



# The Bridge—Volume 105

CITY OF ROCKFORD

## MAYOR'S MESSAGE

When will it end??? Winter is still upon us and there is an end in sight but it seems a long way out. We have experienced a large amount of snow this year and as you may have heard, flooding is expected this spring. Last year we experienced some higher than usual water on the Crow, but not as much as is expected this year. As you may know the city invested in widening the levee two years ago to protect our city but the water did not get high enough to test it. People have been asking me, where do we stand with this more than normal amount of snow that will be melting into the Crow, I want to assure you that the city staff and

**2011 City Council**  
**Martinson, Wenz, Beyer**  
**Hafften and Graner**



the city council have been preparing for what could happen. We have met with Wright County's Emergency Management and purchased extra sand bags in the event we need them. If you want to keep up on the river and how high it is you can go to the city web site and go to the link for Crow River Water Level. We will see above average water coming through Rockford but the height to watch for is over 17'. This will be a very noticeable amount of water but the improved levee is 19'. The key to the spring thaw is that we do not have any ice dams, and the sooner the ice is gone the better.

The other winter situation I want to bring to everyone's attention is the importance of keeping your neighborhood fire hydrant clear of snow. This last winter there have been numerous reports from around the metro of a house fire that hindered the fire department by not being able to find or had to shovel out the hydrant first. Your home is usually the biggest investment and if a fire were to happen, time is one of the biggest assets that the fire department relies on

to extinguish the fire. With over 250 hydrants in our city the staff does not have the time to get all of them before they may be needed. That is why as a neighbor we need to pull together to make sure we have the protection available when needed. If there is a house fire, more than one hydrant will probably be used, so any hydrant on your block is as critical as the one in front of your house. Just remember, the house you save may be your own.

Now for some good news to look forward to. Saturday May 7th is the city wide clean up day at the public works building. The next day, May 8th is the Rockford Fire Department pancake breakfast. I hope to see you at one of those events or probably down by the river this spring.

Thanks again for calling Rockford home.

*Mike*

## CITY NEWS

The city is working with the counties to find the best option to send a **message to our residents**. Wright County has a program called City Watch that uses phone numbers listed in the white pages, but if you don't have a land line you would not receive a notice. Both Hennepin & Wright County have a program called Nixle that residents can sign up for and it includes text and/or email notifications. To sign up for Nixle, go to: [www.nixle.com](http://www.nixle.com). For the last year we have asked residents to send us their email addresses because we stopped mailing the newsletter and wanted to email it, and we do have small list of residents emails. We would only use this method for an emergency or for sending our newsletter. The best method of communication the city has now for any emergency at this time would be through our website, email the residents on our lists or on our govern-

ment access channel. If you are interested in being on the email list send us your information.

Don't forget about the **Emergency Housing Repair program**. The city has funding for low to moderate income residents who own a home and need help financing a new furnace, water heater, windows, roof repair, etc. the maximum funding per household is \$5,000. The money is provided by CDBG funding available to the city. This money cannot be used for mobile homes. If you would like more information please contact Nancy Carswell or Mary Huettl at city hall.

The **Boy Scouts are having a Carnival**, with a stage for entertainment at the Rockford Mall from May 20-22.



## ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

The State of Minnesota's \$6.4 billion dollar deficit has been in the headlines now for weeks. Some of the budget solutions that have been reported include Local Government Aid (LGA) reductions to cities which we planned on when we set the budget for 2011. The dust won't settle on the state budget until the session ends on May 20th, unless the legislators don't make a decision and call a special session.

The city is preparing for high water levels in the Crow River this spring. Staff is on alert and working together with local and state emergency management personnel. We have purchased sand bags keeping track of the water level according to the gage in Rockford. The flood levee was improved two years ago which should provide better coverage downtown. A memo was sent out to property owners in and around the flood plains suggesting they check into getting flood insurance. For information on flood insurance or preparing for floods go to [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov) or go on the city website which has a link to the gage in the river which has actual river levels.

Staff is still pursuing a grocer and have had a few meetings with potential grocers in the past few months. The grocers said our market study is very well done, however, we have not found a grocer that fits into our market. Staff will not give up on finding the

right grocer for Rockford. We thank the residents who have provided us leads to smaller grocers that are outside the metro. In talking with these grocers it has been a learning experience. Each grocer has their own specific "niche" and we just have not fit into one of them at this time. The staff will probably be sending out a survey to residents to find out more about your shopping habits that will be helpful in our search.

The city is meeting with a developer regarding a small senior housing project in Rockford. This has been a goal for the city as we currently have no assisted living-type housing for seniors.

A new business program is being launched this month, which is tailored around business design and helping each other using local talent, professionals and connections to enhance local businesses. The Rockford HRA received a small grant to assist with administering the program and an Open House was held on February 24th to provide more information on the specifics of the program. SCORE has been out in Rockford once a month since November and meets with three businesses or non profit organizations to provide counseling. The Business Design program has been planning a project which will provide assistance to a downtown business and already have some talented business people donating time for this first project.

## EMPLOYEE CORNER



The city just approved the hiring of Christine King who will be joining the public works department. Chris has a lot of experience operating heavy equipment, building maintenance and has a Class A commercial drivers license. Chris will start her employment with the city on February 28th. We are looking forward to working together with Chris as she seems to be a great fit for our city.

The city council has approved an employee recognition policy which will recognize employees after five, ten, fifteen, etc years of service with the city. John Quirk the Street Maintenance/Heavy Equipment Operator started with the city in January of 1997. Mary Huetl the Finance Clerk started with the city in January of 2001. These two employees were the first to be recognized for over ten years of service by the city council at their February 22, 2011 meeting. We also will be recognizing other employees as follows: Nancy Carswell 26 years February, Doug Duda 12 years June, Darcy Desens 5 years June, Dennis Peterson 31 years November and Marlys Elsen 13 years December. The city is proud of the longevity of our staff and feel they are a great part of the city. The service these employees provide is usually done behind the scenes and they don't receive a lot of recognition for all they do for the residents and business owners. On behalf of the Mayor and City Council **Thank You** for your hard work and the pride you take in the operations of the city.

**COMPOST SITE**

The compost site on Elm Street/CR 33 is scheduled to open April 15th. You do not need to check out a key at city hall.

Hours of operation:



**Monday-Friday 7:30am-3:00pm**

**Wednesday Evening 4:30-8:30pm**

**Saturday 8:00am-noon**

Items accepted: grass clippings, leaves and brush no larger than 3" in diameter. All bags used to transport composting must be removed. **NO OTHER DUMPING IS ALLOWED.**

Finished compost material is also available at no charge.

**PLANNING COMMISSION**

The Planning and Zoning Commission has two openings for the position of commissioner: one three year term and one two year term. Meetings are scheduled on the 2nd Thursday of each month and 4th Thursday (April—Sept if needed). If you are interested in applying to be on the Planning and Zoning Commission, please stop by City Hall and fill out an application. The application is also available on line.



**PARK COMMISSION**



The park commission has appointed a new member, Kim Lucarelli who will serve a three year term. The park commission will be receiving input from the Parkwood neighborhood at their next meeting March 7th. The developer donated approximately 10 acres of park land. The park commission will begin developing the park in phases. The neighbors will be presenting their list of items they want included in the design of the Parkwood Park. MN Volleyball is registering adult leagues to be held in the sand courts at Riverside Park. You can register online [mnvolleyballhq.com](http://mnvolleyballhq.com). Leagues start in April and continue through the summer.

**RIVERWORKS FOOD SHELF**

It is time for the **Minnesota Food Share March Campaign!** RiverWorks food shelf needs your help this March. For every pound of food donated and every dollar collected, along with the number of clients served in March the MN Food Share will provide free dollars that we can use to purchase food. Since the food shelf opened last March they have served 1,136 people and provided 109,000 pounds of food! The Rockford Food Shelf needs your continued support not only this March but throughout the year as the number of clients served continues to grow. Riverworks **March is baking month and the food shelf is collecting flour, sugar, and oil** as well as other food and cash donations. For more information contact Kelly Finger the manager at [www.kfinger@riverworksonline.org](http://www.kfinger@riverworksonline.org)

The food shelf is open 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

**8230 Cedar Street**

763-477-6098

[www.riverworksonline.org](http://www.riverworksonline.org)



**COMMUNITY EXPO**

The Rockford Community Expo will be **Saturday, March 19, 2011** from 9am-1pm at the Rockford Community Center, 7600 Co Rd 50. Registration should be received at the RCC by March 10th to avoid the late fee. Contact Barb Northway at 763-477-5294 Ext. 5 Free to the public.



**STORK HOUSE**

The Ames-Florida-Stork House is located at:

**8131 Bridge Street**

763-477-5383 Email: [storkhouse@cityofrockford.org](mailto:storkhouse@cityofrockford.org)

[www.rockfordmnhistory.org](http://www.rockfordmnhistory.org)

Open for tours Tuesdays & Thursdays 10am-3pm and by appointment through April:

PROGRAMS:

**Bookbinding**

3/12/11 10am-2pm at the Lion's Building

**Calligraphy**

4/9/11 10am-2pm at the Lion's Building



**ROCKFORD LIBRARY**

Located at:

**8220 Cedar Street**

(763) 477-4216

[www.griver.org](http://www.griver.org)



Story Times—Wednesdays 11-11:45 am

**2010 VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR**

The City of Rockford is searching for it's 2010 Volunteer of the Year. Forms are available on the city web site, at city hall or the library. Please submit your entry no later than Monday, April 4, 2011.





CITY OF ROCKFORD

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## RECYCLING INFORMATION

Wright Recycling **collects every other Wednesday**. This is a change from the 1st, 3rd and 5th Wednesday . The new 2011 calendars were sent out in the Drummer. If you did not receive one, the calendar is available on the City website, call City Hall and we will send one out or you can pick one up. The recyclables only have to be sorted for paper and glass/cans/plastic bottles can be put together. If you need a recycling bin stop by City Hall. Remember that cardboard should be flattened and no larger than 3 x 3. **Recyclables must be set out at the curb by 7 a.m. The next scheduled pick up is: MARCH 9, 2011. See dates to follow:**



March 23, 2011  
April 6, 2011  
April 20, 2011  
May 4, 2011  
May 18, 2011  
June 1, 2011  
June 15, 2011  
June 29, 2011  
July 13, 2011  
July 27, 2011  
August 10, 2011  
August 24, 2011  
September 7, 2011  
September 21, 2011  
October 5, 2011  
October 19, 2011  
November 2, 2011  
November 16, 2011  
November 30, 2011  
December 14, 2011  
December 28, 2011



BANKWEST is no longer accepting **water bill payments** for the city due to the change in banking regulations. Payments can be made at: City Hall, the utility drop box, autopay, on-line or US Mail.

A link on the city's front page of the web site has been set up to **monitor the Crow River water** level.



To **receive the newsletter** and city updates via email, send your email address to: [audrae@cityofrockford.org](mailto:audrae@cityofrockford.org)

