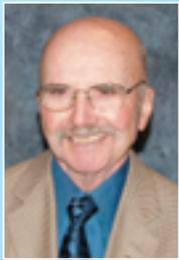




## Mayor's Message



Recently I had the privilege of riding along with Officer Eric Van Nocker of the River Falls Police Department as he patrolled the city on a Friday night/Saturday morning. He picked me up at 10:30 p.m., and we proceeded on his route. It wasn't long before we got a call from Officer Matt Kennett, who was in another squad car. Officer Kennett said he had received a call from a woman who was concerned that a person in a pickup truck had harassed her by driving erratically and tailgating her car. The call included a description of the pickup, the license number, and the location of the incident, but the reporting woman would not give her name.

Shortly thereafter, Officer Van Nocker spotted the pickup on North Main Street. We followed it south through town to Dick's Market, but the driver operated legally and properly, so we quit following. Had the caller given her name, Officer Van Nocker could have pulled the pickup over on the basis of a complaint.

This was the first of many incidents which produced my dominant impression of the evening: police officers are engaged far more in preventing harm than in making arrests. It seemed apparent that the driver of the pickup knew there was a police car following him. Perhaps the driver related the follow-up to the incident reported, perhaps the incident reported was an exaggeration of the facts, or maybe this was not an incident worthy of pursuit. But the officers involved did not disregard the woman's complaint.

After that, the ride was a series of more or less minor incidents, many of them initiated by communication between the two officers on duty. (Sergeant Mike Reardon was also available at the police station if needed.) Our ride included all neighborhoods in the city, including those which Officer Van Nocker said did not usually involve law breaking, but "did consist of tax payers who deserve to get their money's worth from the City police."

One incident involved a call from a pizza delivery guy who complained that he had been harassed when delivering a pizza to some university students who had been drinking. One of the students who answered the door used "abusive, threatening language toward me, so I got out of there and took the pizza with me," the delivery guy said. Officer Van Nocker followed up after the delivery person said he wanted the police to do so. When he went to the door, even though lights were on in the house and music blared, nobody responded. So we left. Later, Officer Van Nocker called the house and left a message explaining the complaint and asking someone in the house to call him in the morning to respond.

I wondered out loud whether there would be a call. "Sometimes they do, sometimes they don't," Officer Van Nocker said. "But at least they will know the police know about it."

Later, when the bars closed at 2:30 a.m., both police cars repeatedly cruised Main Street. On one trip through, as we drove south opposite the Whole Earth Store, a staggering youth attempted to get behind the wheel of a vehicle. Officer Kennett called and said he might need help, then intervened and eventually persuaded the obviously drunk male to call a friend for a ride.

Then, after Main Street emptied, we made a return to a house we had visited earlier, one which had been the location of an incident the night before, flashed the spotlight on the garage as we drove through the alley, proceeded to the Academy Building to shine the spotlight around the west side of the building "just in case," Officer Van Nocker said.

By this time it was 3:00 a.m. Activity had calmed, so I asked to be taken home. I don't know if it was a typical Friday night in February, but it had been apparent that "an ounce of police prevention is worth a pound of community cure." It was an interesting and revealing night for me. ~

*Don Richards, Mayor of River Falls*



## Inside This Issue

Open Book/ Board of Review .....	Page 2
Upcoming Library Events .....	Page 2
Calendar of Events .....	Page 3
Upcoming Recreation Programs .....	Page 3
Farmers' Market .....	Page 3
2010 Highlights .....	Page 4
Cascade Avenue .....	Page 6
Radio Road .....	Page 6
Status of Housing in River Falls .....	Page 8
Employee Spotlight .....	Page 9
Emergency Weather Test Dates .....	Page 10
Urban Forestry Program .....	Page 11
Compost Site .....	Page 12
Yard Care .....	Page 12
National Preservation Month .....	Page 13
Spring Clean-Up .....	Page 13
Mann Valley Land Purchase .....	Page 14
Mayor and Council Information .....	Page 16
Election Results .....	Page 16

# Open Book and Board of Review

All property owners whose total assessed value has changed for 2011 will receive a [Notice of Assessment](#) from Associated Appraisal Consultants, Inc., the City's contracted assessor.

The 2011 Open Book is scheduled on Thursday, May 5, from 12 noon to 8 p.m., and Friday, May 6, 8 a.m. to 12 noon, in the Council Chambers at City Hall. If you wish to speak with the assessor, you will need to make an appointment with Associated Appraisal Consultants, Inc., at 1-800-721-4157.

The Board of Review is scheduled for Thursday, May 26, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon in the Council Chambers at City Hall. Property owners must file a notice of intent to object no later than 48 hours prior to the Board of Review meeting. Anyone wishing to appear before the Board must complete an objection form and schedule an appointment with the City Clerk. 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>. For more information, contact the City Clerk's Office at 715-426-3408 or by email at [lhecht@rfcity.org](mailto:lhecht@rfcity.org).

# Library Calendar of Events - Spring 2011



## GALLERY:

**March 20-April 17:** "Warm & Cozy", the annual quilt show at the public library opens. If you'd like to show off your handiwork in the display, please contact Carol McClelland at the library, 715-425-0905, or email her, [carolm@riverfallspubliclibrary.org](mailto:carolm@riverfallspubliclibrary.org).

**April 24-May 27:** All-School Art Show, featuring work by the talented children of River Falls, elementary grades through high school.

**June 4-July 15:** Elements: Wood, with work by area woodworkers, carvers, and turners.

## American Civil War Sesquicentennial:

**Tuesday, April 12, 7 p.m.:** Come spend "An Evening with Abraham Lincoln", with Lincoln re-enactor and area resident, Ken Roen, in the Collins Community Room in the lower level.

**Tuesday, April 26, 7 p.m.:** As a counterpoint to the Lincoln program, Lincoln scholar Lew Mallow of Eau Claire will present a talk on "The Life of Jefferson Davis" on Tuesday, April 26, at 7 p.m. How much do you actually know about the 'other president' during that turbulent timeframe?

**Tuesday, May 3, 4 p.m.:** Teen Book Discussion

**Tuesday, May 3, 7 p.m.:** Investigating Crop Circles. Dr. Lou Greub, professor emeritus and agronomist from UWRF, will be the presenter.

**Wednesday, May 11, 6:30 p.m.:** Container Gardening with Colleen Gifford, librarian and master gardener.

**Tuesday, May 31:** Registration for summer preschool story-time programs begins.

**Coming up in July:** Flower Arranging Contest (entries due July 6); Kiddie Parade and Petting Zoo (Saturday, July 9)

Check the library's webpage, [www.riverfallspubliclibrary.org](http://www.riverfallspubliclibrary.org) for updated information on these and other programs. ~

## Summer Programs at the River Falls Library

The Summer Library Program, One World, Many Stories, at the River Falls Library begins June 13. The program is open to all children, ages two through high school. The Independent Reading Program is individualized and self-paced. All readers will receive a reading chart where they log the time they spend reading or being read to. Preschool and elementary aged kids will move a marker around a large world map to track their minutes.

This year, kids entering grade 6 and older will receive a special passport, which will serve as the reading chart in which they will log their time spent reading. All readers will earn various incentives. To begin the Independent Reading Program, children can come to the library on June 13 or anytime thereafter to pick up their reading charts or passports.

The family aimed entertainment for kids of all ages will be on Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. in the lower level of the library. These programs are listed here and do not require pre-registration:

- June 15. . . . .Magical Mia
- June 22. . . . .TBA
- June 29. . . . .Paul Halter, Comic Juggler
- July 6 . . . . .Zaney Janey, crafts and activities from around the world
- July 13 . . . . .TBA
- July 20 . . . . .The Bassmeister, Fishing Comedy Show
- July 27 . . . . .Pint-Sized Polkas

Preschool Programs do require pre-registration which begins on Tuesday, May 31. The Lapsit program, ages 24-36 months, runs Tuesdays, June 14- July 26, at 10:30 a.m. The Preschool Storytime, ages 3-5, runs Thursdays, June 16 - July 28, at 10:30 a.m. or 1 p.m.

Teen Programming is new this year for kids entering grade 6 and above. It is Fridays from 1-2 p.m. Here is the program schedule:

- June 17. . . . .Henna with Zaney Janey
- July 22 . . . . .Duct Tape Creations
- August 12 . . . . .Dive into Chocolate

All of the events are offered at no charge. The River Falls Library Foundation underwrites the cost of the program. Watch for information on the Library's website at [www.riverfallspubliclibrary.org](http://www.riverfallspubliclibrary.org), in flyers sent home with children in May, at various locations around the community and at the Library. Call for more information at 715-425-0905 or email [susanp@riverfallspubliclibrary.org](mailto:susanp@riverfallspubliclibrary.org). ~

# Calendar of Events

April 14. ....	<b>Weather Warning Siren, 1:40 and 6 p.m.</b>
April 22. ....	<b>City Offices Closed</b>
April 22, 23, 24. ....	<b>Library Closed</b>
May 3,7,10,14,17,21,24,28,31 . . . . .	<b>Farmers' Market,</b> <i>Corner of East Locust and 2nd Streets</i> <i>Saturdays 8 a.m. – 12 noon, Tuesdays 3-6 p.m.</i>
May 5, 12 noon -8 p.m. ....	<b>Open Book</b>
May 6, 8 a.m.-12 noon	<i>Call Associated Appraisal Consultants, Inc.</i> <i>for an appointment 1-800-721-4157</i>
May 9 . . . . .	<b>Spring Clean up begins and runs for a week</b> <b>at Public Works (950 Benson Street)</b> <i>Monday through Friday, 4 – 8 p.m.; Saturday 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.</i>
May 23 . . . . .	<b>Weather Warning Siren, 1 p.m.</b>
May 26 . . . . .	<b>Board of Review, 10 a.m. – 12 noon</b> <i>Call City Clerk for appointment and form at 715-426-3408</i>
May 28, 29, 30 . . . . .	<b>Library Closed</b>
May 30 . . . . .	<b>City Offices Closed</b>
May 30 . . . . .	<b>Library Closed</b> <i>Sundays Memorial Day through Labor Day</i>
June 4,7,11,14,18,21,25,28 . . . . .	<b>Farmers' Market,</b> <i>Corner of East Locust and 2nd Streets</i> <i>Saturdays 8 a.m. – 12 noon, Tuesdays 3 – 6 p.m.</i>
June 12. ....	<b>Car Show, Downtown River Falls</b> <i>11 a.m. – 4 p.m.,</i> <i>Contact the River Falls Chamber for more information at 425-2533</i>
June 17. ....	<b>Town 'N Country Day, 7:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.</b> <i>Contact the River Falls Chamber for more information at 425-2533</i>
June 27. ....	<b>Weather Warning Siren, 1 p.m.</b>
July 4 . . . . .	<b>City Offices and Library Closed</b>

River Falls Community Television will carry the River Falls Days Parade LIVE July 8 at 6:30 p.m. on Channel 16.

The program schedule can be found at [www.rfcity.org/RFCTV](http://www.rfcity.org/RFCTV).

DVD copies are available by e-mailing [tvstaff@rfcity.org](mailto:tvstaff@rfcity.org) or calling 715-425-5400.



## Visit the River Falls Farmers' Market

The long established local Farmers' Market is open May through October 31. The market is open on Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 12 noon and Tuesday evenings from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. The market is located at the corner of East Locust Street and Second Street, one block off Main Street, in downtown River Falls.

The Farmers' Market sells a wide variety of fresh vegetables, honey, apples, berries, meats, flowers, maple syrup, annuals, perennials, vegetables and herb plants, pumpkins, and fall crops and ornamentals. For more information, contact Betty at 715-425-7394, or [bellacollina98@yahoo.com](mailto:bellacollina98@yahoo.com), or contact Terry at [dpearson@pressenter.com](mailto:dpearson@pressenter.com).

## Recreation Activities Spring and Summer 2011

Brochures for spring and summer activities can be picked up at Park and Recreation office at City Hall, at the Library or at River Falls Schools. The brochure can also be viewed by accessing city web site at [www.rfcity.org](http://www.rfcity.org).

Check out these spring and early summer activities: adult golf lessons, bird watching in May, babysitting, gymnastics, tennis, baseball, and swimming classes.

People interested in teaching a workshop or class that would benefit the community (anything from computer skills, writing, arts and crafts, cooking, home repair to sign language), should contact Cindi Danke, Recreation Coordinator, at 715-426-3420 or visit [www.rfsd.K12.wi.us](http://www.rfsd.K12.wi.us) for Community Education classes and events or 715-425-1830 ext. 1125.

### 2011 River Falls Athletic Associations Websites

Traveling Baseball	<a href="http://www.riverfallsyouthbaseball.org">www.riverfallsyouthbaseball.org</a>
Basketball-Boys	<a href="http://www.pressenter.com/~rfybb">www.pressenter.com/~rfybb</a>
Basketball-Girls	<a href="http://www.pressenter.com/~rfgba">www.pressenter.com/~rfgba</a>
Football – Youth	<a href="http://www.pressenter.com/~rfyfa">www.pressenter.com/~rfyfa</a>
Gymnastics Club	<a href="http://www.riverfallsgymnastics.com">www.riverfallsgymnastics.com</a>
Hockey-Wildcat Centre	<a href="http://www.riverfalls.pucksystems.com">www.riverfalls.pucksystems.com</a>
Hockey-Hunt Arena	<a href="http://www.sa.uwrf.edu/sa/studentlife/recreation/huntarena-fieldhouse/knowles">www.sa.uwrf.edu/sa/studentlife/recreation/huntarena-fieldhouse/knowles</a>
Knowles Recreation Center	<a href="http://www.rfcity.org">www.rfcity.org</a>
Recreation office	<a href="http://www.pressenter.com/~rfsoccer">www.pressenter.com/~rfsoccer</a>
Soccer-Traveling	<a href="http://www.pressenter.com/~rfsoccer">www.pressenter.com/~rfsoccer</a>
Soccer-Fall	<a href="http://www.riverfallsswimclub.org">www.riverfallsswimclub.org</a>
Swim Club	<a href="http://www.riverfallsswimclub.org">www.riverfallsswimclub.org</a>
Volleyball - Girls	<a href="http://www.riverfallsvolleyballclub.org">www.riverfallsvolleyballclub.org</a>
Wrestling - Youth	<a href="http://www.riverfallswrestling.org">www.riverfallswrestling.org</a>

**NEW!**  
**RECREATION CANCELLATION LINE!**

We now have a Recreation Cancellation Line available for information pertaining to weather and other schedule changes.

**Call 715-426-3422.**

# Cooperative Boundary Update

Over the past months, a committee made up of representatives from the Town of Troy and the City of River Falls, has been working on the development of a joint land use and boundary agreement. The agreement would establish long-term ground rules and limitations. This collaborative effort is being built on the October 2005 draft Cooperative Plan and Agreement that the Town and City developed by a committee of appointed Town and City representatives, and reflected the Comprehensive Plan and ordinances of both communities.

In February, the committee held a joint meeting on the Cooperative Plan and Agreement with the Troy Town Board and the City of River Falls Common Council. A presentation and a draft report were provided to both the Town Board and the Common Council. Presently, both governing bodies are reviewing the draft with the intent of providing comments to the committee in the near future. ~

## City Weather Station

A weather station has been installed at City Hall for research purposes. The site provides temperature and rainfall data that is updated hourly. To bookmark the site, please follow the link to the station located at [http://www.rfcity.org/eng\\_stormwater.asp](http://www.rfcity.org/eng_stormwater.asp) ~

# Highlights for 2010

Quality of life is of paramount importance in River Falls. This past year marked a very busy time. The City's team worked around the clock in both high profile and behind-the-scenes positions to deliver high quality services for our residents. The City staff is dedicated, and they take pleasure in a job well done.



The following highlights some of the accomplishments during 2010. River Falls will continue to make significant commitments toward improving our community.

Here are a few notable highlights from 2010:

### FINANCE/ADMINISTRATION

- ✓ **Completed Five-Year Agreement with River Falls Rural Fire Association for Fire Services.** This resulted in an increased contribution by the Towns toward the fire operating costs.
- ✓ **Bid Employee Health and Dental Insurance for 2011.** Two proposals were received and the proposal from WPPI Trust results in a cost savings of \$145,000 in 2011.
- ✓ **Developed a revised training program for Election Inspectors.**
- ✓ **Launched SharePoint.** This is the city's intranet for employees to share documents and work on projects together.
- ✓ **Streaming.** Started streaming RFC-TV programs and city meetings on the web.
- ✓ **Newsletter.** The City began publishing and mailing a quarterly newsletter to residents in an effort to enhance communications.

### LIBRARY

- ✓ **Wisconsin Humanities Grant.** One of six in the State to receive this grant for a Smithsonian Museum on Main Street exhibit which opened in January 2011.
- ✓ **Financial Reimbursement to Library Increased.** St. Croix County Board voted to increase financial reimbursement to library from 85 to 100 percent. This allowed for purchase of a new DVD resurfacer/cleaner and hand dryers for the main level restrooms.
- ✓ **Handicapped parking area of the parking lot improved.**
- ✓ **Final circulation for 2010 was over 401,000, an increase from 374,000.** The door count increased from 197,362 to 199,369. The number of computer sessions remained relatively steady at 44,286. There were about 1,300 new patron cards issued. Additionally, 254 library programs, including weekly storytime programs took place.

### ENGINEERING AND PUBLIC WORKS

- ✓ **Veolia Environmental Services.** The City's contract with Waste Management for solid waste services expired the end of 2010. The City contracted with Veolia Environmental Services in accordance with their proposal for providing the City with solid waste disposal services for 2011-2015. Over 3,500 City households were affected by the changeover from Waste Management to Veolia with the changeover taking place between Christmas and New Year's.
- ✓ **Street Light Utility Feasibility.** Completed an analysis for Street Light Utility rates. A summary of information regarding proposed street light utility was compiled along with a complete list of proposed Street Light Utility monthly billings cross referenced to existing River Falls Municipal Utility accounts.
- ✓ **Snow Events.** February and December were the snowiest months in 2010. Season totals for October through December made it the third snowiest beginning to a winter season. A 20" snow received on December 11 required significant staff time to complete necessary work and continued through to Christmas. Public Works crews successfully managed the snow related issues.
- ✓ **Rain Events.** Although overall rainfall was average, the City of River Falls experienced a number of intense rainfall events in June, July, and August. These intense rainfalls produce debris that must be removed from catch basin grates to allow adequate flow of storm water into the basin. Public Works crews successfully fixed the storm related issues.



(continued on page 5)

# Highlights for 2010

(continued from page 4)



## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- ✓ **Playgrounds Installed.** A playground was installed in Sterling Ponds Park and Golf View Park/Soccer Fields.
- ✓ **City traded land with DNR for eight acres** next to Hoffman Park.
- ✓ **University Falls Redevelopment.** University Falls (formerly Foster Trail Park) was Rezoned to Planned Unit Development (PUD) and Tax Incremental District (TID) was approved.
- ✓ **A new Kwik Trip Store** opened in October on a redeveloped site.
- ✓ Implemented a **revised rental housing permit process** which reduced costs to the City and resulted in reduced fees to rental property owners.
- ✓ **Provided service to over 13,000 participants** involved in adult and youth activities through the City recreation programs or area associations programs in 2010.

## PUBLIC SAFETY

- ✓ **Farm Technology Days (FTD)** was held in July. River Falls Police Department facilitated traffic to/from the event. River Falls Fire Department helped monitor the site with EMS. The EMS Command trailer was used as the main communications hub for EMS and Fire for FTD. Two and a half years of pre-planning went into this event. EMS was able to cover what was required for the show and ensured that coverage for daily 911 calls was not reduced. Over 60,000 people attended the 3-day farm show.
- ✓ **River Falls Police Department received a grant** used for furnishing a child interview room that was completed in November.
- ✓ **Public Safety Building Open House** was held in June.
- ✓ **River Falls Police Department participated in National Take Back Pharmaceutical Initiative** in September to collect unused pharmaceuticals and forwarded them to the Drug Enforcement Administration for disposal.
- ✓ **Ambulance Exceeded En-Route Time Goal.** Average dispatch to en-route time for all 1,556 calls in 2010 was 2 minutes 35 seconds which exceeded the goal of 4 minutes.
- ✓ **EMS passed State ambulance inspection** in February without any negative marks.
- ✓ **EMS started a fall prevention program for the elderly** on October 1 in partnership with River Falls Hospital. It helps identify repeat patients or patients with the potential of falling at their homes.
- ✓ **Hired full-time Fire Chief.**
- ✓ **River Falls Fire Department celebrated 125 years of service** with an open house in September.



## UTILITIES

- ✓ **Recycled 1,262 pounds of incandescent holiday lights.**
- ✓ **Shared Savings Program Success.**
  - River Falls Industrial Center (200,000 kWh savings per year).
  - NCCM Company (300,000 kWh savings per year).
- ✓ **Received five year extension on DNR Permit** for discharge – Wastewater Plan.
- ✓ 400 participants in **Customer Appreciation Energy Expo.**
- ✓ **Celebrated 100 years of electric service** with an ice cream social.



## AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

- ✓ City's G.O. bond rating, improved from A1 to Aa2 by Moody's.
- ✓ RFC-TV won six awards at the WAPC VideoFest.
- ✓ The Fire Department received Chamber's 2010 Citizen of the Year.
- ✓ Received Historic Preservation plaques for six properties.
- ✓ Bird City Wisconsin.
- ✓ Tree City USA.
- ✓ Water Star Wisconsin.
- ✓ Harvard University's "Bright Ideas" Award Winner (Teen Driving Circles).
- ✓ APPA RP<sub>3</sub> Designation (Power Reliability).
- ✓ US EPA Top 10 Renewable Energy.
- ✓ EPA Green Power County (#3 in Nation). ~

# Looking for a Few Good Citizens...

Did you know that the City of River Falls has several committees on which residents can serve as members? These committees offer citizens the opportunity to participate in their local government as their interests and schedule allows.

Currently, there are four committee vacancies: two on the Board of Appeals (one as a regular member and one as an alternate), one on the Extraterritorial Board of Appeals and one on the River Falls Housing Authority. For more information on these committee vacancies, please visit the City's website at <http://www.rfcity.org/bcc-vacancy.asp>.

If you are interested in serving on one of these committees or any other of the City's committees, please contact Mayor Don Richards at 715-426-3404 or email [drichards@rfcity.org](mailto:drichards@rfcity.org).



© 2007 das Manufacturing, Inc.

# Volunteer Opportunity

The City Engineering Department is looking for volunteer groups to affix storm drain markers to the City's storm water inlets. These markers educate people that anything put down the storm sewer drains directly to the river. The City will provide all markers, adhesive, safety vests and cones for volunteers. For more information regarding this program contact Kristy Treichel, [ktreichel@rfcity.org](mailto:ktreichel@rfcity.org), 715- 426-3412. ~

# Pavement Management

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. An explanation of each type of treatment is as follows:

**Crack Sealing** - Normally performed on streets in good to excellent condition. The work consists of cleaning debris out of the cracks in the pavement surface and filling the cracks with a sealant to prevent surface water from getting into the pavement structure.

**Seal Coating** - Normally used on streets in fair to good condition. Seal Coating consists of applying a liquid asphalt to the road surface and covering that with crushed rock, trap rock, or slag. It provides a waterproof surface seal and improves skid-resistance of the pavement.

**Mill and Overlay** - Normally performed on streets in poor to fair condition. The project typically consists of grinding (milling) the outer edges of the street so that new asphalt can be placed flush with the existing gutter. Milling is followed by placement of a new coat of asphalt over the entire street.

**Curb, Gutter and Sidewalk Repair** - The City typically coordinates repairs to sidewalks, curbs, and gutters with a mill and overlay of the street. Curb that is badly sunken, cracked, or offset is spot repaired. Sidewalk repair is performed to eliminate tripping hazards on the walks throughout the City. If you are aware of a sidewalk section that presents such a hazard, please report it to the City Engineer at 715-426-3409. ~

# Cascade Avenue

In 2007, the City began working in partnership with UW-RF and WisDOT toward the eventual reconstruction of Cascade Avenue from Spruce Street to Wasson Lane. The reconstruction is needed to replace failed and inadequate infrastructure with new infrastructure that will adequately serve our needs for 50 years or more. Our goal is to reconstruct the roadway in a manner that addresses problems and concerns associated with the current roadway configuration. To identify these problems and concerns, the City conducted a public involvement process that included six public meetings. In addition to soliciting the public's perspective on problems and concerns, we also asked participants what the project goals and objectives should be and what potential solutions they thought we should explore.

Many different methods were utilized to encourage participation in the public involvement process. Direct mail invitations were sent to over 470 potential stakeholders. E-mail notices were sent to students via the campus E-mail system. The River Falls Journal and Student Voice ran multiple articles and advertisements. Postings for the meetings were made in all campus buildings. Announcements were made on RFC-TV Channel 16, UWRF-TV Channel 19, on campus radio.

From the public meetings, a plan for Cascade Avenue has evolved that attempts to balance viewpoints of many different stakeholder groups. While the concept plan that has been developed does not fully satisfy all the desires of each and every stakeholder group, it does reflect balance of all the various stakeholders and attempts to work as much as possible within the common ground.

Preliminary design work was completed in May 2010. Agreements between the City, UW-RF, and WisDOT are finalized. These agreements will secure approximately \$3M from WisDOT and \$1-2M from UW-RF toward the project. The wide range of these figures reflect the different levels of aesthetic amenities that UW-RF may want to incorporate into the project as Cascade Avenue is really the front door to their campus.

Reconstruction of Cascade Avenue from Spruce through Sixth Streets could begin as early as April 2012. A timeframe for reconstructing Cascade Avenue from Sixth Street through Wasson Lane has not been established but could begin as early as the year following the Spruce through Sixth Street project.

To receive notification of upcoming public meetings on the project, please contact the City at 715-425-0900. ~

---

# Radio Road Interchange

Last summer, you may have noticed construction of an overpass at the intersection of Coulee Trail and State Highway 35 midway between River Falls and Hudson. Construction of this overpass is part of a process to convert Highway 35 between River Falls and Hudson into a freeway. The next step in this freeway conversion process will be in 2013 when WisDOT anticipates constructing an interchange near the current intersection of Radio Road, Chapman Drive, and Highway 35. This interchange has been discussed since the mid 1990's. Construction of this interchange will result in the elimination of two at-grade intersections, including the intersection of Highway 35 and County Highway U which has been the location of multiple fatal accidents in recent years.

The City of River Falls is a partner with WisDOT in the construction of the Radio Road interchange. On September 27, 2005, the City entered into a local cost-share agreement with the WisDOT for future construction of the Radio Road Interchange. The agreement was modified in 2011. This agreement obligates the City to cover 50 percent of the cost of this interchange project with the City's share capped at \$3M. The City anticipates recovering much of its investment in this interchange project through fees paid by

developing property that most directly benefits from the interchange project. As early as 2002, the City negotiated an agreement with the developers of Sterling Ponds committing that developer pay \$590,000 toward the future interchange project. This amount has increased to a little more than \$790,000 in 2010 due to construction cost adjustment factors that were part of the agreement. It is anticipated that the additional contributions will be collected through other agreements associated with developing property that benefits from this interchange including Whitetail Ridge Corporate Park.

In November 2007, WisDOT began survey work for the Radio Road Interchange project. In 2008, WisDOT began designing the interchange improvements and indicated that they were considering roundabout rather than signal lights in conjunction with the interchange. In November 2009, WisDOT indicated that the interchange would be constructed with roundabout intersections at the ramp terminals and at the intersection of Radio Road and Paulson Road extended. In 2010, WisDOT began acquiring the necessary real estate to allow construction of the proposed interchange. Finally, on February 12, 2013, WisDOT anticipates letting the Radio Road Interchange Project which should be open to traffic later that year. A map of the proposed interchange is available on the City's website. ~

# Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety



The Police Department would like to remind everyone about bicycle and pedestrian safety as we head into spring.

Pedestrians crossing at a controlled or uncontrolled intersection, whether the crosswalk is marked or unmarked, have the right of way. Vehicles must stop and yield to the pedestrian. Every pedestrian or bicyclist crossing a roadway at any point other than within a marked or unmarked crosswalk must yield the right of way to all vehicles on the roadway. Many rear end accidents are caused by drivers yielding for a pedestrian when they do not have the right of way.

## Some Tips for Bicycle Safety

1. It's a good idea in the spring to inspect your bicycle and make sure all working parts are in good order and working properly.
2. Wear a helmet. Wear bright or reflective clothing.
3. When riding on the road, ride with the traffic, ride on the right side of the road unless preparing to make a left turn. Ride single file.

4. Obey all traffic signs and signals including stopping at all stop signs! Bicyclists are required to follow the same rules of the road as other vehicle operators.
5. A headlight and a taillight are required at night.
6. Share the sidewalk or bike path with other users by slowing down and staying to the right side. Announce your presence when coming up from behind. There are no bicycles allowed on the sidewalks in the downtown area. Watch for the markings on the sidewalk.

Remember to always lock your bicycle up or put it away to prevent bike theft. In 2010, 45 bicycles were reported stolen in the City. In addition, 129 bicycles were found and no owner was located. A City of River Falls Bicycle license is available for \$2 at the Police Department. Having the bike license attached will make it possible to return your bicycle should it be recovered.

The department will be teaching bicycle safety in all of the elementary schools this spring as well as offering an inexpensive bicycle helmet program. The annual bicycle rodeo will again be held in conjunction with Town N' Country Days in June. Enjoy the great outdoors and stay safe! ~

# Rain Barrel Rebate Program

Years ago many people had wooden barrels in their backyards collecting rainwater to use later for watering flowers and other plants. Today that idea is making a comeback!

Through a joint effort between the City of River Falls and River Falls Municipal Utilities, a \$30 rebate is now available for the purchase of a rain barrel for your property.



Rain barrels are attached to downspouts which collect storm water running off your roof when it rains. The rainwater collected in the barrel can be used for watering your plants or garden during dry times of the year and even to wash your car.

## Why should I use a rain barrel?

- Lawn and garden water makes up approximately 40 percent of total household water use in the summer. A rain barrel can save you money in the summer by lowering your water bill by reducing irrigation water usage. One inch of rain falling on a 1,000 square foot roof adds up to 623 gallons of water! Obviously one rain barrel will not be able to catch all that water but every little bit helps!
- Collected rainwater is better for plants and lawns because it isn't chlorinated like your tap water is.
- Reduce water pollution by reducing storm water runoff which can contain pollutants.
- Storing rainwater for lawn and garden use helps recharge the groundwater which feeds local rivers.



Rain barrels can be purchased through the St. Croix County Land and Water Conservation Department, online and at some home improvement retailers. For more information go to [http://www.rfcity.org/eng\\_barrel.asp](http://www.rfcity.org/eng_barrel.asp) or contact Kristy Treichel at [ktreichel@rfcity.org](mailto:ktreichel@rfcity.org) or 715-426-3412. ~

# Drinking Water Week

A safe, reliable water supply is critical to the success of any community. It



creates jobs, attracts industry and investment, and provides for the health and welfare of citizens in ways ranging from disease prevention to fire suppression. We often take water resources for granted unless we are living through a drought or when depleted water supplies threaten a community's future. Water plays a vital role in our daily lives, so help us celebrate Drinking Water Week May 1 - 7, 2011. Contact River Falls Municipal Utilities at 715-425-0906 or visit [www.rfmu.org](http://www.rfmu.org) regarding any special activities planned during this time. ~

# Volunteer Opportunity

The City Engineering Department started an adopt-a-pond program. This program is open to any interested residents, community groups or businesses. These groups can "adopt" storm water management areas within the City of River Falls to provide inspection, oversight, and minor maintenance such as trash and debris removal in these areas on a regularly scheduled basis. Adopters will be recognized with a sign at the pond they are adopting.

For form information regarding this program please visit [http://www.rfcity.org/eng\\_adopt.asp](http://www.rfcity.org/eng_adopt.asp), or contact Kristy Treichel, [ktreichel@rfcity.org](mailto:ktreichel@rfcity.org), 715-426-3412. ~

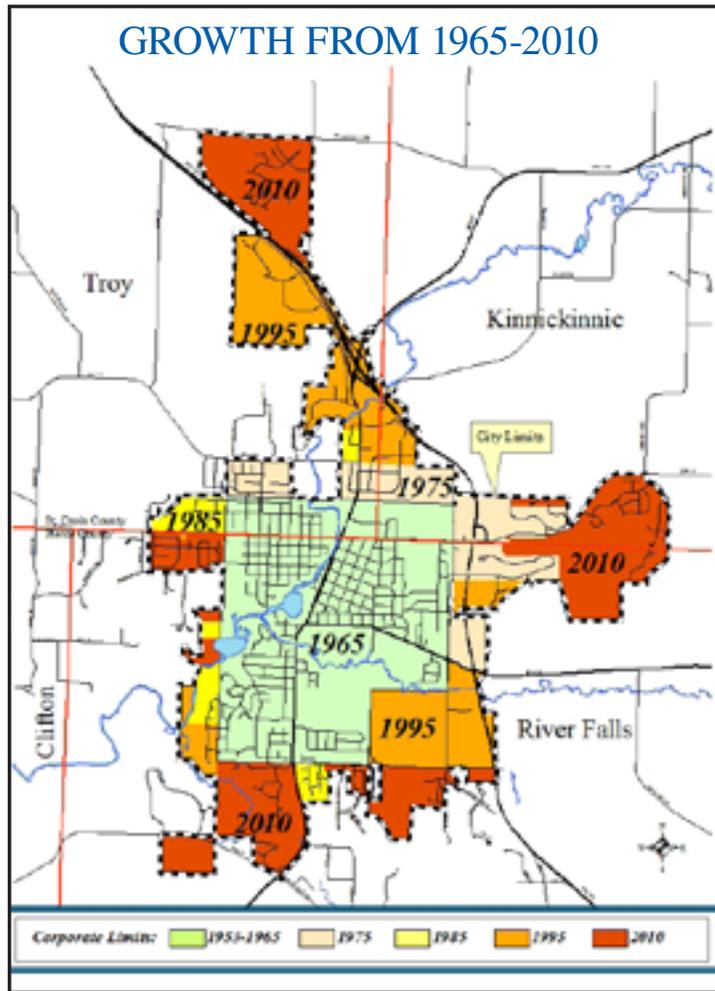
# The Status of Housing in River Falls



## Introduction

River Falls, like many other communities in America, experienced steady growth in its population after the Second World War. We are a growing community located in a growing region. An important factor in the growth of a community is its efforts to provide for the needs of its citizens. Housing is a subject that hits close to home (pun intended) and is a basic need that affects everyone. The recent economic troubles and the role housing had in it has been the focus of national attention. As citizens and residents you may be curious about the status of housing in River Falls.

was approved at the end of 2006. Before 2000, the City averaged approximately 50 new housing units per year. Between the beginning of 2000 and the end of 2009, the City averaged 96 housing units per year. In 2010, 115 housing units were built. A housing unit is either a single-family home or in the case of multi-family dwellings, the number of units. For example, a twin home is two housing units.



Activity with existing housing stock has also seen changes in recent years. The City Building Inspector's records indicate that the number of building permits issued for remodeling and home additions has increased. The recent decline in property values has also seen an increased percentage of homeowners performing their own work as they invest "sweat equity" into their dwellings to help stabilize their property value.

The 2005 Comprehensive Plan estimated the existing number of approved housing units in the City. This estimate includes all approved subdivisions with existing or preliminarily platted lots. Based on that estimate and projected forward to today, there are approximately 1,400 approved units available for construction. Based on recent historic rates of consumption, the City has a 14 year supply if no new lots are added. However, as the overall housing market improves it is reasonable to expect developers to come forth with new subdivisions.

The Urban Area Boundary is a future growth area that comprises the entire City and areas outside of the City that it intends to serve with a full range of capital improvements and public services (streets, parks, sewer, water etc). In 2005, it was estimated at full build out (50 plus years) the City's Urban Area Boundary could accommodate an additional 12,800 housing units. The City has added approximately 500 housing units since this estimate was made leaving the potential for 12,300 units. The Municipal Waste Treatment Plant has capacity to meet the current rate of growth for 20 plus years and the Municipal Utility is proactive in planning for upgrades to meet future capacity needs for water and electric services. It is clear that as services are extended the City is well positioned to absorb residential growth for many years to come.

## Recent History

At the beginning of the 21st century River Falls experienced a boom in housing activity of a magnitude not previously seen. Between 2000 and 2006 property owners annexed 1.6 square miles of land to the City. Nine-hundred thirty acres of this was subsequently planned and to a large extent developed for residential purposes. For comparison purposes the current total area of the City encompasses 6.5 square miles, so the City has physically grown 30 percent in the last 10 years.

## The U.S. Census

The City of River Falls is part of the American Community Survey (ACS). The ACS is conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau and uses a series of monthly data samples to produce annually updated small area data profiles. Five years of data samples were necessary to produce a statistically accurate report. The first report covering 2005 thru 2009 was released in 2010 and will be updated on a yearly basis. The following are some selected housing characteristics:

Eleven major subdivisions were approved in the City between 2000 and 2007. The last new residential subdivision, Knollwood,

*(continued on page 10)*

## Employee Spotlight –



### Nancy Miller

Nancy Miller has worked for the City of River Falls for 25 years. She was initially hired full-time in 1983, and worked her way through various job titles: Library Aide, Assistant Librarian, Children's Librarian, and now Library Director.

She is a graduate of UWRF with a degree in Speech with a Theater emphasis and a minor in Library Science. She completed her master's degree in Library

Science in 1996. She worked as the director of the Carleton Friday Memorial Library in New Richmond for a little over two years, and returned to River Falls to take the Director's position in February 2001.

She firmly believes that the public library is one of the greatest ideas ever (thank you, Ben Franklin), and that how a community supports its library says a lot about what that community values. Citizens of River Falls can be justifiably proud of the great resource they have created for themselves.

Nancy is married to Michael, who is an architect for a firm in Minneapolis, and has three grown children – Ben and Cameron, both of whom are currently attending UWRF, and Addison, who is teaching English in Greeley, Colorado.

She likes to garden, bake, sew, go to movies, read, and dabble at various handicrafts. She works with River Falls Community Theatre directing primarily children's plays, making costumes, and occasionally acting. She also sings with the River Falls Community Gospel Choir. Nancy loves to travel when she can. This past September, she and her husband took a motorcycle trip to Colorado and the Four Corners area, covering about 4500 miles. She says she has no desire to actually drive a motorcycle, although she did have her permit for a while. She's happy to just sit on the back and watch the scenery. ~

## Employee Spotlight –



### Kim Kiiskinen

Kim Kiiskinen has been in library service since high school. She began her library career as a volunteer intern doing archival work in 1987 at the Iron Range Research Center in Chisholm, Minnesota, which transitioned to a summer job in 1987 and 1988. As a college student at the University of Minnesota, Kim was a student-worker inventorying government documents at numerous campus libraries. A few years after graduating from

the University of Minnesota with a BA in History (1991), Kim moved to Durham, North Carolina, to pursue a Master's degree in Library Science at North Carolina Central University. As a graduate student, Kim worked part-time at the Orange County Public Library in Hillsborough, North Carolina, and at the Duke University Medical Library in Durham, North Carolina. Shortly after finishing her master's degree, Kim started her job as the Reference and Technology Librarian at the River Falls Public Library in November 1996.

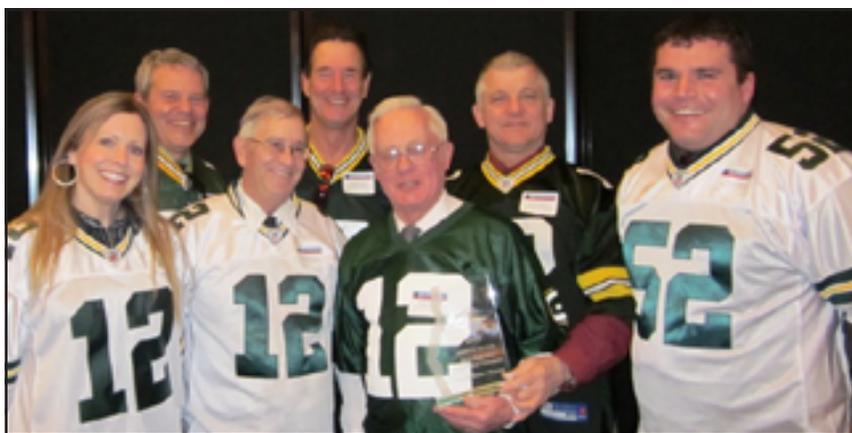
Kim's evolving duties at the library include: selecting reference and non-fiction materials, helping at the check-out desk, administering the library computer network and all other aspects of technology, designing and updating the library website, scheduling meeting rooms and equipment, ordering and stocking the tax forms, and most importantly, providing customer service by answering any and all questions. Kim's philosophy is that the only dumb question is the one that you don't ask.

Kim has been married for almost 15 years to Bruce Mann. They live on his family farm in Hager City, Wisconsin, with numerous four-legged creatures. Kim's many hobbies include motorcycling, snowshoeing, canoeing, fishing, home-brewing, vegetable gardening and raising a small flock of chickens.

If you are interested in what the library has to offer, how to use new library technology, such as ebooks and digital downloads, or need assistance finding information - call, email, chat, or stop by the library - Kim will be there to help you. ~

## River Falls Fire Department Wins "Citizen of the Year" Award

Congratulations to the River Falls Fire Department who received the "Citizen of the Year" award at the annual "chOscars" on February 10. They wore Packer jerseys to the event because firefighters work as a 'team'. Accepting the award of behalf of the Fire Department was: (from left) Molly McLagan, Doug Rudesill, Paul Whiteside, Pauly Cudd, Frank Holter, Scott Nelson, and Scott Gavin (who recently was voted "Firefighter of the Year"). Congratulations RFFD! ~



# River Falls Emergency Weather Warning Siren Test Dates 2011



The City of River Falls will be doing audible testing of the outdoor warning siren system on Thursday, April 14, in conjunction with the National Weather Service. If actual severe or threatening weather exists on this date, the test will be postponed until Friday, April 15, at the same time. Listed below is the audible test schedule for 2011. If severe or threatening weather exists on any of these scheduled dates, the test will be the next day (Tuesday) at the same time.

- Thursday, April 14, 1:40 and 6 p.m. - Make-up date - Friday, April 15
- Monday, May 23, 1 p.m. - Make-up date - Tuesday, May 24, 1 p.m.
- Monday, June 27, 1 p.m. - Make-up date - Tuesday, June 28, 1 p.m.
- Monday, July 25, 1 p.m. - Make-up date - Tuesday, July 26, 1 p.m.
- Monday, August 22, 1 p.m. - Make-up date - Tuesday, August 23, 1 p.m.
- Monday, September 26, 1 p.m. - Make-up date - Tuesday, September 27, 1 p.m.

It is important to remember 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 Status of Housing in River Falls

(continued from page 8)

CITY OF RIVER FALLS	2000	2010
Occupied housing units.....	4,269	4,970
Owner-occupied.....	2,177	2,621
Renter occupied.....	2,092	2,349
Average household size for owner occupied.....	2.70	2.58
Average household size for renter occupied.....	2.31	1.96
Owner-occupied units with a mortgage-median dollars (monthly).....	1,097	1,591
Housing units paying rent-median dollars.....	565	732

estimates indicate five million mortgages are two months behind in payments. During February 2011, Pierce and St. Croix County Court records indicated there were 36 homes in foreclosure in River Falls. This is slightly more than one half of one percent of the total housing units in the City. It is a positive sign that the City is doing much better than the national average.

### Foreclosures

Foreclosures are an issue that has been in the news in recent months. Some experts think it may be two years before the real estate market stabilizes. Others believe stabilization has begun to occur. In 2010, approximately 2.2 percent of the homes in the U.S. were in foreclosure. Over 50 percent of foreclosure activity came from five states, California, Arizona, Florida, Illinois and Michigan, and in the last quarter of 2010 Wisconsin ranked 17<sup>th</sup> in foreclosure activity. Recent nationwide

### Conclusion

River Falls is an attractive and inviting place to live. Planning for the future growth of the community has been and always will be a primary concern for our citizens and decision makers. Like many other communities we have experienced the ups and downs of the economy over the past ten years. On average housing development has grown at a steady pace. River Falls is in an excellent position to allow for the housing market to thrive for many years to come. ~

## New Recruits for Spring 2011

### River Falls Fire Department Recruits are:



From left to right: Matt Lubich; Jeff Rixmann, Ambulance Director; Ted Slowiak; Joe Cudd; Tom Schmitz; Garrett Gill; Ky Kaminski;

Holly Mitchell, Ambulance Operations Supervisor; Rob Kerr; Andrew Schulz; Tynan Heller; Nic Kuehneman; and Jay Koskie. Not pictured: Justin DuBois; Neil Engel.



### River Falls Ambulance EMS Recruits are:

(Front - left to right) Shana Rossow (EMT-Basic); Margo Stern (EMT-Basic); Matt Lubich (Paramedic) (Back - left to right) Bryan Dunham (EMT-Basic); Ben Uden (Paramedic); Dan Zielsdorf (EMT-Basic); Lucas Bauer (EMT-Basic); Todd Freese (EMT-Basic). Not pictured: Mandy Pichla (EMT-Basic)

# Even/Odd Watering Restrictions

Warm, hot summers place a strain on our water resources, often causing demand to double because of outdoor water use. So now is the time to get water wise. River Falls Municipal Utilities water conservation restrictions will help ensure there will be adequate water available when demand is high and rainfall is low, plus plenty of reserve in storage for fire protection purposes. If every home in the City tried to sprinkle lawns at the same time, water demand would greatly exceed water production capabilities and a total sprinkling ban would be necessary to reserve water for fire protection. If half of the homes in the City sprinkle lawns every other day and the other half the alternate day, this will help ensure there is adequate water available for all purposes. River Falls obtains its drinking water from four deep municipal wells. In order to maintain the use of these wells into the future and minimizing further costs associated with increasing our water supply, we ask that all residents and businesses comply with the following even/odd sprinkling restrictions between May 1 and September 30:

Lawn watering is allowed any time before 8 a.m. and after 7 p.m. as follows: even numbered addresses – permitted only on even calendar days; odd numbered addresses – permitted only on odd calendar days.

Unless otherwise prohibited, the following activities are permitted at any time:

- Sprinkling on gardens, trees, and shrubs through use of a hand-held watering can or other hand-held container or hose, provided such watering device is utilized manually and cannot be left unattended.
- Sprinkling or otherwise irrigating new landscape.
- Sprinkling or otherwise irrigating outdoor sports complexes including, but not limited to, baseball diamonds.
- Sprinkling conducted at cemeteries.

These restrictions are crucial to managing the demand for drinking water during the summer. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding. If you have questions or concerns, please contact River Falls Municipal Utilities at 715-425-0906. ~



## Urban Forestry Program

The urban forest is a significant factor in the natural aesthetics of a community. Not only do trees have incredible environmental benefits such as improving air quality, providing shade and reducing temperatures, but also have an effect on the visual appeal that they can bring to a community. Trees provide a sense of balance and form to the streetscape and the neighborhood. They also create character and a sense of place that defines our community. Trees also perform as effective buffers along city streets that protect the safety of pedestrians while traveling on sidewalks.

The City supports and maintains an Urban Forestry Program and has been recognized as a Tree City USA Community since 1993. The fall planting program annually plants approximately 100 trees per year in the right-of-ways and parks to replace those that are lost to disease, storms and old age. As we look to the future, we will be challenged by the invasion of the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) just as we were with Dutch Elm disease. The City Urban Forestry Program will be key in mitigating the effects of EAB and planting for the future.

You can contact the City Forester at 715-426-3424 if you have questions about the City's Urban Forestry Program. ~

# The Roots of Arbor Day

Arbor Day was the idea of J. Sterling Morton. Morton was born in Detroit, Michigan, and was a transplanted Nebraska pioneer and journalist who advocated the planting of trees. He missed the benefits of trees that were few and far between on the plains of Nebraska. He recognized the aesthetic and conservation value that trees can contribute to the environment. In 1872, Morton proposed a tree planting holiday to be called Arbor Day. In 1874, Arbor Day became a legal holiday in Nebraska. Many states followed and by 1882, schools nationwide were observing Arbor Day. Today, Arbor Day is observed in all 50 states and many countries.

River Falls observes the Arbor Day tradition every year on the last Friday in April. This year's observance is on April 29 and will be celebrated with school children planting trees in one of the City parks. The City also encourages citizens to celebrate with their own tree planting activities that contribute to a green and healthy City. ~



*"Other holidays repose upon the past. Arbor Day proposes for the future"*  
**J. Sterling Morton**

## 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 only. The site is open April through November during daylight hours. Material must be removed from plastic and other non-compostable bags. A dumpster is available at the site for disposal of the bags. Compost and woodchips are available at the site for residents on a first come, self-serve basis. Please help us by self-monitoring the site as hours will have to be severely curtailed if we are forced to have an attendant on duty to monitor the sites usage. Use of this site is for City residents only. ~

## Oil Recycling Changes

Oil recycling is no longer available at the compost site, as there are a number of other local options for disposing of used motor oil including the following local businesses that accept used oil from the general public: ~

### Bowen's Garage

405 S. Main Street

M-F 7:30 AM – 5:30 PM  
Sat. 8:00 AM – Noon

### BP Amoco

700 N. Main Street

M-F 8:00 AM – 6:00 PM  
Sat. 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

### River Falls Tire

410 N. Main Street

M-F 7:30 AM – 5:30 PM  
Sat. 8:00 AM – Noon

### River Falls Car Wash

661 N. Main Street

M-F 8:00 AM – 6:00 PM  
Sat. 8:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Note: Pierce County and River Falls Car Wash also accept used antifreeze. Questions? Contact Kristy Treichel at 715-426-3412.

## Yard Care



### Lawn and Garden Fertilizers

Healthy lawns, trees and shrubs add to the beauty and value of a home. Maintaining healthy lawns and landscape plants often requires the use of fertilizers which can cause water pollution.

Fertilizer carelessly applied to lawns can be a waste of the money and can lead to major problems for the Kinnickinnic River. Fertilizer programs should **always** begin with a soils test to avoid over-application. Excess fertilizer will typically run off the lawn into the street and ultimately the Kinni.

Starting in April 2010, usage of phosphorus fertilizer in Wisconsin was banned (with a few exceptions). Most lawns do not require phosphorus.

For trees and shrubs, nutrient requirements vary from plant to plant. In general, nitrogen promotes leafy top growth; phosphorus is used for root development and potassium is necessary for winter hardiness, disease resistance and overall plant durability. Typically fertilizer should be applied in late fall or early spring when plants are dormant. Fertilizing in early fall may stimulate growth that might be killed in winter. Similarly, fertilizing in late spring stimulates growth that depletes food supplies and weakens the plant.

Tips to Remember:

- Always start with a soils test.
- Healthy trees and shrubs do not require annual fertilizer applications.
- Sweep all fertilizers off paved surfaces.
- Pesticides are often unnecessary. Application can waste money as well as pollute the river.

### Rethinking the norm

Many every day activities that occur at our homes have the potential to harm the Kinnickinnic, such as:

- Fertilizer and pesticide applications can cause harm when over applied before a heavy rain.
- Leaves and grass clippings that are not properly disposed of can also wash into the river, thereby overloading the river with the phosphorus and nitrogen that they contain.
- Auto maintenance: Anything that drips from your car (oil, gasoline, antifreeze, etc) will likely be flushed into the street and ultimately to the river. Five quarts of oil can create a slick as large as two football fields and persist in mud or plants for over six months.
- Failure to read labels can result in application of pesticides that do not target the pest you are having a problem with. This results in an unnecessary application which wastes

your time and money as well as potentially harming the environment.

- Failure to read labels can also lead to applications at the wrong time which can have the same results as applying the wrong chemical.
- If a label says not to apply if rain is in the forecast, heed to that recommendation.

### Soils Test

*Is a soils test complicated?*

Taking a soils sample is easy, you simply need to take soil from 3-4 places in your yard, mix it together and submit two cups of this mixture to the address provided with your sample kit instruction sheet. With each soils test you get an analysis of the current nutrient content of the soil and recommendations of type and amount of fertilizer to add.

*How Often?*

Every three years is suggested.

*Where do I get a sample kit?*

To request a soils kit be mailed to your home call the UW-Extension office in Ellsworth at (715) 273-3531, ext. 6663, or in Baldwin at (715) 684-3301 ext. 5. Soils tests cost \$15 but can save you time and money by detailing when and how much to fertilize your lawn.

### Lawn Watering

- A healthy lawn needs about one inch of water per week applied all at one time. Frequent, light watering favors shallow roots, making lawns less tolerant to dry periods.
- Using a can on the lawn can help you gauge when you've watered one inch.
- Excess water can keep the soil too moist which damages roots.
- Established lawns can survive several weeks of dormancy with no water.
- The City restricts lawn watering to before 8 a.m. and after 7 p.m. on odd/even days (corresponding to the house number)

### Mowing

- Set mower height to 2 ½ - 3 inches to provide more leaf area to shade the soil. Weeds thrive in bare soil but suffer in tall, dense turf.
- Mow frequently. It's best not to remove more than 1/3 of the leaf blade at any time. Removing more than 1/3 the blade shocks the lawn and can stop root growth. In addition, long grass clippings don't break down as easily.
- Leave your grass clippings on the lawn. Clippings can provide between 20-50 percent of the nitrogen needed by your lawn each year.
- Sharpen your mower 2 - 3 times a year. Dull blades tear the lawn leaving it at risk for diseases. ~



## May is National Preservation Month

“Celebrating America’s Treasures” is the theme of the month-long celebration sponsored by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Since the National Trust for Historic Preservation created Preservation Week in 1971 to spotlight grassroots preservation efforts in America, it has grown into an annual celebration observed by small towns and big cities with events ranging from architectural and historic tours and award ceremonies, to fundraising events, educational programs and heritage travel opportunities. Due to its overwhelming popularity, in 2005, the National Trust for Historic Preservation extended the celebration

to the entire month of May and declared it Preservation Month to provide an even longer opportunity to celebrate the diverse and unique heritage of our country’s cities and states and enable more Americans to become involved in the growing preservation movement.

In celebration of National Preservation month, the City Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) plans to hold an ice cream social at the old railroad/freight depot site on River Street. The freight house is on a site that is currently being redeveloped and the HPC is considering options to preserve the building. The date and time of the ice cream social is yet to be determined and will be posted on the City of River Falls’ website, [www.rfcity.org](http://www.rfcity.org).

The City of River Falls and its residents have made many efforts to preserve its historic resources. In 2003, the City achieved Certified Local Government status by the State Historic Preservation Officer. Since the 1970s, the citizens of River Falls have been active in historic preservation activities that eventually led to four structures being included in the National Register of Historic Places. They include South Hall, North Hall, the Freeman House, and the Glen Park Swimming Pool. In addition, the River Falls Historic Preservation Commission has been working on many local historic preservation projects. They include local landmark designation and placing history plaques on downtown businesses.

It is important to preserve historic resources because they are the heart of communities like River Falls. Historic buildings give character to the community and help bring tourism revenue. River Falls will continue to work to maintain its unique and historic resources for future generations.

Learn more about National Preservation Month at [www.PreservationNation.org/PreservationMonth](http://www.PreservationNation.org/PreservationMonth).

## Spring Clean Up

Each May, a spring clean up is provided for residents in the City of River Falls who are currently billed for City garbage service by Veolia. 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 Veolia. People who do not qualify will not be allowed to dispose of their goods.

The clean up is conducted for six days at the City Public Works Facility located at 950 Benson Street. Spring clean up begins the second Monday in May and runs for one week. There will also be a one week fall clean up beginning the second Monday in November. Both clean up events will have the following hours: Monday through Friday – 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. and Saturday – 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

### **Acceptable Items Include:**

- Carpet/pad
- Large bulky items
- Furniture
- Miscellaneous garbage (less than one cubic yard)
- Mattress/box spring
- Propane tanks
- Minor household construction debris (less than one cubic yard)

### **Acceptable Items that will be charged a fee include:**

- Car Tire (\$5)
- Air Conditioner (\$16)
- Computer or Printer (\$8)
- Truck Tire (\$4)
- Microwave (\$4)
- TV Monitor < 20” (\$16)
- Appliances (\$16)
- Dehumidifier (\$8)
- TV Monitor > 20” (\$32)
- Large quantities of construction debris (varies)

### **Unacceptable Items include:**

- Oil
- Paint
- Car batteries
- Special or hazardous waste
- Chemicals or waste that is generated by a contractor

Veolia reserves the right to refuse any hazardous materials. Pierce County Solid Waste 715-273-3092 does offer a clean sweep program each September for disposal of many hazardous waste products generated by City of River Falls residents who are also Pierce County residents.

Any calls regarding questions on what can be discarded should be directed to Veolia at 866-983-6542. ~

# Mann Valley Land Purchase

In February, the City closed on a purchase of 85+ acres of land south of CTH MM and east of Mann Road. The land was purchased from River Bank. This article covers some frequently asked questions about the purchase.

## Why is the City seeking to purchase land?

The City Council indicated that a major goal of the community was to seek additional land for industrial and corporate park development. This was included in the approved Work Plan for 2009-2011.

## Why is the City seeking Industrial/Corporate Park Land?

A balanced composition of land uses and types helps provide stability and prosperity for a community. Communities which rely solely on residential or institutional uses can have difficulty balancing the service demands with available resources. The City of River Falls and its partners have been very successful in developing corporate and industrial parks.

## Don't we have enough Industrial/Corporate Park land?

The City has two existing industrial parks. They total approximately 135 acres and the businesses located in them employ approximately 1,000 people. The River Falls Industrial Park has 10 acres of land available for development. The Whitetail Ridge Corporate Park has 30 acres available. Since 1988, approximately 110 acres of land in the two parks has been developed. This amounts to approximately five acres per year. Even if a slowdown in the economy continues, the City has only 10-15 years of land available.

Purchasing this land increases the community's opportunity to compete for larger scale development opportunities. The largest vacant industrial or corporate lot in the City of River Falls is twelve acres.

## Why buy this land?

Land prices are considerably lower now than they have been over the past decade. The negotiated price of this property allows the City to continue seeking other lands for more immediate development while having a back-up plan if negotiations with other landowners are not fruitful.

This land is within our proposed Urban Area Boundary and is readily served by utilities and main transportation routes.

Even if the land is not developed anytime soon, the City will benefit from value appreciation and land lease payments. Land lease payments for the 85 acres are currently over \$10,000 per year.

## What was the process used by the City to decide this was a good piece of land to purchase?

The process of identifying potential sites for corporate park development has involved an overall land mapping project of parcels of 40 acres or larger with geography that would provide for corporate park sites (limited slopes, swamps, water bodies, forests). Then sites were evaluated based on proximity to current sites and infrastructure. Six to eight sites met the minimum criteria and were further narrowed based on discussions with landowners. Sites that would be too costly in the current market for new companies were eliminated. That left four to five sites for consideration.

The City was approached by River Bank about the opportunity to purchase all or some of a 325+ acre site they controlled on the



west side of the community. The City determined development of that site would be costly without other adjacent lands being developed and sharing in infrastructure costs. However, the site remained in consideration due to the estimated acquisitions costs.

## Why buy this land now if it isn't great for immediate development?

The land was offered at \$6.5 million or \$20,000 per acre. Due to the limited value for immediate development, the City determined to purchase up to \$1 million dollars worth of land if approximately 100 acres could be purchased. The parties negotiated for months with a resulting offer sheet (August 2010) providing

*(continued on page 15)*

# Mann Valley Land Purchase

(continued from page 14)

85 acres outright plus between 17 and 26 acres of additional land for storm water management and parkland dedication. Therefore, the City is obtaining 102-111 acres for development. This results in a cost of approximately \$9,000 to \$10,000 per acre.

As previously discussed, only four to five pieces of land are desirable for future corporate park development. Even though this land was not the top pick, all other things being equal, the purchase price allows the City more options as it seeks more immediately developable parcels of land.

## **It was reported that this purchase was for the "next" industrial park. How soon will this be developed?**

The City does not view this land as the "next" site for a corporate park. Discussions are ongoing for acquiring land for the next phase of corporate/industrial park development in River Falls. If the City is successful in acquiring additional land, this recent purchase will not likely be developed for thirty or more years. If the City is not successful in acquiring other land, it will still likely be a decade or more before this site is going to be developed.

## **Did the City give up any future rights to collect assessments, impact fees, or other charges from the Bank?**

No, the City expressly reserved the right to approve subdivision and use of property, right to charge, levy, assess and otherwise capture costs of public construction.

## **How can the City afford to purchase this land?**

The City looked at several options for financing the purchase including general fund balance, Tax Incremental District (TID) funds, borrowing, or general taxes.

TID funds can be used for a purchase like this within certain parameters. In this case, the land lies too far outside current TID boundaries to make it eligible for purchase with TID funds.

Bonding is available in a number of forms for a purchase like this and many cities would use that as a purchase resource. However, fiscal planning for the City has called for a conservative approach to debt accumulation and a limit on extending general borrowing. Our fiscal planning has put a large emphasis on protecting fund balances in the general fund.

The City Council indicated a desire not to use general tax funds to purchase this property. This leaves special purpose funds as the best opportunity for purchasing without borrowing new money. City staff researched options and determined that the environmental fee fund to be a good match.

## **What is the environmental fee fund?**

The environmental fee was first initiated in 1995 to fund monitoring and capping costs at the site of the closed City landfill on County Road FF. The bonds for the landfill cap were paid off in 2007, and the fee has been reduced twice since it was put in place. The fee is now primarily used for ongoing monitoring costs.

The environmental fund includes funding from the settlement with the area Towns and a local business that were considered responsible parties related to landfill liability. The City received \$1,400,000 in 1996 from these responsible parties, which has been invested for future landfill costs. Since the landfill was capped in 1993, the cap has performed according to expectations. The fund has a current balance of approximately \$2,000,000.

It is anticipated that these funds may be needed in two to three decades should environmental law require modifications to safety or monitoring systems or if the landfill needed to be recapped. As these funds are not needed at this time, an advance from the environmental fund for the purchase of land could be considered. The funds are currently invested with an annual yield of 2.42 percent.

The environmental fund would receive an average 2.50 percent to 3.00 percent in interest over a minimum of a ten year period. The environmental fee fund would benefit from a higher yield while the City would benefit from a lower cost of borrowing.

It is anticipated that the City would recoup its borrowed funds at the time development of the site allows for repayment with interest. This is the pattern followed for both of the existing business parks. The land lease payments would likely be applied to interest costs.

## **What is the future for this land?**

The City has no immediate annexation or development plans for this land and a land lease is in place to continue farming operations on the land. The City is likely to utilize buildings on the site for some municipal purpose or lease them with the land for farming. Unless a large lot development opportunity presents itself, the land is likely to remain in agricultural use until such time as other industrial/corporate lands are exhausted, or a development proposal for land lying east of this land is presented. It is in the best interest of the City, as the new owner of the land, to steward its value as an agricultural asset first since that is the most likely use for decades. It is likely that the ultimate decisions regarding development will be made by a City Council in ten or twenty years. ~

# New Social Security Field Office Information

As of March 2011, the Social Security Administration will be visiting the River Falls Public Library only when there are appointments scheduled in advance. Walk-in clients without an appointment will no longer be served. Please call the Eau Claire SSA office toll free at 1-866-815-2924 or 1-800-772-1213 for assistance or to schedule an appointment. They suggest that those needing information or wishing to file applications consider visiting them online at [www.socialsecurity.org](http://www.socialsecurity.org). ~

## How to Report an Outage

### **Residents Are Encouraged To Report Street Light Outages.**

Your help in identifying street lights that are not working is very important, as River Falls Municipal Utilities relies on your notification assistance. Once aware of an outage, the utility takes the appropriate action to make sure the light is repaired in a reasonable amount of time. Report an outage electronically by using the Street Light Outage Form at [www.rfmu.org](http://www.rfmu.org), via phone at 715-425-0906, or via email at [rfmu@wppienergy.org](mailto:rfmu@wppienergy.org). If possible, please have the following available:

- Property address or nearest cross street to where the light pole is located.
- The number located on a metal strip attached to the pole.
- The nature of the problem.
- Your name and contact information in case there are additional questions ~

## International Migratory Bird Day – May 14th

River Falls has been recognized by the Bird City Wisconsin Project for its efforts to make the community a better place for birds and other wildlife. On May 14, the City will be observing International Migratory Bird Day. At 1:00 p.m., the St. Croix Valley Bird Club will host a presentation on area song birds at the RF public library and a demonstration on binocular use for kids, along with bird pictures to view. After the library event, there will be a walk along the White Pathway to view local birds with the binoculars.

For more information, email [jbeix@dishup.us](mailto:jbeix@dishup.us) or [mbroen@hotmail.com](mailto:mbroen@hotmail.com).

### 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  
Dawn Wills  
Scot Simpson, City Administrator

#### PHOTO CREDITS:

Margaret Smith  
Dawn Wills  
Cindi Danke  
Chris Blasius  
Kristy Treichel  
Tony Steiner  
River Falls Fire Department



City of River Falls  
Web Site  
[www.rfcity.org](http://www.rfcity.org)



Back Row: Tom Caflisch, Scott Morrisette, David Cronk, Randy Kusilek  
Front Row: Bob Hughes, David Reese, Mayor Don Richards, Jim Nordgren

## The Current Mayor and Common Council

Position	Name	Address	Phone	E-mail Address
Mayor	Don Richards	106 N. Wasson	715-441-2397	drichards@rfcity.org
At Large	Randy Kusilek	518 N. Winter	715-425-0415	rkusilek@rfcity.org
At Large	David Cronk	843 Leroy Lane	715-425-9174	dcronk@rfcity.org
At Large	Scott Morrisette	2137 Rushmore Drive	715-425-8993	smorrisette@rfcity.org
District 1	Tom Caflisch	508 Roosevelt Court	715-425-7186	tcaflisch@rfcity.org
District 2	Jim Nordgren	1144 South Fork Drive	715-425-7327	jnordgren@rfcity.org
District 3	David Reese	425 N. Wasson Lane	715-425-9369	dreese@rfcity.org
District 4	Bob Hughes	709 Bartosh Lane	715-441-8325	bhughes@rfcity.org



## Results of the April 5 General Election

<b>District 1 – Wards 1, 2, 13 and Wards 3, 4</b>	
Tom Caflisch	573
Todd Coleman	473
<b>District 2 – Wards 8, 9, 10</b>	
Eunice Beauchman	105
Jim Nordgren	156
<b>District 3 – Wards 5, 6, 7</b>	
David Reese	563
<b>Aldersperson At Large</b>	
Josh Hudek	984
Randy Kusilek	1616

222 Lewis Street  
River Falls, WI 54022



Presort Standard  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit #16  
Hastings, MN