

The Bridge

CITY OF ROCKFORD

MAYOR'S MESSAGE



Michael Beyer, Mayor

Winter, will it ever end? I don't know about you, but spring can't come fast enough. With spring comes our annual Fire Department's pancake breakfast. Mark your calendars for the first Sunday in May so you won't forget. Due to budget constraints the May clean up day may be held bi-annually.

As spring approaches, we on the Council are looking at some possible street maintenance projects for some of our neighborhoods. If it isn't winter it is construction season. What we do this year will depend on what the State does with our Local Government Aid. We could be denied our share which could be as much as an additional \$135,000 which is 8.17% of the 2010 tax levy. This money has helped us in making ends meet and will force us to be more self sustaining by taxing ourselves. You can have your say by contacting our State Representative Tom Emmer and State Senator Amy Koch. Or if you want you can also tell the Governor what you think of having cities lose their Local Government Aid. Without this aid we have to be even more frugal with our budgets. Last year was a very trying year with some of our aid being reduced, but this year will be even more so, and what to cut without affecting the services will be a great challenge for the Council and Staff.

Many of you may have noticed, the new

levee protecting us from the Crow River was completed last fall. With the amount of moisture in the snow the chance of flooding is high this spring. Our new levee may get its first test as the Crow River is one of four rivers that are expected to go into a potential flooding period. With our new levee we have a less than 10% chance of the river getting to the top of our new levee and I am comfortable that our city will have a fighting chance against the high water this year.

There is some new and exciting news for Rockford. You may have heard that we have a nonprofit organization starting up a food shelf in Rockford. RiverWorks will be running the food shelf in the building next to our library at 8230 Cedar Street. They will be opening in March to aid and assist residents in their time of need. This will be a great asset for our city. If you feel a need to help or need help, check it out. This can be a great opportunity to volunteer your time, support the food shelf with food donations and/or financial support. Welcome RiverWorks Community Development to Rockford!

As always, thank you for calling Rockford home, and I will see you around town this spring or at the pancake breakfast.

Mike

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BUILDING COMMUNICATION

The city council is interested in building better communications between our shareholders which is you the taxpayers. Rockford has their own government access channel on Charter #12 which airs our council meetings, and a bulletin board that we use as another means of keeping our residents informed of upcoming meetings, events, election information, etc. We have partnered with the school and shown

some of their concerts on our channel which the residents have really enjoyed. We want to build a list of our shareholders email addresses as another way to keep you up to date with current events. If you are interested send us your email address to: audrae@cityofrockford.org. We will send out events starting the end of March.

C H A M B E R O F C O M M E R C E

After two years of holding business summits the Rockford and Greenfield businesses have officially formed the Rockford-Greenfield Area Chamber of Commerce. The new board of directors have planned their next meeting for **March 11, 2010** (noon-1:30 pm) at BANKWEST 5901 Main Street, Rockford, MN. There are currently 30 chamber members and the group is seeking area businesses that have not yet joined. Membership forms

may be obtained at the Rockford City Hall or contact Audra at 477-6565. The bi-monthly meetings include a speaker and usually 3 businesses are in the "spot light". The chamber has formed committees including: events, marketing, ambassadors, etc. The chamber is working on getting their own website but until then you may contact Audra Etzel at Rockford City Hall audrae@cityofrockford.org



**Business Summit at Bank West
Rockford, MN**

A D M I N I S T R A T O R ' S R E P O R T

Our last newsletter went out prior to the end of the year so I want to give you some statistics about 2009. In 2009 the city issued 9 new residential building permits, 1 new commercial permit. Our general fund ended the year with money left over due to the budget cuts that were made by the city council during the year. The staff did a great job staying within their department budgets and have had no wage increases for two years. The city completed the flood levee project with the exception of some landscaping, which is good timing due to the threat of high water this spring. The HRA issued 1 no interest business loans, worked at

redevelopment of some properties in downtown and on Highway 55. The city's HRA funded a market study that shows Rockford can support a grocer and other retail stores. We have provided this study to many interested parties and are working with a few grocers that have shown some interest. The park department received a grant to purchase the 2nd phase of playground equipment for Kettener Park. The equipment will be installed this summer. The government access channel is planned to air more PBS programs and locally produced videos this year so stay tuned.

R O C K F O R D P U B L I C L I B R A R Y

We have a Guthrie "Introduction to Memoirs" class in the library on Saturday, March 6, from 10-11:30. The goal is for adults to learn the basics of getting thoughts and ideas from their life story down on paper (might also be helpful if you want to help someone else begin their memoirs). Preregistration is required and will

be accepted through March 6. Funded by the Legacy grant received from the state of MN.

The library will be closed on Monday, April 12th.

On April 20th and May 18th, a University of MN Master Gardner will answer questions and present gardening tips begin-

ning at 2 pm at the library.

For more information regarding the Rockford Library call (763) 477-4216 or visit their web site at: www.griver.org
8220 Cedar Street

Library Hours

Monday 2pm-8pm
Tuesday 2pm-8pm
Wednesday 10am-6pm
Thursday 3pm-8pm
Friday 3pm-6pm
Saturday 10am-1pm



ROCKFORD GARDEN CLUB

Are you tired of the cold and snow? Well think spring! The Garden Club will be swapping out those spruce tips and fixing up the city gardens with beautiful blooming flowers and we need your help. You don't have to be a master gardener, just be willing to get your



hands dirty. We will meet at **10:00am on May 14 and/or 15** in the city parking lot (by the can recycling trailer). If you can't make it those days, you can contact Marsha about the "Adopt a Pot" program where volunteers keep their favorite pots or garden weeded and looking great all summer. If you are interested in helping out or donating plant cuttings, contact Marsha White (763)477-6173

COMPOST

The compost site on Elm Street/CR 33 is scheduled to open April 15th.

Hours of operation:

Monday-Friday 8:00am-4:00pm

Wednesday Evening 4:30-8:30pm

Saturday 8:00pm-noon



DOG LICENSES

All dogs 6 months or older are required to be licensed with the City of Rockford. No person shall have more than two dogs without first securing a kennel license. Dog licenses expire on June 30, 2010 all other licenses will be pro-rated.



Volunteers make a difference in every community and recognition of their dedication should be celebrated. The awards a special volunteer in April each year.

RIVERWORKS FOOD SHELF OPENING!

Located next to the Library at 8230 Cedar Street, Rockford

Saturday, March 6th—Community Open House. The surrounding communities are invited to come and tour the newly completed RiverWorks Food Shelf. The Open House is from 1-4pm. Refreshments will be served.

Sunday, March 7th-Dedication of the Building will take place at 12 noon. Refreshments to follow inside the building.

For more information contact Denise at 763-607-9308 or email: dkesanen@riverworksonline.org

Hours of operation:
Monday 5:30-8:00pm
Tuesday 9:00-11:00am
Thursday 5:30-8:00pm



The 3rd Wednesday of each month is Senior Day 9:00-11:00am

March is Minnesota Food Shelf Month, please consider making a donation.

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR



The City of Rockford is seeking it's 2009 "Volunteer of the Year". Do you know a resident who volunteers time for our community? If so, stop by City Hall and fill out a nominee form or give us a call at 763-477-6565.

Nominee forms are also available at the Rockford Public Library or on the front page of the City's web site:

www.cityofrockford.org

COMMUNITY EXPO

The 8th Annual Community Expo will be held on **Saturday, March 20, 2010 from 9am-1pm** at the Rockford Community Center, 7600 Rebecca Park Trail (County Road 50)

Statistics have shown over 1,000 people visit the Community Expo. It is a great opportunity to exhibit your business or organization and connect with potential customers. There are also stage demonstrations, children's area, door prizes

and cash prizes, which typically draw people into the Expo.

Registration should be received at the RCC by March 10th to avoid the late fee
Contact Barb Northway at 763-477-5294 Ext. 5



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Upcoming Events

March 6th-RiverWorks Open House (1-4pm)

March 20th-Community Expo (9am-1pm)

March 20th -Stork House/Building History (10am)

May 2nd—Fire Dept Pancake Breakfast (7am-noon)

June 10th-12th-City Wide Garage Sales

June 15th-Music in the Park

July 13th-Music in the Park

July 23rd-Movie in the Park at Dusk

August 3rd-National Night Out

August 10th-Primary Elections

August 13th-15th-Rockford River Days

Sept 10th-Movie in the Park at Dusk

Nov 2nd—General Elections

2010 CENSUS

On April 1, 2010, the U.S. Census Bureau will count every resident in the United States. Why?

Numbers mean power. The Census count is the basis for determining the number of each state's Congressional representatives. Minnesota currently has eight representatives in the U.S. Congress; however, the state could lose one seat after 2010 because of population changes. Completing and returning the Census questionnaire will help ensure Minnesotans' interests are fully represented in Congress.

Numbers mean money. For every 100 Minnesotans who fail to answer the Census, the state will lose **\$1 million** in

federal funds over the next 10 years. The federal government gives out approximately **\$300 billion** each year based on the Census count, while the state distributes many of its program funds based on population counts. Counties, cities and townships where residents fail to answer the Census will lose additional state dollars.

Numbers mean information. Businesses, governments, schools and non-profit agencies use Census data for planning programs, land use, businesses and services. Census data tell us who our customers are, where our students will live and what our greatest needs will be.



www.mn2010census.org