

CITY OF NEW YORK MILLS

March 2011

Volume 2 Issue 2



New York Mills Trade Show Set for March 19th



Preparations are underway for the 2011 New York Mills Trade Show, which is set for Saturday, March 19th. The Trade Show, which is held at the New York Mills Sports Center from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm, is sponsored by the New York Mills Civic and Commerce Association.

A full slate of events is planned, starting off with a Pancake Breakfast from 9:00 -11:00 am in the High School Commons. The NYM Bandwagon will offer concessions

throughout the day, beginning at 10:00 am. A Book Fair will be held, with proceeds going to the High School Media Center.

Other items of entertainment include a seminar put on by the Minnesota DNR on Invasive Species at 10:00 am, followed by a Fishing Seminar with local fishing pro Scott Perala at 10:30 am. The 11:00 slot features a Tae Kwon Do Demonstration in the Commons area.

A large slate of vendors have registered with displays both indoors and outdoors as well. The always popular petting zoo will again be offered, sponsored by the New York Mills FFA Chapter.

New this year, the East Otter Tail Daycare Association, in

conjunction with the NYM Police Department, will be doing fingerprinting of children at the Trade Show.

Stop by and play some of the games offered by the New York Mills Lions-try your hand at shooting hoops or perfect your golf swing.

The Trade Show is a popular event for young and old alike, offering prize drawings and giveaways, information on the newest products and services available, not to mention a chance to visit with friends and neighbors.

Admission is Free with a donation of a non-perishable food item to the local Food Shelf. For more information or to register, call Julie Adams at 385-2436 or Ken Peltier at 385-2865.

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Are You Interested in the 55 Alive Driving Class?

Classes are filling up for the AARP 55 Alive Classes-If you are interested in either the 8 hr Course or the 4 hr Refresher Course, contact Community Education at 385-4203.

Classes will be scheduled after adequate response is received.

Alternate Route Advised until Hwy 67 Street Project Resumes



If you have entered or exited New York Mills from the south on County Hwy 67 lately, you have undoubtedly found the project area a hazard to drive with uneven surfaces, potholes and mud. As the

spring thaw approaches, this situation is sure to intensify.

Work on the project will not resume until road restrictions have been lifted this spring. In the meantime, you are encouraged to take an alternate route when travelling in the southern area of town, such as Walker Ave. or going around to County Hwy 135.

Every effort will be made to reduce the inconvenience to residents living along the project

route. Your consideration in taking an alternate route will help to alleviate wear and tear to the road surface until pavement can be laid and help preserve the surface for those who must use this route to access their homes.

The railroad crossing on South Main is also extremely uneven, so caution is advised when using that area.

The City would like to thank everyone for their patience and cooperation during this time.

Volunteers Sought for Easter Egg Hunt



Easter arrives late this season on Sunday, April 24. That means the annual Easter Egg Hunt would be on Saturday, April 23. The New York Mills Civic and Commerce Association is seeking a community group to volunteer to organize and run this year's Easter Egg Hunt.

Do you know of a group that would like to take this on? If so, have a representative come to the Eagles Café on Thursday, March 3, at 8:00 a.m. for the monthly C&C meeting to volunteer. The task involves some work in advance of the event, such as purchasing candy and plastic eggs and other prizes from local merchants, and assembling the prizes and then hiding them in Smith Park before the event begins. Then, the group would have volunteers on-site to help the children during the Easter Egg hunt! You can be creative with what types of prizes or other

events that are planned. Want a large Easter bunny in costume to make an appearance? Want a local band or singing group to sing songs with the kids? Or a storyteller to read a story? You can be creative in what you plan for the day. It's a great chance to get your organization involved and see the smiles on the kids faces at this annual event. If your organization cannot attend the March 3 meeting, please contact either Nate Welte at 385-3100 or Darla Berry at 385-2213 to let us know of your group's interest in volunteering to run this event!

 Kaleva Apts is
 looking for a
 manager

The Schuett Companies is seeking a local ambitious and dedicated individual who is passionate about their community and willing to help make our building a center for senior activities and a place to call home. Microsoft Office desired. Email resume/cover letter to dnorman@schuettco.com or fax 763-541-4711 EEO
Kaleva Apts has 1BR Apts available now
 62+ or disabled. Rent based on 30% of gross income.
 For more information call 218-385-3273 EHO

Significant Flooding Expected in Otter Tail County this Spring



With this winter's significant snowfalls and above normal rainfall over the past year, water table conditions are extremely high, which will likely result in significant spring flooding in Otter Tail County this year.

Jess Steinbrenner, Public Information Officer for the Otter Tail County Emergency Operations Team stated, "Predictions are indicating that areas within our county that have not experienced flooding in the past may be vulnerable this year. In an effort to be proactive in regards to predicted spring flooding in our county, The Emergency Operations Team will be releasing a series of flood preparedness documents urging all OTC residents to take measures that may reduce loss of property and help to keep families safe should flooding occur."

During a flood, the Federal Emergency Management Agency recommends that you:

- Install and maintain a sump pump
- Have your furnace, water heater, and electrical panels elevated (if susceptible to flooding)
- Install "check valves" in sewer traps to prevent flood water from backing up into the drains of your home
- Construct barriers (levees, beams, floodwalls) to stop floodwater from entering buildings-call Otter Tail County Land & Resource (218-998-8095) for information on proper construction
- Seal walls in basement with waterproofing compounds to prevent seepage
- Anchor fuel tanks (indoors and outdoors) to prevent contamination and damage to property
- Familiarize yourself with the

process of turning off the electricity and gas to your home (this may be necessary in the case of a flood)

- Move important documents, valuables, and irreplaceable items to a second story (if possible)
- Store household chemicals (from your home, garage, and out-buildings) above flood levels
- Consider purchasing flood insurance-keep in mind that many policies require a waiting period before flood insurance goes into effect, so do not postpone your purchase.
Always have emergency supply kits on hand, including:
 - A 3 day supply of water (one gallon per person per day) and non-perishable food (with a manual can opener) and infant formula (if applicable)
 - A first aid kit (which includes prescription medications) and personal hygiene products
 - A battery powered radio, flashlight, and extra batteries
 - A waterproof container filled

with dry clothing and dry matches.

If you are traveling in Otter Tail County, be on the look out for water over roadways. Information is available on the Otter Tail County website if you are travelling informing you of what roads are closed, as well as a road conditions map of the county. Go to: www.co.otter-tail.mn.us/highway/notices/2010/wateronroads.php.

State road conditions can also be accessed from this site or by going to 511MN.org.

Otter Tail County is participating in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Due to county participation in NFIP, Otter Tail County residents, regardless of where they live, are eligible to purchase flood insurance. For more information and to locate a local flood insurance agent, use the following link: <http://www.floodsmart.gov>.

More information, including a video on preparing your sump pump is available on the Otter Tail County website at <http://www.co.otter-tail.mn.us/emergency/default.php>.

Retail Center Opens at Mills Locker Plant



Coming back after a well-deserved Florida vacation to subzero temps would normally not put a smile on your face, but this is not the case with Whitman and Amanda Briard, of Mills Locker Plant. You will not find a more enthusiastic pair of business owners anywhere.

The Retail portion of Mills Locker Plant is open, and off to a great start according to the Briards.

“We are just so excited to be open for everyone again!!” stated Amanda. After the devastating fire that destroyed the

locker plant at its original location on July 18th of last year, they can finally see a light at the end of the tunnel.

The retail store currently features a wide variety of beef, pork and chicken, including 14 different types of brats. Probably the most popular are the smoked maple, wild rice, and pineapple brats,” stated Whitman. Along with the popular brats, Mills Locker also offers jerky, snack sticks, breakfast sausages, and bacon. Their specialty, however, is their smoked chickens, which won awards at the Mn Association of Meat Producers (MAMP) for the Tri State area.

One thing that makes their smoked meats so special has to do with new equipment. A “tumbler” helps the Briards do

in 6 hours what used to take 10 days to 2 weeks. The tumbler helps to infuse the product with a brine, saving time and more evenly distributing flavor to the meat. Two new smokers have also been installed. They differ from home smokers in that these units first remove the moisture from the meat and then pump humidity back in, so the delicious smoke flavor absorbs throughout the entire product rather than just on the outside. Every product that comes out of the smoker is fully cooked.

While you can already find a wide variety, Whitman and Amanda are not stopping here. Beginning today, March 1st, we will be carrying a variety of steaks as well as seafood, including salmon and shrimp. As time goes on, they plan to also

add crab and lobster to their line.

Within the next three weeks, they will also be offering cheese products produced by Bongards. Keep checking their store as you will not be disappointed!

When the Briards moved to their new facility, they built to federal specifications, meaning that on the horizon, they may become a USDA certified meat facility.

“This retail part has been nothing but fun—it’s all new to us” stated Whitman. “We would like to thank everyone in the community for their overwhelming support through all of this. Special thanks to F & M Bank and to the City for their help and to our employees. Everyone has been great!”



Lake Country Home Care Offers Caring Hand



(Left to Right) Linda Moore, Rhonda Koehler, Adele Lausten

With over 60 years of combined home care experience, Lake Country Home Care founders Adele Lausten, Rhonda Koehler and Linda Moore know what it takes to make their business successful. And successful it has been.

Lake Country Home Care got its beginnings when Tri County Community Health Services made the decision to discontinue its homemaker services.

The three women, all registered nurses with Tri County, recognized the need to

fill the void and made the decision to start their own venture. Beginning with 50 clients and 10 employees in July of 2009, they have grown by leaps and bounds to well over 100 clients in Todd, Wadena and Otter Tail Counties as well as other central Minnesota locations.

In January of 2011, they found their offices had outgrown their location at the Lausten residence and moved into the city of New York Mills. Their offices are now located in the Subway building at 95 Miller Street, Suite E.

The core of this growth comes from their unwavering dedication to providing their clients the highest quality of care in a professional and caring manner. “We believe it is of the utmost importance that our clients feel loved, re-

spected and comfortable while maintaining their health and being able to live in their own homes. Everyone wants to be able to stay in their own home and they deserve it.”

“At Lake Country Home Care, we treat our clients as if they were members of our own family.” The positive relationships developed through their caring mindset and nurturing hand have earned them a reputation of respect.

Lake Country Home Care offers homemaking and personal care assistance including light housekeeping, meal preparation, companionship, grocery shopping, laundry, mobility, personal cares, transfers and positioning as well as PCA services and custom care. Clients can be referred by health providers, hospital physicians, Social Ser-

vices, current clients, individuals or family. Lake Country Home Care clients range from geriatric and adults to pediatric clients. They accept Medical Assistance, private long-term care insurance, workman’s comp, and private pay as well as working under Elderly Waiver, Alternative Care and CADI.

Staff members are individually selected by the management team based on their experience, integrity and reliability. They are trained to work with clients of all ages and it is not only essential, but second nature that they treat all patients with dignity, caring and respect.

The City of NYM is happy to welcome Lake Country Home Care to their list of businesses. For more information, phone 218-385-3422, or visit them at 95 Miller St., Suite E. N.Y. Mills.



Pet Vaccination Clinic Set for May 3rd

A low-cost vaccination clinic for pets will be held on Tuesday, May 3rd from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm. at the New York Mills Fire Hall. The clinic is sponsored by Lakeland Veterinary Clinic of Perham. Dog and cat licenses will also be available during the

clinic, which are required by the City of New York Mills.

To license your pet, it must be current on both rabies and distemper vaccinations, which can both be obtained on site that day. Dog licenses are issued for two years at a fee of \$20.00 per animal, and cat

licenses are issued for two years at a cost of \$10.00 each. License fees this year will be half priced and will cover the remainder of 2011. Vaccination costs are \$15 for rabies and \$20 for distemper. Also available are vaccinations for lymes disease and blood testing.

Schik Engineering Joins List of NYM Businesses

Jason Schik first made a decision to pursue a career in engineering as a junior in high school as a part of his Careers class with Jay Sorenson. After speaking to Al Haman, an engineer from a firm in Alexandria, he had made up his mind. "I never envisioned that this would lead me to owning my own engineering firm in New York Mills, but I am really enjoying the way things have turned out," said Jason.

Schik is a 2001 graduate of New York Mills High School. After graduation, he pursued a career in Civil Engineering at NDSU, graduating in 2005.

Jason was employed by Ulteig Engineers in Minneapolis

prior to striking out on his own in march of 2010, when Schik Engineering came into being.

Schik Engineering, located at 95 Miller Street, Suite C (The Subway building), specializes in structural engineering. His work varies from working with architects, contractors, utility companies, homeowners and business owners, while providing services of various size and scope ranging from a site visit with a memo or detail to full construction documents (blueprints) for his customers.

Schik was involved in some of the Storm Damage Recovery in the Wadena area this past year. He has also provided services

throughout central Minnesota, including projects in Detroit Lakes, Ponsford, Park Rapids, Nisswa and Hancock.

"I am excited to be working back in my home area," said Schik. "Business is going much better than I expected."

Schik Engineering is eager to help you with your structural concerns, large or small. Contact Jason at 218-385-2044.

Jason is the son of Paul and Nancy Schik of New York Mills. He and his wife Lacey, have been married for 1 1/2 years and live in New York Mills. Lacey, also a New York Mills native, is employed by the Wadena Pioneer Journal.



Jason Schik of Schik Engineering

F&M Welcomes Roder

Farmers & Merchants State Bank's Board of Directors is pleased to announce the hiring of Vice President Nicholas A. Roder.

Roder's position will expand the lending services at Farmers & Merchants. In addition to many other areas, his duties will include managing, analyzing and cultivating new and existing loans at the bank

A graduate of Valparaiso University, Roder's most recent position has been as a financial

analyst / credit underwriter for Venture Bank in Golden Valley, MN where he managed and analyzed a variety of commercial and individual loans.

"We're very excited about the lending experience that Nick is bringing to F&M," stated Executive Vice President Al Berube. "We look forward to introducing him to our customers and know that he'll be a great asset to the community of New York Mills

Roder's wife, Betsy, grew up in New York Mills and they are very enthusiastic about returning to her hometown with their two young sons, Finn & Bergen. He looks forward to becoming involved with the many events and great organizations in New York Mills.

Farmers and Merchants State Bank is locally owned and is celebrating 95 years of providing financial services to the New York Mills area.



F & M Bank Vice President Nicholas Roder

March is Food Shelf Month in Minnesota!

Any time is a great time for individuals to consider making donations to their local food shelf, but March is, in particular, better than ever...why?

During the month of March, your local food shelf has several opportunities to multiply the value of your donation of food, paper items or money from outside sources.

Donations received in March of last year brought in an additional \$200 to the local food shelf. In addition to this, the Feinstein

Foundation provides food shelves across the country with a match for any donations received in March and April. This match resulted in a \$283 grant last year for the New York Mills location.

Where can you bring your donations? One great opportunity is coming up with the NYM Trade Show on March 19th, where they will be collecting items at the door. In addition, many area churches have shopping carts set up where you can leave your items. You can also contact Connie War-

ner at 385-2900 to set up a time. Monetary donations are a great idea as well. They can be mailed to the New York Mills Food Shelf at PO Box 323, New York Mills, MN 56567.

The New York Mills Food Shelf accepts any non-perishable food items as well as paper items in addition to cash.

The Food Shelf is open on the last Monday of each month and is located at 400 South Walker Avenue in New York Mills.



Public Works Update-Be CO Safe!

Roger Salo-Public Works Director

Last time I talked about various 'winter' items such as proper venting, keeping ice off gas meters and having your furnaces checked. Spring will be here soon, but in the meantime, we are still warming our homes and keeping them sealed up against the cold, which brings about the concerns of carbon monoxide safety.

Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless and toxic gas. Because it is impossible to see, taste or smell the toxic fumes, CO can kill you before you are aware it is in your home. At lower levels of exposure, CO causes mild effects that are often mistaken for the flu. These symptoms include headaches, dizziness, disorientation, nausea and fatigue. The effects of CO exposure can vary greatly from person to person depending on age, overall health and the concentration and length of exposure.

CO gas can come from

several sources: gas-fired appliances, charcoal grills, wood-burning furnaces or fireplaces and motor vehicles.

Everyone is at risk for CO poisoning. Medical experts believe that unborn babies, infants, children, senior citizens and people with heart or lung problems are at even greater risk for CO poisoning.

You can protect yourself and your family from CO poisoning by implementing the following:

—Install at least one carbon monoxide alarm with an audible warning signal near the sleeping areas and outside individual bedrooms. Make sure the alarm has been evaluated by a nationally recognized lab, such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL). Carbon Monoxide alarms measure levels of CO over time and are designed to sound an alarm before an average, healthy adult would experience symptoms. It is very possible that

you may not be experiencing symptoms when you hear the alarm. This does not mean that CO is not present.

—Have a qualified professional check all fuel burning appliances, furnaces, venting and chimney systems at least once a year.
—Never use your range or oven to help heat your home and never use a charcoal grill or hibachi in your home or garage.
—Never keep a car running in a garage. Even if the garage doors are open, normal circulation will not provide enough fresh air to reliably prevent a dangerous buildup of CO.

—When purchasing an existing home, have a qualified technician evaluate the integrity of the heating and cooking systems, as well as the sealed spaces between the garage and house. The presence of a carbon monoxide alarm in your home can save your life in the event of a CO buildup.



300,000 Sandbags Purchased for Use by OTC Residents

Otter Tail County has issued, as part of a series of Flood Preparedness Documents, the following Press Release:

Otter Tail County is asking for cooperation from residents in prioritizing the use of bags for protection of homes and dwellings. The Otter Tail Emergency Operations Team, with approval from the Otter Tail County Board of Commissioners, has purchased 300,000 sandbags to be available to residents.

The Emergency Operations Team is working to set up three distribution locations where residents will have access to the sandbags, sand, and plastic needed to construct dikes.

Residents will be responsible for filling and

transporting their own sandbags. Bags that are filled on site will be available free of charge. Residents are asked to prioritize the use of the free supplies for the protection of homes and dwellings.

Individuals interested in purchasing empty sandbags may do so at the distribution centers for .20 cents per bag. All residents who utilize the distribution centers (for filled or unfilled bags) will be required to show identification and provide the address of the location where the bags will be used.

The following distribution locations will be open beginning Monday, February 28, 2011 from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Locations will be open Monday thru Friday until further notice.

In order to ensure that supplies are on hand, please call 218-998-8470 to schedule a time to fill or pick up sandbags. Supplies will NOT be accessible at distribution sites after the designated hours of operation. Distribution locations are as follows:

1. Pelican Rapids County Hwy Garage-208 NE 5th Avenue Pelican Rapids MN
2. City of Perham Public Works Facility-610 Co Hwy 51 Perham, MN
3. Battle Lake County Hwy Garage—601 Holdt St, Battle Lake, MN

For tips on calculating the number of bags you might need to construct a dike (or for information on proper dike construction) visit www.co.ottertail.mn.us/emergency.



Easter is just around the corner. Soon enough we'll be thinking about what we're going to prepare for the big dinner. (Or maybe what can I bring to add to the meal.) Whether it's ham or turkey, or perhaps a rack of prime rib, Mills Liquors have the wine to accompany your meal. The old adage that white wine with white meat is not always true. A Pinot Noir is nice with baked poultry for example.

If you are having a beef entree, I would like to suggest a couple of nice red wines that are new to the store; Apothic

Complete Your Meal with one of Mills Liquors Newest Wines!

Kim Hoban, Liquor Store Manager

Red, which according to The Wine Advocate "is one of the greatest bargains I have ever tasted from California...a hedonist's dream, this fruit-bomb exhibits loads of berry fruit, pepper, and spice, silky tannins and an attractive mouth feel..." Priced at \$11.99. Secondly, Oyster Bay Merlot. Though I don't have a wonderful quote from a Wine magazine, I can say from experience that this is a wonderful, smooth, full-bodied merlot. Never having been a merlot drinker, this is one that has swayed my opinion on merlot. Priced at \$12.99.

If you are planning a nice fruit pastry, you might try Frost Bitten, an Ice Wine we just brought in. Frost Bitten is like dessert

itself, just ask Wanda. Or if you plan on a rich chocolate cake, a bold Cabernet or Shiraz would pair well. One of the only times I can drink (and enjoy) a cab, syrah, or shiraz is with decadent chocolate desserts. The two are a match made in heaven.

There are no hard and fast rules when it comes to pairing wine. A large part of the fun is to experiment yourself to see which combinations strike your palate's fancy. If you're like I was, you just stay away from anything dark and red because you're sure you won't like it unless it's sweet. I have been fortunate, in that I have had the opportunity to go to wine tastings where wines were paired with particular foods, and I must say, have had my eyes and my

palate "opened". I found that I really do like a bold and berry cab or a nice, spicy and jammy zinfandel when paired with the foods they're best with. I haven't yet graduated to just sipping for sipping sake. This is as good a place as any to mention that I am starting a wine club this spring. I would love your feedback. Being a member would entitle you and a guest to attend 4 wine tastings a year free of charge, and you would receive 10% off any wine purchased throughout the year. The cost would be \$25/year. Those of you who are interested, please drop your e-mail address with Kim, Wanda or Rosa at the Liquor Store. Thanks and happy sipping!

Spring Projects in Mind?

With Spring just around the corner, you may be beginning to think of projects to spruce up your home. When planning a home improvement project or a new addition to your property, remember that in many instances, a zoning permit is required from the City. In New York Mills, you are not required to obtain a permit if you are doing normal maintenance projects such as shingling, residing, painting or repaving. Replacement of windows does not require a permit unless you are changing the "footprint". For example, if you replace a flat window with a bay window or dormer window, a permit would be required.

Zoning permits are generally required for any new construction, additions and alterations (as well as

demolitions) that change the shape, or size of any structure on your lot. You should check with the City if you are putting up a temporary structure, such as a carport for winter storage. While you may not need a permit, you still need to comply with setbacks and other standards. Snow fences are allowed from October 15th through May 15th.

If you are planning a project in your yard, such as a dog kennel, fence, or storage shed, a permit is also required. The basis for this is, any time you are covering imperious surface, (which is anything that covers ground surface with something that will resist absorption of surface water into the soil, such as pavement, a patio, or

deck) you are altering the runoff or drainage patterns. Permits are also required for items such as privacy fences, hedges and shrubbery placed on property lines.

In most instances, a permit is necessary for a sign. Check with the City for details.

If you are planning to place a business in your home, or to start up a business check with the City first. There are certain restrictions in place, which regulate the type of business going into a particular area, such as residential areas. In some instances, a conditional use permit must be obtained.

Zoning restrictions are put into place to help integrate orderly and progressive development of the city, while respecting



the rights of property owners as well as considering the interest of the citizens of the city. Many factors go into putting together zoning regulations, including addressing the natural resource and public facility implications as well as the concerns of property owners on both sides.

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Mini Seminar for Seniors to be Held May 9th

Each year the Senior Center hosts a mini seminar in connection with the Tri-County Advisory Board located in Fergus Falls. Lyle Hoxtell, coordinator of aging with the Otter Tail Health Department sets up these

events.

These sessions are a service to Sr. Citizens in the community, offering valuable information from local police departments and bank representatives to name a few.

This year's session will be held

on Monday, May 9th at 1:00 pm at the New York Mills Senior Center. The topic this year, will be on "Senior Citizens Driving Safely". Farmers & Merchants State Bank will provide coffee and cookies.



Library Happenings

Julie Adams, Library Director

February was "I Love to Read" month, but the Library board & staff changed it a bit to "WE LOVE OUR LIBRARY PATRONS" month. Drawings were held every week with prize donated by local business. Thanks to Mills Lanes, Subway, Mills Creamery, and the Eagles Café for donating the prizes. And congratulations to the weekly winners.

The Library has received Legacy funding to sponsor the Mis-

soula Children's Theatre this summer to do a week long residency working with kids entering grades 1-12 to put on a performance of *The Tortoise Versus The Hare*. This event will be held June 20-25. Up to 60 kids can participate. The Library is compiling a list of people who are interested. Please contact the Library at 385-2436 if you would like more information.

The Library is working on other Legacy funded events as

well. The exact dates and times have not been set yet, but the Library hopes to be able to sponsor events such as a book-making class, a series of writer's workshops, a play, and a bus trip. The best way to find out about events that the Library is sponsoring is to stop by the Library and talk to the staff or you can follow the "New York Mills Public Library" on Facebook. Specific details will be announced as soon as possible.



New York Mills Public Library
30 Main Ave N
PO Box 279
New York Mills MN 56567
(218) 385-2436

Find us on

facebook

A Message from Our Chief of Police

Chief Jim Van Schaick



As a child in the early 70's I remember that my grandparents had a list of "emergency" numbers posted on the wall next to their rotary telephone: Police Department, Fire Department, Hospital and Hairdresser. If there was an emergency, one simply located the appropriate number on the list and dialed the seven digits to get help. Apparently, the same was true for hair emergencies.

Back then, dialing a number was literally dialing – aligning your finger with the appropriately numbered hole, rotating the dial to the finger-stop and releasing. Some might say that dialing a rotary phone was a task that could be particularly difficult or nearly impossible to accomplish under stressful circumstances. The task may have become less of a challenge with the introduction of the push-button phone, but the seven digit emergency number would still have to be looked up if calling from somewhere other than home and then "dialed." Granted, in some cases you could dial "0" for the operator to proclaim your emergency and seek assistance, but this was often inefficient,

caused delays and was not a universally available service.

Then 9-1-1 appeared. The number sequence "9-1-1" was made available by AT&T for use as a nationwide emergency phone number in 1968 and a number of regions began implementing it shortly thereafter. Believe it or not, it wasn't until 1999 that President Bill Clinton signed the bill into law that formally designated 9-1-1 as the nationwide emergency number. In the beginning, 9-1-1 was no more than a "hotline" to local law enforcement that provided no location information or even the phone number of the caller. Today, however, in most areas, it is enhanced with features to assist 9-1-1 operators in deter-

mining the location of the caller and assigning the appropriate emergency personnel. Dispatchers are trained professionals that are prepared to handle all types of calls and are often the unsung heroes of the public safety world.

I am frequently asked, "When is it appropriate to call 9-1-1?" My general response is that if you find yourself in a situation in which you are not sure if you should call 9-1-1 or not, you probably should. Obviously, intentional misuse of 9-1-1 is unlawful.

9-1-1 calls from New York Mills are answered by Dispatchers at the Otter Tail County Sheriff's Office.

Drip Drop—Water Rates in New York Mills

City Clerk, Darla Berry

If you are either a resident or a business owner in the City of New York Mills, you are probably pretty familiar with the utility costs here in town. I often receive questions about our rates, and find many people comparing our rates to those of neighboring towns or of other towns they have lived in. Like many of you, before I became the City Clerk I was pretty much in the dark as to how utility rates are established. Well, I'll try to shed a little light on this topic for you.

Our rates are very specific to the water and sewer systems we have here in our town, and also relate to the condition of our underground infrastructure. Comparing our rates to those in other Cities does not take into account the details of the systems those other Cities have in place and the condition of their infrastructure. In this article, I'm going to focus on our water rates. In a 2010 study that we participated in con-

ducted by AES2 of Grand Forks, ND, the respondents included cities of populations from 1,000 to 5,000 in a 5-State area. These Cities were grouped into two types of systems—surface water or ground water systems.

Like 77 of the other Cities, our system is a ground water system. Rates were compared based on a typical usage of 7,500 gallons of water per month, and for the 78 Cities ranged from a charge of \$11.50 at the low end to \$82.64 at the top. The rate here in New York Mills was \$34.30 for that usage level. While this data is interesting, it really doesn't reveal the condition of the systems in those other cities, it merely reflects the rates in effect in early 2010.

Here in town, we recently made many improvements to our drinking water system, including many underground infrastructure improvements and the painting of the water

tower. Improvements of this type are generally paid for with either special assessments or with revenues from utility fees or a combination of those. If those sources of repayment are insufficient or unavailable, we then must look at tax levies to meet the debt service obligations for the improvements.

Once a City makes improvements to their systems, they often must raise rates to make the debt payments for the improvements. Additionally, accounting requirements dictate that rates are high enough to cover depreciation on the new system, which can be a substantial amount given the high costs involved. This almost requires a "doubling" up on the costs as rates must cover the current debt as well as the annual set aside needed to fund replacement of the current system at the end of its useful life. Our water rates are going to be changed sometime this year due to a change in State Statutes, section 103G.291, which

was amended in 2008. It includes a requirement for public water suppliers serving more than 1,000 people to adopt a water rate structure that encourages conservation. Our City must comply with the new requirements by January 1, 2013. Currently, our rate structure is a simple two-rate usage charge, with one rate that applies for up to 10,000 gallons of use, and a somewhat lower rate applied to monthly usage in excess of 10,000 gallons.

Under conservation rates, higher usage will have a higher rate per 1,000 rather than a lower rate. We will be taking a close look at our customers, their typical water usage, and our system costs in revamping our rate system to incorporate conservation rates later this year.

Watch this space in future newsletters for sewer and gas rate information!





Mayor's Corner- Larry Hodgson, Mayor

For the past several years one of the main issues of concern for us as city officials has been how much LGA funding we were going to receive from the State.

Many people are confused as to what LGA is and how it benefits our community. Hopefully this article will shed some light onto this mystery. I have taken the information for this article from the internet, newspaper, and legislative updates.

Local Government Aid (LGA) was established as a method of providing fairness in property taxation across the state. The underlying philosophy of the LGA program is that no matter what corner of the state we live in, no matter how poor a city's property tax base is, and no matter how high a city's need is, we all have the right to needed services. These services include police and fire protection, libraries, parks and recrea-

tion programs, and safe roads year-round, among others.

LGA is distributed to help Minnesota cities bridge the gap between the cost of services and the ability to raise revenue. Money from the state general fund is distributed to cities based on a formula that includes factors such as income, population decline, age of housing, vehicle accidents, and crime.

Some cities do not receive LGA because they have higher property wealth or lower need than other cities, and can raise enough revenues to cover the cost of services while maintaining a fair tax rate. However, for the majority of the state, this is not the case. Most cities are unable to cover the costs of services through property tax revenues alone and require LGA to maintain a fair tax rate. Of the 854 recognized cities in the State of Minnesota only 97 cities do not receive LGA payments. New York Mills does receive LGA payments and we rely heavily on them in our budget as these payments make up approximately 47% of our General Operating Fund balance. Unfortunately in

the past three years we have seen our LGA payments drop \$109,700 through unallotments imposed by Governor Pawlenty.

Early in February both the House (HF130) and the Senate (SF60) passed similar budget bills that included significant reductions in LGA payments to cities. These budget bills were then immediately vetoed by Governor Dayton, as he rationalized that cutting LGA would result in increased property taxes. I feel that what has transpired so far is somewhat of a game of political posturing and where it will finally end is anybody's guess.

We will not know the final result of the State's budget until the middle or end of March and in the meantime we have to hopefully continue to move in the right direction in anticipation of these expected cuts in funding. What I do know is that at the present time, with our state of economy, LGA funding is an important part of our yearly budget plan and without it there will have to be some significant changes in services provided to our community.

"New York Mills does receive LGA payments and we rely heavily on them in our budget as these payments make up approximately 47% of our General Operating Fund balance."

Spring Projects, Cont...

Please be aware that you need to apply for a zoning permit well in advance of beginning a project! The process typically takes a minimum of a couple of days.

Gopher State One Call must be contacted and their part of the process takes 48 hours (not including weekend hours). Once an application is received, the Zoning Administrator reviews it and makes an onsite inspection. If there are no issues, he will approve the application and upon payment of the fee, a per-

mit is issued. In the event there are items which need to be addressed, the process takes longer. If your project does not conform to zoning standards, you have the option to apply for a variance or conditional use permit. There is an application fee which needs to be paid for the process to go further from here. A public hearing is required, along with City Council action.

Please do not begin your project prematurely as this will result in double the permit fees as well as the possibility of having to

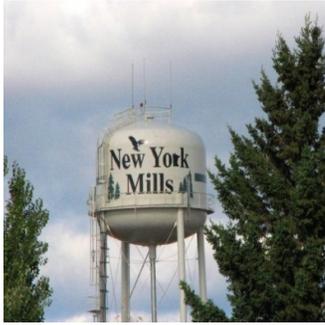
change or completely remove your project—completed or not! You must have paid your permit fee and have been issued your permit before you begin construction. Failure to comply with this law constitutes a misdemeanor and is punishable by up to a \$500 fine and/or imprisonment up to 90 days.

Applications as well as a copy of the City's Zoning Ordinance are available from the City Office or our City Website at www.newyorkmills.govoffice2.com



CITY OF New York Mills

M I N N E S O T A



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Community Calendar



- Mar 1-26 **Gallery Exhibit** at Cultural Center Patti's Florilgium and sculpture by Kent Scheer gallery exhibit
- Mar 3 **MIRC Workshop—"Doing Business on the Internet"** at HS Media Center 5:30 pm. Light Supper & presentation by Ryan Pesch. Free of Charge
- Mar 4 **Stomp It Out Dance** 8-11:30 pm in HS Commons
- Mar 5 **Pancake Breakfast** at Sr Center 8-9:30 am
- Mar 7 **Sit and Stitch Knitting Group** 6-8 pm at the Cultural Center
- Mar 7 **Band Concert** 7 pm at James W Mann Auditorium
- Mar 8 **Open Mic Night** at Cultural Center 7-9 pm
- Mar 8 **City Council Meeting** 4:30 in Council Chambers, Public Forum at 5 pm
- Mar 9 **CPR Course—Heart Saver CPR/AED/1st Aid @** 5:30 pm in Perham Area EMS Training Room 525 W Main, Perham. Cost \$55, call 346-4485
- Mar 11 **"Monroe Crossing" Concert** at Cultural Center 7:30 pm. Bluegrass at Its finest!
- Mar 12 **Tae Kwon Do Tournament**
- Mar 14-July 14 **EMT 140-Hr Course** at Perham Area EMS Training Room Cost \$800, Contact Doug Harthan 346-4485
- Mar 14 **Sit & Stitch Knitting Group** 6-8 pm at the Cultural Center
- Mar 15 **Games Day @** Sr Center 1:30 pm
- Mar 19 **Civic & Commerce Trade Show—** at High School 9 am-2 pm Pancake Break fast 9-11 am
- Mar 21 **Sit & Stitch Knitting Group** 6-8 pm at the Cultural Center
- Mar 21 **No School**
- Mar 24 **Choir Concert** 7:30 pm at James W Mann Auditorium
- Mar 28 **Sit & Stitch Knitting Group** 6-8 pm at Cultural Center
- Mar 30-April 9 **Gallery Exhibit** at Cultural Center K-6 Grade Regional Art Show
- Apr 1 **No School—(Subsection Choir Contest** 8-5 at NYM School)
- Apr 1 **Concert** at Cultural Center— Check website for time @ www.kulcher.org. Flamenco guitar, song and dance
- Apr 2 **Pancake Breakfast** at Sr Center 8-9:30 am
- Apr 2 **Artist Reception** at Cultural Center 10 am -3 pm, Grades K-6
- Apr 2 **"Curtis & Loretta" Concert** at Cultural Center 7:30 pm-Medley of Minnesota Songs
- Apr 12 **Open Mic Night** at Cultural Center 7-9 pm
- Apr 12 **City Council Meeting** 4:30 in Council Chambers, Public Forum at 5 pm
- Apr 13-23 **Gallery Exhibit** at Cultural Center-7-12 Grade Regional Art Show
- Apr 13 **CPR Course—Healthcare Provider CPR @** 5:30 pm at Perham Area EMS Training Room, Cost \$45 —call 346-4485
- Apr 16 **Artist Reception** at Cultural Center— Grades 7-12
- Apr 16 **"Honey Dew Drop" Concert** at Cultural Center 7:30 pm-Blues, folk & rock music
- Apr 19 **Games Day @** Sr Center at 1:30 pm
- Apr 22-25 **No School—Spring Break Prom-/After Prom Party**
- Apr 30 **"Next Stop Horizon" Concert** at Cultural Center 7:30 pm-Contemporary Swedish Music
- May 3 **Pet Vaccination Clinic @** Fire Hall 4-6