  
 October 4-10 . . . . . Fire Prevention Week  
 October 5, 19 . . . . . Lego Afternoons 4-5 p.m. at library  
 October 15 . . . . . Author Walter Rhein (*Beyond Birkie Fever* and  
*Reckless Traveler*), 7 p.m. at library  
 October 19 . . . . . Fall Clean up Begins at Public Works Garage  
 October 22 . . . . . Board of Review, 8:30-10:30 a.m. at City Hall  
 October 25-November 29 . . . . . Taking Flight at Library Gallery  
 October 31 . . . . . River Falls Community Business Expo  
 12 noon – 4 p.m. at River Falls High School  
 October 31 . . . . . Annual Haunted House, 5:30-9 p.m. at library  
 November 1-March 31 . . . . . Odd/Even Parking  
 November 4 . . . . . Coffee with a Cop, 8 a.m. at UW-River Falls  
 November 5 . . . . . Burial Beliefs/Traditions, 7 p.m. at library  
 November 10 . . . . . Women in War, 7:30 p.m. at library  
 November 2, 16, 30 . . . . . Lego Afternoons 4-5 p.m. at library  
 November 22 . . . . . The Ancient Sport of Falconry, 2 p.m. at library  
 November 27 . . . . . River Dazzle (*visit [www.rfchamber.com](http://www.rfchamber.com)*)  
 December 1-31 . . . . . Food Collection at City Hall  
 Nov. 30, 9 a.m.-7 p.m. and  
 Dec. 1, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. . . . . . Holiday Light Exchange, at City Hall  
 December 1 . . . . . First day to circulate nomination papers for City Offices  
 December 14 . . . . . Lego Afternoons 4-5 p.m. at library  
 December 8 . . . . . Gingerbread Competition Begins at library  
 December 10 . . . . . Holiday Open House, all day at library  
 December 20-January 30 . . . . . The Promised Land at Library Gallery  
 December 28 . . . . . 5 p.m. Last day for incumbents to file  
 Non-Candidacy Paperwork  
 January 5 . . . . . Final day to file nomination papers for City Offices 5 p.m.

# 2015 Bacon Bash September 19-20 2015

The Bacon Bash—now the second largest bacon festival in the Midwest—is a free outdoor festival that celebrates all things bacon and features cook-offs plus pig-themed activities for the entire family. The 2015 Bacon Bash will be September 19 and 20 (Saturday 10 a.m.-8 p.m. and Sunday 10 a.m.-4 p.m.) in



Heritage Park located at 232 West Maple Street. This year's event will be even more "porktacular" with new events including:

- Super Qualifier elite event for the World Food Championships, exclusively for Wisconsin in 2015
  - Sign up today for the EAT Certification and Judging Class; receive priority seating to judge at the Bacon Bash Super Qualifier elite event and become eligible to judge at the World Food Championships in Kissimmee, Florida, in the fall
  - Contestants wanted – sign up today to compete in one of four culinary competitions: Bacon, Chili, Sandwich or Dessert. Twelve competitors will earn their way into the 2015 World Food Championships main event in Kissimmee, Florida, to compete against the world's best and the \$100,000 grand prize.
- Kid's Bacon Eating Contest
- Bacon Bash Brewery & Winery Tour
- "Hog" & Car Cruze-in
- More food vendors & expanded marketplace

Popular returning events include:

- "When Pigs Fly" & "When Pigs Float" – plush & plastic pigs with prizes
- Kid's Cook-off Competition
- Pet Costume Parade – Humans welcome
- Pig Wing Eating Competition
- Kid's Activity Area

The Bacon Bash also includes live music, merchandise from local artists, local craft brews and more!

The Bacon Bash committee is looking for active volunteers to help plan this year's event. With the large number of people expected this year, volunteers are needed to assist during the event. Sign up today to spend a couple hours volunteering and receive a FREE Bacon Bash t-shirt. Contact the Chamber at 715-425-2533 to learn more.

Interested in marketing your brand in front of 15,000 – 20,000 bacon lovers of all ages? Become a sponsor and help fund this year's event. Sponsorship opportunities start as low as \$250. Check out [riverfallsbaconbash.com](http://riverfallsbaconbash.com) to learn more and view the complete Calendar of Events. ~

# Fire Department Open House is September 28

The City of River Falls Fire Department invites citizens to its Open House on Monday, September 28, from 6-8 p.m. at the Fall Hall on 115 N. Second Street. Come and see our fleet of engines! There will be many activities for families and information on fire prevention. Refreshments will be served. ~



Along with firefighters and safety advocates nationwide, RFFD is joining forces with the nonprofit National

Fire Protection Association (NFPA) during Fire Prevention Week, October 4-10, to remind local residents about the importance of having working smoke alarms in the home and testing them monthly.

## Keep your family safe with a working smoke alarm in every bedroom.

Did you know that roughly half of home fire deaths result from fires reported between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m., when most people are asleep?

Smoke alarms save lives. If there is a fire in your home, smoke spreads fast and you need smoke alarms to give you time to get out. In fact, having a working smoke alarm cuts the chances of dying in a reported fire in half!

## When it comes to smoke alarms, it's about "location, location, location".

The **key message** of this year's Fire Prevention Week campaign is to install smoke alarms in every bedroom, outside each separate sleeping area, and on every level of your home, including the basement. Larger homes may need more alarms.

Replace all smoke alarms when they are 10 years old or sooner if they don't respond properly. ~

# 2014 Fire Department Annual Report

The department's report is a compilation of many accomplishments as well as a review of our inventory, call volume, statistics and other items of interest. Included are reports from Assistant Chiefs, the Fire Safety Education Officer, and a special feature on our new engine purchase. Every member of our department has helped in the success we had this past year. We are all very proud of our department, its accomplishments and our service to the River Falls community. To read the report, visit: <http://www.rfcity.org/FireAnnualReports>. ~

# September 28 is the Last Emergency Weather Warning Siren Test Date of 2015

The City of River Falls will be doing audible testing of the outdoor warning sirens on September 28. If severe or threatening weather exists that day, the test will be September 29 at 1 p.m.

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 on a monthly basis to have a chance to ask questions, voice concerns and get to know the officers of the Police Department. Upcoming dates include: September 4, 8 a.m., at the American Legion and November 4, 8 a.m. at UW-River Falls. Please view the calendar on the City's website ([www.rfcity.org](http://www.rfcity.org)) or contact the Police Department at 715-425-0909 for future dates and

locations. Please stop in for a cup of coffee and some pleasant and informative discussion. ~

# Fall Cleanup Begins October 19

Fall cleanup is provided for residents within 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, October 19-23 (4 p.m. to 8 p.m.)
- Saturday, October 24 (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](http://www.rfcity.org/cleanup) for a list of acceptable and unacceptable items. ~



# Library Programs and Events Fall/Winter 2015

Check the library website at [www.riverfallspubliclibrary.org/events.html](http://www.riverfallspubliclibrary.org/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](mailto:katiec@riverfallspubliclibrary.org), or get notices of upcoming events by registering for notifications at the City's website, [www.rfcity.org](http://www.rfcity.org).

## Closed Dates

**September 5, 6, 7; November 26, 27, 28, 29; December 11, 24, 25; and January 1**

Drop boxes will be open; renew materials online at the MORE website, [www.more.lib.wi.us](http://www.more.lib.wi.us) or by calling Telephone renewal 1-866-697-3639.

## Children/Youth Programs

### Fall Story Times

Stories, songs, action rhymes, and lots of fun! Pre-registration required and begins August 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: September 8 – December 15
- **Toddler Lapsit** (24–36 months & caregiver) – Tuesdays 10:45-11:15 a.m. Dates: September 8 – December 15
- **Preschool Story Time** (3-5 year olds) Thursdays 10:30-11:15 a.m. or 1:00-1:45 p.m. Dates: September 10 – December 17
- **Family Story Hour** (geared to up to 5 year olds but open to all) Third Tuesday at 6 p.m. Dates: September 15, October 20, November 17, December 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 September 8, October 13, November 10, December 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 September 1, October 6, November 3, December 1.

The **4th-5th Grade Book Discussion Group** meets the third Tuesday of each month at 4 p.m. Dates are September 15, October 20, November 17, December 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: September 21; October 5, 19; November 2, 16, 30; December 14.

### 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

### Teens In Power (TIP)

Seeking teens in grades 6-12 for our teen advisory board. Meets the third Wednesday at 4 p.m. to talk about events for teens. Dates are September 16, October 21, November 18 and December 16.

## The Fall of Edgar Allan Poe

An exciting collection of programs featuring the works of Edgar Allan Poe, begins on September 10. There will be book discussions (copies of Poe's best works are available at the library), films, and art projects. Check the library website for dates.

### Poe Lecture

The Edgar Allan Poe series opens with a lecture by retired UWRF English professor, Jane Harred, on Poe's life and writings. September 10, 7 p.m.

### Bizarre Burial Beliefs and Traditions

Paranormal investigator and author Chad Lewis will wrap up the Poe series with a program on burial beliefs. November 5, 7 p.m.

## Adult Programs

### Second Tuesday Book Discussion Group – 6:30 p.m.

Dates: September 8, October 13, November 10, December 8. Location: To be determined by group each month.

### Book & Beans Book Discussion Group – 10:30 a.m.

Dates: September 15, October 20, November 18, December 16. Location: To be determined by group each month.

### YA for Adults Books Discussion Group – 6:30 p.m.

Dates: September 16, October 21, November 18, December 16. Location: Junior's Bar and Grill Garden Room

### Friday Fit Lit Club

Meet and share with others the books they are reading, and then head out the door for a walk or run. After finishing, return to the library for coffee, light post-exercise snacks, conversation, and access to the library Internet before the doors open.

Dates: Every Friday at 6 a.m. Location: Smith Meeting Room, Library Lobby.

## Events and Programs

### Peter Fletcher, classical guitar-October 4, 2 p.m.

Place: Lower Level, River Falls Public Library

### Walter Rhein, author of Beyond Birkie Fever and Reckless Traveler-October 15, 7 p.m.

Place: Lower Level, River Falls Public Library

### Halloween Haunted House-October 31, 5:30-9 p.m.

Visit the only slightly haunted library lower level and meet the creatures that inhabit it; only for this one night. See the amazing and totally sincere pumpkin patch transformed into jack-o-lanterns. Great Halloween-theme games to play while waiting for your turn, and it's all free. Reservations available but not required. Event is designed for elementary age children, their parents and younger siblings.



### Women in War-November 10, 7:30 p.m.

A screening of the Minnesota Department of Veteran's Affairs documentary, *Women Serving in War* (1/2 hour long) with discussion following by Vietnam-era military nurses Mary Beth Crowley and Kim Heikkela. Heikkela is also author of the highly acclaimed book, Sisterhood of War: Minnesota Women in Vietnam. Co-sponsored by River Falls Chapter of AAUW.

(continued on page 5)

## Library Programs and Events

(continued from page 4)

### **The Ancient Sport of Falconry-Hunting with Birds of Prey-November 22, 2 p.m.**

Falconry is hunting with the assistance of a bird of prey, usually a hawk, falcon, or eagle. Learn a bit about this fascinating sport that originated nearly 4,000 years ago from Falconer Steve Kaufner and meet his goshawk, 17-year-old Meenah, as well as his daughter's red-tailed hawk, Eve.

### **Gingerbread Construction Class-November 30, 6:30 p.m.**

This is a free class! Get instructions and tips for making your own gingerbread creation; then enter the gingerbread competition at the library. Place: Board Room, River Falls Public Library



### **TR Smith's Annual Tribute to the Beatles-Sunday, December 6, 2 p.m.**

An afternoon of good fun and great memories as local poet and musician, Thomas R. Smith, and his merry musicians take us back to the days when the world was simpler and the Fab Four seemed to know all our deepest feelings.

### **Annual Gingerbread Competition-December 8, by 8 p.m.**

A holiday favorite! Enter your creation – in the adult or youth categories, architectural (buildings) or whimsical. Cash prizes. Sponsored by the library and River Falls State Bank.

### **Holiday Open House-December 10, all day**

An all day celebration of the library and you! Please join us for demonstrations, music, refreshments, and more.



### **Fall/Winter Gallery Events**

#### **From Farm to Fair: A Celebration of Summer Continues through September 12**

A lovely, eclectic mix of fun and serious historical facts covering the process of exhibiting at the county fair including 4-H exhibits, photo ops, voting for your favorite chicken, enjoying toy horse and tractor collections, as well as some real antique farm machinery.

#### **A Cut above the Rest: The Guild of American Papercutters Exhibit September 20 – October 18**

Prepare to be amazed at these exquisite creations in this fine showing of papercutting as an art form.

#### **Taking Flight-October 25 – November 29**

Spectacular photographs of birds in flight, how birds fly and why some don't, as well as a look at the advances in human flight from Da Vinci to NASA.

#### **The Promised Land: Coming to Wisconsin December 20, 2015 – January 30, 2016**

It is said that we are a nation of immigrants, and our state is no exception. Meet the people who populated our state from its birth... to the ongoing influx of new Americans, from nearly every nation on earth. What was life like for the first European immigrants to Wisconsin? What about the latest? Where did they come from and why did they come? How did they travel? What challenges did they face when they arrived? Exhibit includes a special display from Ellis Island, the gateway to America for thousands of immigrants.

### **Coming in 2016**

Watch for information about RIVER FALLS READS 2016, which will be held in January and February. The book we will be sharing is Kitchens of the Great Midwest by J. Ryan Stradal, a former Hastings, Minnesota, resident. Copies of the book are now available to check out at the library. ~

## Open Book and Board of Review

In June and July, all properties within the City were reassessed for tax purposes. This is the process that determines the new value for the entire city as each property is viewed and valued. The goal of the reassessment is to create uniform, equitable, and fair assessments based on current market conditions, so that each property bears its share of the property tax burden on an annual basis.

The City is required by Wisconsin Statutes to assess property at full value at least once every five years. Full value is considered to be the same as market value and changing conditions require these periodic reassessments.

The City published a request for proposals for revaluation and assessment services in 2013. After considering proposals from three qualified firms, the City Council selected Associated Appraisal Consultants out of Appleton, Wisconsin. The City has used Associated Appraisal since 2007.

In order to make accurate assessments, appraisers conducted an interior and exterior review of all homes, apartments and businesses this summer. It is necessary to consider all of a home's features that impact its market value to make sure the assessment is accurate. Your tax bill is based on your property's assessed value at January 1.

### **2015 Open Book**

Open Book is Thursday, September 24, 12 noon - 8 p.m. and Friday, September 25, 8 a.m. - 12 noon. Open Book is a time when property owners may speak with the Assessor and changes can be made to their property assessment. An appointment is required. To make an appointment, call 800-721-4157.

### **2015 Board of Review**

The date for the Board of Review is Thursday, October 22, 8:30 - 10:30 a.m. Any city property owner may file an objection regarding the assessed value placed on his/her property. The Board will hear evidence from the objector. The objector must provide the Board with evidence that supports his/her opinion of property value. The completed Form PA-115A (<https://www.revenue.wi.gov/forms/govtvc/pa-115a.pdf>) including supporting documents must be given to the City Clerk 48 hours prior to the Board of Review date.

Please call the City Clerk (715-426-3408 or 715-426-3419) by October 19 for an appointment and to obtain an objection form.

For more information regarding property assessment the Guide for Property Owners may be viewed at <http://www.dor.state.wi.us/pubs> or visit the City's web site at [www.rfcity.org](http://www.rfcity.org)

If you are not able to attend Open Book to speak with the City Assessor and feel an error has been made to your property record, please contact the Assessor at 1-800-721-4157. Corrections of errors may be addressed without attending Board of Review and must be made prior to the scheduled Board of Review Meeting. ~



*Graham and Sylvia  
enjoy the new  
Tri-Angels playground.*



## Tri Angels Playground Opens

### Honors Lives of Schaffhausen Sisters

The Tri-Angels Playground at Hoffman Park is now complete! This community started fundraising efforts in 2012 to honor the lives of the Schaffhausen sisters: Amara, 11, Sophie, 8, and Cecilia, 5. The playground design was based upon the girls' interests and hobbies. There are three play spaces reflecting that inspiration.

A community build took place on June 27 and the opening/ dedication was on August 15. Playgrounds of this magnitude take quite a bit of time to build, particularly the spongy surfacing and ramping systems. Thanks to the philanthropic support of the community near and far, over \$555,000 had been secured including in-kind materials and services. Funds came in from all types of efforts ranging from a lemonade stand that yielded \$140 to a 5K bringing in over \$50,000. Companies from around the area have contributed their equipment, workers and materials to make this project come to life for the thousands of children that will play and enjoy for many years! If you can dream it, you can do it." Thank you to everyone who cares! Enjoy! ~



## 18th Annual River Dazzle

Kick off the holiday season at the 18th Annual River Dazzle scheduled for November 27 beginning at 1 p.m. Santa and Mrs. Claus are scheduled guests. The day features a chili cook-off, free horse-drawn wagon rides and strolling carolers. The day concludes with the parade on Main Street at 6:30 p.m. For more information, visit the Chamber of Commerce's website at: <http://tourism.rfchamber.com/Events/details/river-dazzle-6107>. ~

## Halloween Safety Tips



The River Falls Police Department would like to emphasize safety this Halloween. Halloween and the trick or treating that occurs can be a fun tradition. However, in order to help ensure the safety of Halloween activities, the following tips are recommended:

- Wear a comfortable costume that is fire retardant, is not a trip hazard, and allows you to see. Bright costumes are more visible than dark costumes. Props should also be safe without sharp or dangerous ends. Consider face makeup as masks can obstruct vision.
- Children should be supervised by a parent or responsible adult. However, if older children are allowed to go trick or treating without adult supervision (not recommended), there should be a preplanned route and a set return time.
- Stay in your neighborhood where you feel comfortable.
- Stay outside of houses. There is no good reason to enter a residence for treats. Let the resident bring the treat to you.
- Trick or treat early before it gets too dark 5-7:30 p.m. is recommended.
- Bring a flashlight with you so you can see and be seen. Consider wearing reflectorized clothing.
- Watch for traffic as motorists can be distracted by children and decorations. Use crosswalks when crossing the street. Never cross a street from between parked cars, mid-block, or run into the street.
- Only accept wrapped or packaged candy or treats and do not eat any until it is thoroughly checked by your parent or other responsible party.
- Use caution around pets and other animals to avoid being bitten or other injury.
- Avoid cutting through yards as there may be multiple hazards.
- Residents who wish to welcome trick-or-treaters should leave an outside or porch light on. Children should be advised to only visit homes with outside lights on.
- Motorists should be extra cautious on Halloween night. Be aware of children darting out from between parked cars or walking on roadways. Please be careful exiting and entering driveways.
- Parents should take special precautions to avoid children getting separated from a group.
- If you are going to have a jack o' lantern, consider a battery operated light or something similar rather than a real flame.
- There are many odd behaviors exhibited on Halloween. Please don't confuse them with behavior that may harm someone such as going somewhere with a stranger. Don't approach a car if directed or asked to by an unknown occupant.

We encourage everyone to please remind children of these important safety rules to help ensure our community has a safe and fun Halloween! Please report any illegal or suspicious activity to the Police Department at 715-425-0909. ~



## Pickleball is at Glen Park!

The old tennis courts in Glen Park have been transformed into four pickleball courts. The grand opening and dedication was June 24 with about 50 people in attendance.

In September 2013, members of the newly formed Pickleball Association (Lee Lueck, Bev Shepard and Harold Tiffany) approached the Park and Recreation Advisory Board to express an interest in adding more courts due to increased participation in the sport. The request was approved by City Council and donations were received to redo the tennis courts into four pickleball courts.

The oddly named sport of "Pickleball" has become America's newest passion. The activity appeals to people of all ages. It is regarded as the fastest growing sport in North America.

The sport began 50 years ago near Seattle, Washington. Three men are credited with creating the sport to combat the boredom of their children. A story is that the dog of one of them kept chasing the ball. Since the dog's name was "Pickle," Pickleball was born.

The sport is played with a solid racquet (paddle) and a whiffle ball. The court is smaller than a tennis court and the net is also lower. It has been compared to ping-pong and involves the strategy and skill of the net play in tennis. The formal rules of the game are set by the United States Pickleball Association (USAPA).

Players alternate serving with a "double-bounce" rule and then volleying begins. The action is fast and fun. Games are generally played to 11 points. Doubles play is by far the most popular game, but singles play is also available. A game usually takes 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

The appeal of the sport is that it is an accessible activity and very social.

The sport has no age or gender barriers. If you want more information on how you can play or learn to play-contact the River Falls Park and Recreation office at 715-425-0924. ~

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## 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 year around. 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 Terry Kusilek, Operations Superintendent, at 715-426-3481 or email tkusilek@rfcity.org. ~

## Chief of Police Recruitment

Police Chief Roger Leque is retiring in October after 37.5 years working for the City and an additional 3.5 years working in law enforcement in Wisconsin. The City congratulates Roger on his long and successful career with the City of River Falls.

Due to the high importance and visibility of this position, proposals from executive search firms were solicited to help in the recruitment efforts for this key City position. Under Wisconsin State Statutes 62.13, the members of the Police and Fire Commission are responsible for appointing a new Chief of Police. On June 22, 2015, the Police and Fire Commission interviewed two executive search firms and selected GovHR USA.

A search committee was established that includes members of the Police and Fire Commission (Carole Mottaz, Dan Vande Yacht, Jean Wespetal, Gary Donath, Mark Sams), Mayor Dan Toland, City Administrator Scot Simpson, and Human Resources Director Karen Bergstrom.

The typical recruitment process timeline is 12 weeks. We anticipate having a new Chief appointed in October 2015.

If you have any questions regarding this recruitment, please feel free to contact Karen Bergstrom, Human Resources Director (kbergstrom@rfcity.org). ~

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## Whitetail Ridge Trailhead Parking

The City of River Falls will be constructing a trailhead parking lot at the west end of Whitetail Boulevard in the Whitetail Ridge Corporate Park this fall. A temporary cul-de-sac was created at that location in 2002 when Whitetail Boulevard was first built with the thought that Whitetail Boulevard might someday be extended west. The popularity of off road cycling trails created and maintained by Kinnickinnic Off-Road Cyclists (KORC) in the Whitetail Corporate Park area has driven the need for safe and convenient parking for trail users. City staff, KORC, and neighboring businesses reviewed various ideas for creating a trailhead parking facility near the west end of Whitetail Boulevard. The design chosen involves expanding the current temporary cul-de-sac into a combined permanent cul-de-sac / parking lot that provides for vehicle turn around and parking for 20 cars. The design provides the ability to enhance the trailhead in the future with shelters, bike racks, and other amenities. Feel free to contact Reid Wronski, City Engineer, wronski@rfcity.org, 715-426-3409, regarding this project. ~



# UW-River Falls Fosters a Culture of Innovation

Despite the recent serious state budget reductions, the University of Wisconsin-River Falls continues to prioritize ways it can reinforce its role as a driver of innovation and excellence in the region. The following is a summary of some of the exciting new opportunities at UW-River Falls designed to better prepare our students to become productive, engaged citizens, as well as stimulating regional economic development.

## New Programs at UW-River Falls

**Data Science and Predictive Analytics:** In spring 2016, UWRF will be the first in the University of Wisconsin System to offer a cutting-edge undergraduate degree in the field of data science. The program will teach students to collect and analyze data and to make data-driven decisions — skills that are in high demand across the economy. Leaders in government, business, healthcare, online commerce and other sectors increasingly rely on data science professionals to track and accumulate information.

It's an emerging field that has huge implications for the entire world economy, according to Hossein Najafi, professor and department chair for the Computer Science & Information Systems Department at UWRF.

"The field of data science will bring about a new wave of change and will impact every industry in ways not imagined," Najafi said. "Its potential is often compared to that of the dot-com boom of the 1990s."



*SoPOD team members Andrew Lind (left) and Eric Wenz (right) in the lab.*



*SoPOD team member An Trieu mixes ingredients for a prototype of their product in the lab.*

**STEMteach:** UWRF has also recently begun offering a novel graduate teaching licensure program with an optional master's degree in the science, technology, engineering and math, or STEM, fields, called STEMteach. The program, the first of its kind in the upper Midwest, is designed to give both recent graduates and professionals from corporations like 3M the training they need to become secondary science or mathematics teachers.

**Agricultural Engineering:** UWRF officials are anticipating approval in September for a new agricultural engineering program that could be offered as soon as fall 2016 to serve students and the needs of regional businesses. The program will build upon the success of UWRF's existing agricultural engineering technology major to give students a deeper understanding of ways to engineer sustainable solutions for complex problems in the agricultural and food industry.

## Opportunities for Innovation

UWRF continues to offer its students a supportive and challenging environment in which to create new ideas and products. The university recently hosted its first New Venture Competition designed to encourage entrepreneurship and innovative thinking through a rigorous business model development competition. This year's winners created a biodegradable soap technology, called SoPod, that will allow travelers to carry body wash, shampoo and conditioners in airplane carry-on luggage while avoiding TSA restrictions. The product has also gained the attention of the hospitality industry as its use would allow hotels to greatly eliminate plastic bottle waste and thus reduce their carbon footprint. The UWRF SoPod team went on to place first in the Wisconsin Big Idea Tournament in Madison, earning them a \$25,000 seed grant, and the team reached the semifinals in the International Business Model Competition in Provo, Utah, placing among the top 22 contenders in a field of more than 3,800 teams from 276 schools and 15 countries.

At UWRF, we're proud to have been a part of the River Falls community since 1874. Over the next year we will continue to promote hands-on research, creative innovation, global education and collaborative learning in a supportive environment. This commitment to academic excellence has led to UWRF consistently being named a Best College in the Midwest. Visit <https://www.uwrf.edu> for more information. ~



*SoPOD team members Andrew Lind, Eric Wenz and An Trieu won the Wisconsin Big Idea Tournament and will receive a \$25,000 grant for their business. They competed in the International Business Model Competition May 1-2 at Brigham Young University.*

**The University of Wisconsin-River Falls actively participates in our community.**  
For information on the resources it provides,  
please visit this website link: <https://www.uwrf.edu/partnerprograms/>.

# River Falls' New Official Flag

The City of River Falls has an official flag! Numerous cities in the state have adopted official city flags, such as Madison, Waukesha, and West Allis. The City of River Falls, however, has never had an official flag to represent the community. As a result, Mayor Toland initiated the creation of an official City of River Falls flag.

The River Falls Flag Challenge was designed so that anyone in the community could enter a flag design. There were also certain specifications for the entries. All flag designs needed to be created for a 3' x 5' rectangle. The flag also needed to display the city's name, the year 1885 (which is the date that the City of River Falls was incorporated), and could include no more than five colors.

After the challenge closed, a Flag Challenge Committee was formed in order to narrow the 32 entries down to the top five. After the entries were narrowed down, the community had a chance to vote on their favorite design. The five flag designs were placed on display and voting took place at City Hall and the River Falls Public Library with paper ballots, and on the City's website through the Survey Monkey website.

The artist of the winning flag design is Ben Branum, a local resident of River Falls. In addition to winning the challenge, he also received a \$200 cash prize from the River Falls Community Arts Base, who helped sponsor the flag challenge. For more information about the flag and how to purchase your own City of River Falls flag please visit the City's website at <http://www.rfcity.org/CityFlag>. ~



Artist Ben Branum, winning flag designer, and Mayor Dan Toland, with the official City flag



Utility box on South Main/Walnut done by Julie Larson

## Utility Box Beautification Project

River Falls has a vibrant Main Street that is the envy of many other towns, but the desire to make improvements is why River Falls is such a wonderful City. Dull, gray utility boxes in prominent places became the inspiration for public art and the Utility Box Beautification Project was born.

Connecting the owners of the utility boxes with the artist community turned out to be easy. The Community Arts Base (CAB) is well-established and the River Falls Municipal Utilities (RFMU) has a very long track record of giving back to the community, so the partnership was mutually beneficial. Both parties worked together to create a program where artists were paid a stipend to paint selected works of art on specific utility boxes.

As the artwork unfolded, anticipation grew, people stopped to look and comment. A buzz was created and people made positive comments to artists, City staff and on social media sites. Did everyone love them? Certainly not, this is public art.

The artwork for the 2015 Utility Box Beautification Project is now complete so now it's time to evaluate, adjust and improve. The project got people thinking because new ideas for the project have been offered and are now under consideration. If you would like to give input on this project, please contact Mike Noreen at [mnoreen@rfcity.org](mailto:mnoreen@rfcity.org) and let him know what you think. ~



Utility box on North Main/Pomeroy done by Mark Olson



Utility box on North Main/Union painted by David Markson



Utility box on North Main/ East Maple painted by Leslie A. Batt-Lutz

# City of River Falls 2014 Audit Results

The City of River Falls contracts each year for an audit of its financial statements and operations with a report prepared for the City Council, citizens and other interested parties. The 2014 report has been prepared and shows positive results for the City's finances. The complete report for 2014 and previous years is available on the City's website at [www.rfcity.org/transparency](http://www.rfcity.org/transparency). This financial report is designed to provide a general overview of the City's finances and to demonstrate the City's accountability for the money it receives. Questions concerning any of the information provided in this report or requests for additional financial information should be addressed to: City of River Falls, Julie Bergstrom, Finance Director/Assistant City Administrator, 222 Lewis Street, River Falls, WI 54022; or email [jbergstrom@rfcity.org](mailto:jbergstrom@rfcity.org) or call 715-426-3416.

## Financial Highlights

The City has total assets and deferred outflows of resources of \$142.9 million and liabilities and deferred inflows of resources of \$37.3 million resulting in net position of \$105.6 million at the end of 2014. This was an increase of \$4.2 million from the previous year. Of the net position, \$86.1 million represents capital assets net of related debt, \$5.4 million is held for restricted purposes, and \$14.1 million is available to meet the government's ongoing obligations to citizens and creditors.

At the close of 2014, the City's governmental funds reported combined ending fund balances of \$8.0 million, an increase of \$4.1 million as compared to the prior fiscal year. A portion of the increase, \$2.2 million, results from proceeds of 2014 borrowing to repay previous year project costs. In addition, assets increased with the recording of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation grant payment of \$979,139 for the Cascade Avenue project.

The City issued \$5,425,000 of new general obligation corporate purpose bonds in 2014. The proceeds were allocated to tax increment district #10 - Sterling Ponds Corporate Park for \$3,005,000 in construction costs; Radio Road interchange improvements in the amount of \$1,525,000; and \$895,000 toward tax increment district #5 - Whitetail Ridge Corporate Park refinancing.

The City reports financial results for two specialized categories, governmental and business-type operations. Governmental includes operations that are primarily funded from state aids, grants, property taxes and miscellaneous fees and revenues. These funds include the general fund, debt service, library, capital projects and special revenue funds. Business-type operations include those funds that are funded from user fees related to providing a service, such as utility and ambulance services. As the measurement focus is dissimilar, and generally accepted accounting principles require different treatment, the annual results are summarized separately.

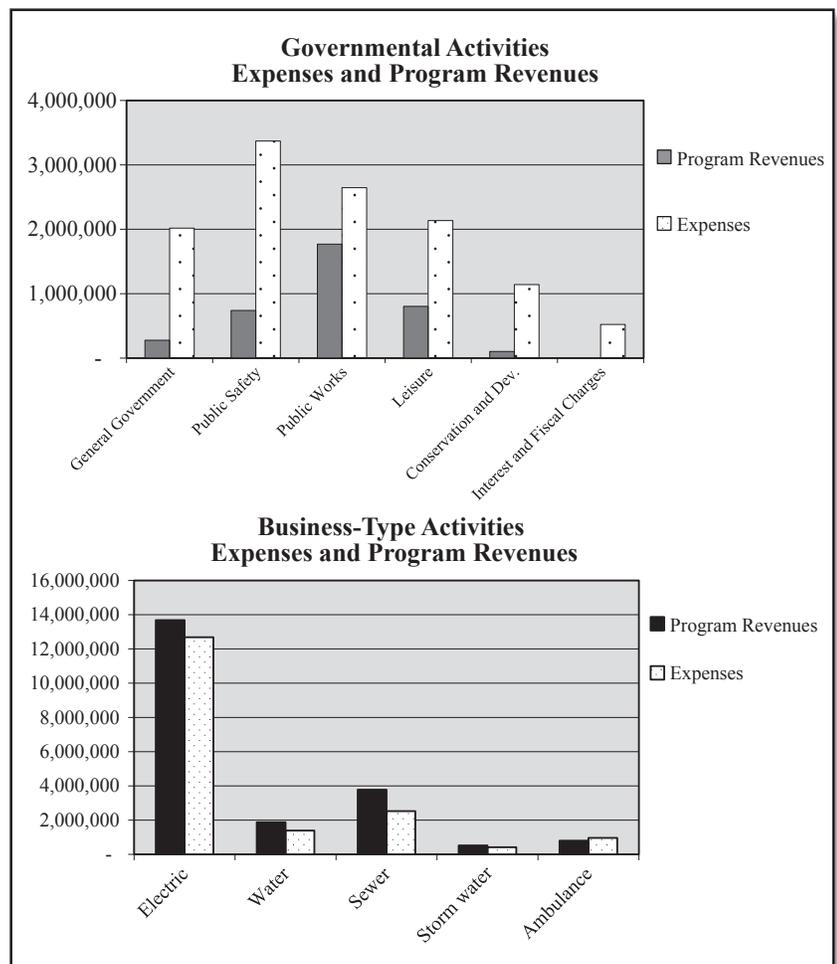
## Governmental Activities:

Revenues for the City's governmental activities, excluding transfers from other funds, totaled \$12.8 million, with property taxes accounting for 46.7 percent of the total. Intergovernmental revenues include \$2.0 million in state shared revenue and grants, and comprise 16.3 percent of annual revenues. Operating and capital grants and contributions factor 20.6 percent while charges for services account for 8.3 percent of total revenues, which include solid waste and environmental fees, as well as permits, licenses and miscellaneous fees.

Governmental activities expensed \$11.8 million, with public safety (\$3,369,820), public works (\$2,646,432), leisure services (\$2,135,758), and conservation and development (\$1,141,840) accounting for 78.5 percent of the expenses. The accompanying graph displays the governmental activities expenses in comparison to program revenues. When all sources of revenue are combined, such as property tax, investment earnings, interfund transfers, grants and contributions not restricted to specific programs, total revenues exceeded expenditures by \$2,145,239; or a 4.6 percent increase in net position.

## Business-Type Activities:

Business-type activities increased the City's net position by \$2,056,833. Due to the enterprise nature of these activities, 92.5 percent of annual revenues are generated by charges for services. In 2014, business-type activities recognized \$1,004,738 in capital grants and contributions which includes an adjustment to recognize prior year impact fee collections of \$596,736 in addition to current impact fee collections and developer contributions.



# 2013-2015 Work Plan Update

Two years ago, the City Council approved the third consecutive two-year Work plan. The Work Plan is an important tool for planning, executing, implementing, and monitoring priority initiatives and projects the community and Council believe are most valuable for our continued prosperity.

The timeframe for the 2013-2015 Work Plan ended this past July, and we would like to update you on everything that was accomplished. The projects were organized by the Council's four organizational goals. Some of the priorities shifted throughout the two years which resulted in some new projects being added to the Work Plan and others being removed.

The following are highlights of some of the projects that were completed from the 2013-2015 Work Plan organized by organizational goal. For a complete listing of the 2013-2015 Work Plan, please see [www.rfcity.org/workplan](http://www.rfcity.org/workplan).

## Deliver quality, cost effective municipal services

- **Transitioning to LED Street Lights:** After evaluating the cost savings over the life of a street light, the City has implemented a four year plan to replace all traditional street lights with LEDs.



- **Develop 2015-2019 Capital Improvement Plan:** This was completed and approved by Council on October 14, 2014. For more information on the 2015-2019 Capital Improvement Plan please visit <http://www.rfcity.org/CIP>.
- **Seek Grant Funding for Hoffman Park Storm Shelter:** The City received Grant funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The shelter will be located in Hoffman Park next to the First National Bank of River Falls Field and will be open to the public in October.

## Promote a positive image

- **Quality of Life Designations:** The City is maintaining designations as a Tree City, Playful City, Bird City, and Bicycle Friendly Community.
- **River Falls Citizen Survey:** The Citizen Survey was sent to 1,200 resident households in June 2015. Results will be received in September 2015.

## 2015 Customer Appreciation Event

Thank you for making this year's Customer Appreciation Event the most successful one yet! A record number of people attended on a gorgeous day to enjoy great local food, games, music, and camaraderie. It's a pleasure to serve such a wonderful community!



## Promote Economic Vitality

- **Downtown Parking Changes:** After extensive study, the parking meters were removed from the downtown. Residents lined up during last year's River Falls Days to purchase their very own and cleaned out the supply in just over an hour! Some people, like one of the City staff turned the meters into arts and crafts projects.
- **Development Plan for Sterling Ponds Corporate Park:** This project was split into two phases. The first phase of construction will be completed this fall.
- **Glen and Hoffman Park Master Plan:** Both the Hoffman and Glen Park Master Plans were adopted by City Council on June 9, 2015. For more information about the Park Master Plans please visit <http://www.rfcity.org/ParkMasterPlans>.



## Develop a High Performance Workforce

- **Review Employee Residency Requirements:** On January 13, 2015 the City Council passed a resolution eliminating State residency requirements.
- **Enterprise Resource Planning Software, Phase 1:** The City has completed its transition to a new software system for financial management, human resources, and payroll. ~

# 2016 Spring Elections & Candidate Information

Elections for local offices will be held on April 5, 2016. The following offices will be voted on:



- Mayor – Two year term currently held by Dan Toland
- Alderperson At Large – Two year term currently held by Scott Morrissette
- Alderperson At Large – Two year term currently held by Dan Gulick
- Alderperson District 4– Two year term currently held by Aaron Taylor
- Alderperson District 2 – Two year term currently vacant. Special Election in 2016 for one year term. Regular Election in 2017 for two year term.

If a local primary is needed it would be held Tuesday, February 16, 2016. A primary is needed when more than two candidates run for the same office.

If you are interested in running for a City Office, contact the Clerk's Office at 715-426-3419 or 715-426-3408.

## Important Dates To Remember:

**December 1, 2015** – First day for candidates to circulate nomination papers for 2016 Spring Election

**December 28, 2015** – Last day (5 p.m.) for incumbents not seeking re-election to file Notification of Non-Candidacy with the City Clerk

**January 5, 2016** – Last day (5 p.m.) for candidates to file nomination papers with the Clerk's Office ~

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## Poll Workers Needed

The City of River Falls Clerk's Office is looking for residents that are interested in applying as a poll worker for the 2016/2017 election term. Citizen involvement is essential in conducting open, accurate, and fair elections. We hope that you will consider participating in the election process by applying to be a poll worker.

Please contact the City Clerk's Office at 715-426-3419 if you would like more information and to apply for a poll worker position. The election dates in 2016 are February 16 (if needed), April 5, August 9, and November 8. ~

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## Municipal Court Relocated

The Municipal Court moved to a new location within City Hall in mid-August. The Court office, previously located on the lower level, moved to the upper level just inside the west entrance of City Hall at 222 Lewis Street.

The River Falls Chamber of Commerce has moved into the Court's former location.

The Municipal Court will be expanding its office hours to match the regular business hours of City Hall. It is hoped that this move will better serve the community and residents. ~

# River Falls Hydroelectric Licensing Update

Previous City newsletters have discussed the relicensing process for the hydroelectric facilities at Junction Falls and Powell Falls on the Kinnickinnic River. In the last issue, we also discussed the new direction from the City Council and stakeholders toward a planning process to enhance the Kinnickinnic River and develop a river corridor plan. The federal government is evaluating the amendment application to extend the current license five years to allow for the time to develop this plan. We hope to hear from them by mid-fall.

City staff and stakeholders are continuing to meet and discuss the vision for the Kinnickinnic River Corridor Plan process and are collaborating on important studies of sediment and recreation. This summer, staff and stakeholders reviewed proposals for a sediment analysis and an agreement was approved by the Utility Advisory Board with Inter-Fluve, a river restoration firm based in Madison, Wisconsin. They are working this summer and fall to evaluate the amount of sediment in the two lakes, conduct sampling of the sediment for contaminants, and develop a guide for managing the sediment in the future. This study will inform parts of the Corridor Plan process by providing cost estimates for the management of sediment if the dams are removed or stay in place.

If the license extension is granted, City staff will shift their focus to the Corridor Plan process, which will begin in earnest in 2016! For more information on this project, please check out our website at <http://www.rfcity.org/hydro>. ~

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## Park Master Plan Update

The Park Master Plans for Glen Park and Hoffman Park are the culmination of over 12 months of public outreach with community members, user groups and partners that help provide many of our community's services. City Council voted to adopt the Glen and Hoffman Master Plans on June 9, 2015, based upon a unanimously positive recommendation by the Park and Recreation Advisory Board and Plan Commission.

The city parks and recreation system is a reflection of the community's long held values and support for parkland, green space, fitness and wellness. The park master plans continue this tradition, and are focused on providing a 20-year vision for Glen Park and Hoffman Park facilities, features, access, and circulation.

With adoption of the park master plans, the City of River Falls commits to the new vision and guiding principles, as well as the initiatives contained in the fiscally constrained plan. In the implementation of the park master plans, the community will see not only the vision and layout of park features and amenities, but also suggestions for scheduling implementation of proposed improvements. The timing of implementation depends on several factors including, demand, cost, and construction phasing. Available funding will be focused on the highest community priorities, centered on access and circulation of vehicles, reorganization of parking, access to the variety of existing park features, and development of new park amenities.

The park master plan documents can be viewed at the River Falls Public Library, City Hall, and the City's website at <http://www.rfcity.org/ParkMasterPlans>. Any questions regarding the future vision for Glen Park and Hoffman Park can be directed to Mike Huth at [mhuth@rfcity.org](mailto:mhuth@rfcity.org). ~

# Water Rate Increase

Water systems are unique in that the majority of the costs are related to infrastructure that must be in place in order to serve the customer, while very little cost is related to the product. As the weather and consumers habits can affect the volume of water that is sold, it is important to build in fixed revenue to offset the capital costs that are being recovered over time, such as wells, water towers and mains. An increase in the fixed costs is recommended for all classes of customers in River Falls. The proposed increase ranges from \$2.75 per month for residential customers with 5/8" and 3/4 " meters, to \$15.25 per month for large industrial and public authority customers.

The current fixed charge for a typical residential user is \$5.25 per month and \$1.40 per 1,000 gallons used. The average household uses 4,000 gallons per month, which results in a monthly charge of \$10.85 for water. The public fire protection fee is in addition to the fixed and volume charges, for a total typical water bill of \$15.31 in River Falls.

## Inverted Rates for Residential Customers

The current water rate for residential customers is \$1.40 per 1,000 gallons, regardless of how much water is used. The recommendation is to promote conservation through an inverted rate, or an increase in water rates for higher water usage. For most residential customers, this will not be a significant portion of their water bill, and may decrease costs for those using less than 4,000 gallons per month. Those customers that are using over 8,000 gallons per month will see an increase in the volume charge from \$1.40 per 1,000 gallons to \$2.30 per 1,000 gallons. This should provide incentive for conservation, but only 5 percent of the residential customers use over 8,000 gallons on average.

## Multi-Family Customers

The addition of Multi-Family properties as a separate customer class became effective in 2014. As a separate class, the recommendation is to charge multi-family dwellings a flat rate of \$1.37 per 1,000 gallons, as conservation rates would not be effective in rental situations. The current rate is \$1.40 per 1,000 gallons, so this would be a minor decrease in the volume rate. The fixed rate will be based on the meter size, and the public fire protection rate would decrease for multi-family customers.

## Irrigation Rates

The PSC looks unfavorably on irrigation meters as a waste of resources. This became evident in the 2012 study, when the rate was established 46 percent higher than general service customers. The recommendation continues to keep the irrigation rate high, with an increase of 12 percent or \$2.30 per 1,000 gallons used. This is also the rate that is charged for residential customers using over 8,000 gallons per month.

## Public Fire Protection

Public fire protection (PFP) charges were added to the utility bill in 1991 based on assessed values of improved parcels. As the City grew, the rates for fire protection were not in sync with the actual costs of providing the service, and the rates were *adjusted downward* in the 2012 rate case. The current rate case also *reduces* the public fire protection fees, to more accurately match the actual cost. The recommendation is to decrease the PFP charges by 20 percent, which mitigates much of the increase in the fixed and volume water charges.

The rate setting process for water is established with the Wisconsin Public Service Commission and involves approximately eight main steps:

1. Review historical data by consultant and staff
2. Complete rate change application and submit to PSC
3. PSC accepts and processes request
4. PSC provides draft exhibits to City (discussion point for City and PSC)
5. Customers are notified of public hearing date and time
6. Public hearing is held at PSC in Madison, Wisconsin
7. PSC issues rate order and prepares final exhibits
8. City Council accepts rate order and sets effective date

These changes to the River Falls water utility rate structure will result in an overall increase in water rates of 6.3 percent for residential customers. The monthly fixed charge is going up, while the charge for the water itself actually going down a bit. This rate increase is pending the Public Service Commission final approval.



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# River Falls EMS Adopts Business Plan

The Ambulance Commission and the City Council recently approved a business plan for River Falls EMS. This plan was developed over the past several months to provide direction to the service and how the service should react to future challenges.

## **Plan Highlights**

The purpose of a business plan is to help guide the organization toward defining its vision and goals and taking the necessary steps toward reaching those goals. This business plan defines the objectives of the service in four parts:

1. To provide excellent service at the critical care paramedic level with revenue adequate to meet service priorities over the next five years.
2. To recruit, retain and train full time, part time, and volunteers of the highest caliber to serve our patients; keep current with new procedures that assist the community, patients and emergency medical team.
3. Analyze the current and future communities served, project the operating needs of the service for the next five years, and make provisions for future rates, staffing and other operational needs.
4. Continue community outreach that reinforces the image of the department as a community partner.

The plan includes a history of the department, staffing levels, five year goals, financial scenarios as well as other information on the service. This plan will be updated on regular basis to reflect changes in the EMS environment. Information on the plan is available on the City's website at <http://www.rfcity.org/EMSBusinessPlan>.

# Deferred Payment Arrangements – Residential Tenant Customers

River Falls Municipal Utilities has been approved by the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (Commission) to amend our electric and water operating rules as they apply to deferred payment agreement offerings to residential customers who are tenants. This application applies to residential tenant customers only.

Pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 66.0809(9) and the Commission's final order in docket 5-EI-152, effective June 18, 2015, River Falls Municipal Utilities will not offer a deferred payment agreement to a residential customer who is a tenant if any of the following criteria applies:

1. The residential tenant has greater than \$100 of account arrearages that are more than 90 days past due for utilities that bill monthly, or for utilities that do not bill monthly, has greater than \$100 of account arrearages that are past due for more than two billing cycles.
2. The residential tenant has defaulted on a deferred payment agreement in the past 12 months. This criterion only applies to deferred payment agreements and not to other types of payment extensions or agreements.
3. The residential tenant is responsible for account arrearages that were placed on any property owner's tax bill in the utility's service territory in the past 24 months.
4. The residential tenant has a balance that accrued during the winter moratorium that is more than 80 days past due.

River Falls Municipal Utilities continues to direct people to payment assistant programs, work with diligent customers on pay arrangements, and are always eager to work with customers who reach out for payment help. ~

# Winter Moratorium 2015-2016

River Falls Municipal Utilities is prohibited from disconnecting for non-payment of electricity or water service from November 1 to April 15 if these services are a necessary part of the heating system (PSC 113). However, we will continue to try to collect past due accounts. Past due notices will be sent to the service address and notices to the landlord of rental property.

It is also important to remember that past dues accrued during the winter months must be paid in full or the customer must have payment arrangement in place by April 15 to avoid disconnection.

If you are a customer struggling to make utility payments, remember that we are here to help you. Please reach out to us as soon as possible to let us know about your situation. There are many agencies that offer payment assistance, and we will help you get in touch with them should you need their services. Again, start this process for help as early as possible as lag times to receive assistance can be lengthy and money does run out at many of these agencies. We are here to help you and greatly value you, as our customer. Call our Customer Service Staff at 715-425-0906 for assistance with your bill paying questions. ~

## Did You Know...

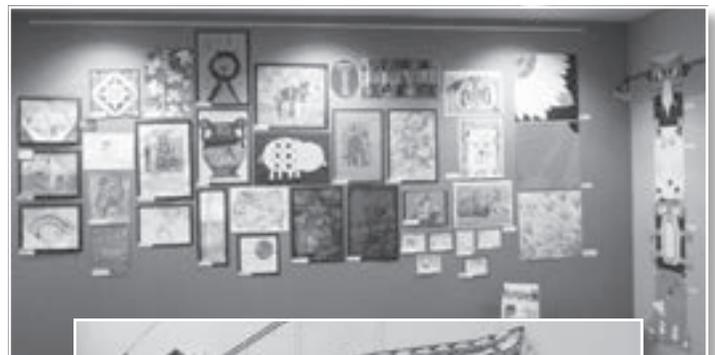
River Falls Municipal Utility offers customers easy ways to pay their bills through programs called E-Bills and Pre-Authorized Payment? E-bills allow you to view your bill online anywhere you have access to your email, and PAP program withdraws your payment automatically from your account. To learn more about these two programs, visit [www.rfmu.org](http://www.rfmu.org). ~

## Art in City Hall

This past June, the City launched the new Art in City Hall program. This program is a fun and exciting way for artists in River Falls and in the surrounding communities to showcase their artwork in City Hall. Until October, select pieces from the All School Art Show will fill the lobby of City Hall. The artwork displayed will be on a rotating basis. The schedule for when artwork will be accepted and displayed is as follows:

Submit artwork by:	Artwork Displayed by:
December 1	January 1
February 1	April 1
June 1	July 1
September 1	October 1

For more information on the process please visit the City's website at <http://www.rfcity.org/art>. Please stop by City Hall and take a look at all the great artwork! ~





## Holiday Light Exchange

**Monday, November 30, 9 a.m.-7 p.m. and Tuesday, December 1, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. at City Hall**

As you're getting ready to decorate your house for the holidays, let us make your decorating experience a little brighter! How nice would it be to avoid a high electric bill, burnt fingers, a tangled mass of old lights, or stepping on a broken light bulb?

River Falls Municipal Utilities can help with that through our LED light exchange. We'll take your old strands of lights (even if they're in a massive tangled ball) and exchange them for some bright, shiny, new strands of LED lights. It's a one for one deal, up to two strands. However, if you want us to recycle all your old lights, we'll do that. The light exchange lasts for two days only so mark your calendar and get to City Hall. We will collect and recycle old lights through January 31.

Many customers have been diligent in bringing in their old strands and now no longer have any more to recycle. We plan for that! Bring in at least four non-perishable food items, and we'll give you two strands of LEDs. All the old strands get recycled right across the river in Minnesota in sheltered workshops and all items go to the food shelf right here in River Falls.

This program brightens up your holidays and those who are in need in River Falls. ~

## Food Pantry Collection in December

During the month of December, the City of River Falls will be collecting items for the River Falls Food Pantry. Please consider donating paper products and non-perishable food to help support families in our community. Your donations can be dropped off at City Hall. Thank you! ~

**PUT A ON FREEZE WINTER HOLIDAY FIRES**

It's fun to decorate for the winter holidays, but holiday decorations can increase your risk for a home fire. As you deck the halls this season, be fire smart.

Connect **no more than 3** strands of mini light sets.

Connect **no more than 50** bulbs for screw-in light sets.

**2** out of **5** home decoration fires are started by candles.

Keep candles at least **12** inches away from anything that burns.

Although live Christmas tree fires are not common, when they do occur, they are dangerous. On average, **1** of every **40** reported home Christmas tree fires resulted in death.

A heat source too close to the Christmas tree causes **1** in every **6** of the fires.

Make sure your tree is at least **3** feet away from heat sources like fireplaces, radiators, space heaters, candles or heat vents.

Get rid of your tree after Christmas or when it is dry.

For more information on how to prevent winter fires, visit: [www.usfa.fema.gov/winter/](http://www.usfa.fema.gov/winter/) and [www.nfpa.org/winter/](http://www.nfpa.org/winter/)

Logos for River Falls, City of River Falls, and NFPA.



## Sidewalks to be Kept Clear

According to City ordinances, the owner/occupant of any lot or parcel shall have snow and ice removed from the sidewalk within 24 hours after the snowfall ceases. If the owner/occupant fails to comply with this requirement, the City shall remove the snow/ice and the cost charged to the property owner. The cost for removal shall be billed according to the City's current Fee Schedule. Failure to pay for said services, upon billing, will result in the costs being assessed against the property and placed on the annual tax roll. Please keep your sidewalks clear for the safety of all residents.

**Note: Only one door hanger notice will be posted at the property this snow season regarding clearing of sidewalks. After the first notice, the City will clear sidewalks if they have not been done.** If you have any questions, please contact Terry Kusilek, at 715-426-3481 or by e-mail at [tkusilek@rfcity.org](mailto:tkusilek@rfcity.org). ~

# Odd/Even Parking Begins November 1

Per the City's Municipal Code, Chapter 10.12, Odd/Even Parking begins November 1 and runs through March 31. To comply, each night between 1 a.m. and 6 a.m. you must:

- Park on the odd numbered side of the street on odd dates
- Park on the even numbered side of the street on even dates
- Remember to park according to the date after midnight

Vehicles parked in violation of parking regulations may be towed for snow removal, street maintenance, or other public safety needs. Questions may be directed to the River Falls Police Department at 715-425-0909. Thank you for your cooperation! ~

## 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](mailto:newsletterfeedback@rfcity.org))

Kristi McKahan

Scot Simpson

### PHOTO CREDITS:

University of Wisconsin-River Falls

River Falls Chamber of Commerce

Brenda Rundle



222 Lewis Street  
River Falls, WI 54022

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Permit #1

POSTAL CUSTOMER

## Mayor and Common Council

Position	Name	Address	Phone	E-mail Address
<b>Mayor</b>	Dan Toland	420 E. Elm Street	715-426-3404	<a href="mailto:dtoland@rfcity.org">dtoland@rfcity.org</a>
<b>At Large</b>	Daniel Gulick	1746 Southridge Road	715-425-0486	<a href="mailto:dgulick@rfcity.org">dgulick@rfcity.org</a>
<b>At Large</b>	Scott Morrissette	2137 Rushmore Drive	715-425-8993	<a href="mailto:smorrissette@rfcity.org">smorrissette@rfcity.org</a>
<b>At Large</b>	Diane Odeen	811 Oak Knoll Avenue	715-426-5325	<a href="mailto:dodeen@rfcity.org">dodeen@rfcity.org</a>
<b>District 1</b>	David Cronk	843 Leroy Lane	715-425-9174	<a href="mailto:dcronk@rfcity.org">dcronk@rfcity.org</a>
<b>District 2</b>	Vacant			
<b>District 3</b>	Hal Watson	215 7th Street	715-425-1176	<a href="mailto:hwatson@rfcity.org">hwatson@rfcity.org</a>
<b>District 4</b>	Aaron Taylor	1143 State Street	608-444-2392	<a href="mailto:ataylor@rfcity.org">ataylor@rfcity.org</a>



## Honoring Alderperson Peter Anderson

The City of River Falls would like to recognize Alderperson Peter Anderson. Mr. Anderson was elected as the representative for District 2 in April 2015. He was also a member of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. Mr. Anderson unexpectedly passed away on June 20. Thank you to Alderperson Anderson for his service to the City of River Falls. ~

## Connect with the City of River Falls

### City of River Falls

➔ [www.rfcity.org/facebook](http://www.rfcity.org/facebook) • [www.rfcity.org/twitter](http://www.rfcity.org/twitter)

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

➔ [www.rfmu.org/rfmufacebook](http://www.rfmu.org/rfmufacebook) • [www.rfmu.org/rfmutwitter](http://www.rfmu.org/rfmutwitter)

### River Falls Public Library

➔ [www.rfcity.org/libraryfacebook](http://www.rfcity.org/libraryfacebook) • [www.rfcity.org/librarytwitter](http://www.rfcity.org/librarytwitter)

### River Falls Park and Recreation

➔ [www.rfcity.org/parkrecfacebook](http://www.rfcity.org/parkrecfacebook) • [www.rfcity.org/parkrectwitter](http://www.rfcity.org/parkrectwitter)

### Channel 16 Sports Scores

➔ [www.rfcity.org/sportsscoresfacebook](http://www.rfcity.org/sportsscoresfacebook) • [www.rfcity.org/sportsscorestwitter](http://www.rfcity.org/sportsscorestwitter)

Subscribe to the City of River Falls YouTube Channel at [rfcity.org/youtube](http://rfcity.org/youtube)