

CITY OF NEW YORK MILLS

January 2011

Volume 2 Issue 1



City Council Bids Farewell to Long-Time Member, Welcomes New One

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Above: Councilwoman Dianna Wallgren, Mayor Larry Hodgson

The New York Mills City Council bid farewell to retiring member Dianna Wallgren at their council meeting on December 14th. Mayor Hodgson presented her with a plaque in appreciation and recognition of her 10 years of service to the City of New York Mills.

Wallgren stated, "Thank you. I will miss you. Many people have asked me how it will feel to

not be on the council any longer. It's kind of like sending your child off to college—you hope you've taught them a few things, you hope you've learned a few things and hope they can go on just fine without you."

In addition to her position on the Council, in which she also served as Vice-Mayor for the City, Wallgren also has served on various other boards and committees including serving as Zoning Chairperson and the Library Board President, both of which she plans to continue on with. She has also served on the personnel and liquor store committees for the City.

Wallgren has been an active volunteer and board member of many other civic and service groups within the community as



Left to Right: Councilwoman Marsha Maki, Mayor Larry Hodgson, Councilman William Warner Jr.

well. The City of New York Mills appreciates her tireless and valuable contribution to our community and wishes her well in her retirement.

Marsha Maki was elected to replace Wallgren in the November election and will be sworn in at the January Council meeting. William Warner Jr. was re-elected to his position on the Council, as was Mayor Larry Hodgson.



Do YOU Have What It Takes?

The New York Mills Fire Department has openings for volunteer firefighters. For more information, contact Fire Chief Reed Jacobson at 218-385-2868 or call the City Office at 218-385-2213.

Christmas Tree Festival Was a Success!



This year's Christmas Tree Festival entitled "Winter Wonderland" finished with great success, according to festival co-chairperson

Dolly Tumberg. The event, sponsored each year by the New York Mills Civic and Commerce, raised over \$2,600 for Santa Anonymous this year—that is \$900 more than 2009. The Civic and Commerce would like to thank everyone who donated so generously. This money was raised through many of the displays which were auctioned off in a silent auction, proceeds of

the 4H quilt raffle and donations by several businesses and organizations.

With 36 different displays, the theme "Winter Wonderland" was a fitting attribute as the city hall ballroom was transformed.

People's Choice Awards were given out to the following displays: 1st Place: NYM Royalty, 2nd Place: NYM Elementary School Teachers, 3rd Place: Farmers & Merchants State Bank.

(Continued on page 2)

Christmas Tree Festival, Cont.

Highlights of the festival included the kick-off which included cookie decorating and a drawing for Mills Marks, won by Justin Fischer, Santa Day was held on Sunday this year and included make-and-take crafts as well as a visit from Santa. More Events included a Trinity Bell Choir presentation, a Wine Tasting event (which was new this year and held in conjunction with the Cultural Center's Silent Auction), a Senior Tea and of course, the Community Christmas Party,

which included a meal, music by Sapphire and the culmination of the Silent Auction. All events were very well attended, according to Dolly Tumberg. "We would like to thank all the many volunteers who gave of their time during the festival, both on the forefront and behind the scenes.", stated Dolly. "Their help was greatly appreciated and was crucial to making the festival such a great success."

Plans for next year's Christmas Festival are already underway, so mark your calendars for the kick

-off, held the Friday after Thanksgiving.

If you have suggestions or questions regarding the festival, contact either Dolly Tumberg at 385-3691 or Jodi Tumberg at 385-2945.



BEST WISHES
FOR A HAPPY
NEW YEAR!

❄️ **From the NYM Senior Center** ❄️

The Sr. Center would also like to wish Site Manager, Gloria Curtis a speedy recovery-
See you in February!



With the holidays behind us, what are you thinking of? Shedding those holiday pounds with some type of fitness activity, or going the opposite way and snuggling up on the couch with a great book and relaxing? Either way, there are many choices offered within the community to help you through these cold winter months ahead.

If being active is your goal, Open Gym is one great way to do that, sponsored by Community Education and the New York Mills Booster Club. Held every Sunday night throughout the winter months from 7-9 pm, it is open to students grade 7-12 and adults in our school district. It is also open to elementary students if accompanied by an adult. The cost is \$1 per night.

On-Going Walking is another great chance to keep active this win-

Enjoy the Winter Months in New York Mills!

ter. Come walk the 2,329 feet of hallways in the NYM School from 6:30-8 am and 4-8 pm any school day.

The Fitness Center at the NYM School gives you the opportunity to work out on a variety of fitness equipment, and is open Monday through Fridays from 6:00-8:00 am and from Monday through Thursdays from 3:30-6:00 pm through March. It is also open Sundays from 7:00-9:00 pm on Open Gym nights. There will be paperwork and training before you can actually start in the Fitness Center on your own. Passes can be purchased in the Fitness Center or the District Office of the NYM School. As with other activities, when school is closed, the Fitness Center will also be closed, including school closing due to inclement weather or holidays. For more information, call 385-4203. Students grades 6-12 can participate for free courtesy of the NYM Booster Club. Adult fees are \$2.00 for a daily pass, \$20.00 for a monthly pass, or

\$40.00 for a 20 punch pass.

For outdoor enthusiasts, don't forget the Community Skating rink located at Smith Park, which is free.

The area is a hotspot for ice fishing, and cross country skiing, and snowmobiling as well, with groomed trails right outside your door, courtesy of the Otter Trail Riders Snowmobile Club.

The NYM Regional Cultural Center is sponsoring a Talvijuhla Winter Celebration on February 12th. Plans are still in the works for this event, so contact them at 385-3339 or www.kulcher.org for the latest information.

Thinking more of a warm blanket, a crackling fire and a good book? The NYM Public Library sponsors a Book Club, which meets the last Monday of each month at the Library meeting room at 7:00 pm. The cost is free (unless you wish to buy the book) and the Book Club is open to all interested adults. For more information, call the Public Library at 385-2436.

Every Monday evening from 6-8 pm you can join the Sit and Stitch

group for creative artists of all types-FREE to all ages at the NYM Regional Cultural Center.

For indoor family fun, consider an afternoon at Thumper Pond Resort in Ottertail on Sunday, January 23rd from 1:00 pm—7:00 pm. (come between 1 and 3 pm to get the group rate.) This event is open to all 4H families and friends for a cost of \$5 per person, payable to EOT 4H. For more information call 385-5420.

Another 4H sponsored event is a Roller Skating Fun Day on February 13th. Skate from 1:00-3:00 pm for a cost of \$3.50 per person. This event is also open to all 4Hers and their friends. Call 385-5420 for more information.

Mills Lanes is offering an Open Bowling Tournament beginning at noon on Saturday, January 8th. This event is open to everyone who enjoys bowling!

Many other activities are available in New York Mills this winter. Make it your New Year's Resolution to find something you enjoy in 2011!

Council Certifies Levy Increase of 3.55% for Taxes Payable in 2011

On December 14, 2010, the City Council held its final meeting of 2010 and approved the levy for taxes payable in 2011 at \$379,000. This levy amount is a 3.55% increase over the levy certified for taxes payable in 2010.

The levy is comprised of two parts—the operating levy and the bond levy. For the third consecutive year, the City has held the operating levy flat at \$204,000. The increase in the certified levy comes on the bond part, which is necessitated by the City's bonds that are repaid with property tax levies. The bond levy amount is being certified at \$175,000, down slightly from the \$185,000 amount that was proposed in September 2010. As bond

payments are scheduled at the time the bond is issued, projections prepared by City Clerk Darla Berry are used to determine how much to levy each year for scheduled bond payments.

How was this reduction possible if bond payments are fixed at issuance? In November of 2010, the City initiated the refunding of two of its bonds with one bond with lower interest costs. This refunding saved the City money in future debt servicing over the remaining life of each of the two bonds refunded. After adjusting the projections, Clerk Berry identified savings that would allow the City to lower the amount of the bond levy by \$10,000, and recommended to

the City Council to do so.

The 3.55% increase scheduled for 2011 is the lowest increase in the last four years, and is the second lowest increase since 2004 when there was a 13.04% increase in the City levy. During the last three years, the City has experienced cuts in local government aid and market value credit payments from the State of Minnesota that totaled \$152,401.45. The City Council and City staff have worked hard to find ways to keep expenses down in order to keep the levy as low as possible without eliminating essential services.

The City has not raised taxes to recover the \$152,000 in lost State aid revenues; rather, we have reduced some services,

closed the airport, reduced staffing by one full time position, renegotiated rental agreements with businesses that install communications equipment on the City water tower, established new fee structures for some City services, and established franchise fees with the local electrical power companies, as well as many other expense reduction measures. We continue to search for additional ways to reduce expenditures as we anticipate further reductions in State assistance in 2011 and beyond.



Traveling? MnDOT Offers Latest Road Condition Reports



If you plan to travel this winter, MnDOT offers a valuable tool to get you there safely. **511** is an easy-to-remember traveler information service which provides continual updates about weather-related road conditions, road work, commercial vehicle restrictions, road closures and other travel information via the phone or internet 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

How does **511** work? On the phone, simply dial **511**.

You will be connected to a computerized voice recognition system which will offer voice response and/or touch-tone options to request road-specific information. On the web, find traveler information at 511mn.org.

Most wireless companies will connect to **511**; however there may be places where reception is poor, preventing access. In some cases along state borders, MnDOT's **511** may or may not work properly depending on the cell tower connection for that specific call. The **511** out-of-state phone number is (800)542-0220. Drivers are encouraged to put safety first by asking a passenger to call **511**, calling or logging onto 511mn.org prior to departure, or placing the call

at a appropriate stopping point along the way.

Is **511** available nationwide? While many states, highway corridors and cities already have **511** service, many states are still planning to implement **511**. To view a map showing the status of **511** nationwide, go to their website at 511mn.org. **511** is a public service of the MN Department of Transportation. Calls to **511** are local when dialed from a landline phone. Cell phone users are responsible for normal airtime and roaming charges in accordance with their wireless service contracts.

This is a statewide service that provides information on the interstates, U.S. routes and state highways. It does not include county roads or city streets. Specific road information is

available by following the prompts. On the web, look for icons on the interactive map to obtain detailed information.

Keep in mind that weather and road conditions can change rapidly, and the information reported on MnDOT's site should not be used as the only factor in determining whether to travel in a particular area. Motorists are cautioned to be alert to changing circumstances and to adjust their driving accordingly.

Information for the system is provided by transportation department field crews. Additional information comes from the MN State Patrol, the National Weather Service, and the Road Weather Information System.

Information for this article courtesy of MnDOT's website at 511mn.org.

A Message from Our Chief of Police-Internet Safety



For many of us, computer safety is a relatively new concept. Prior to the internet, most of our computer safety concerns were about backing up important information in preparation of the proverbial “crash.” Since the implementation of the internet, unscrupulous computer criminals have had a direct portal to our computers that we use for work and for recreation. In early discussions of internet safety, viruses and malware that disabled computers and caused data loss were often the subjects. As access to the internet has diversified, this discussion has drifted more toward the safety of the people using the computers. Exploitation of children, identity theft, fraud, harassment, and terroristic threats... the list goes on for the type of crimes that are committed over the internet. It is easy to forget that devices like cellular phones, iPods, eBook readers and other electronic devices are now used to communicate over the internet as well. In recent years social net-

working sites have grown exponentially and what used to be the realm of the “computer geek” is used by people of all ages and walks of life.

The internet is a tremendous tool for learning and communicating, but also contains content that may not be appropriated for children. Sexually explicit material, instructions on how to make destructive devices and weapons, along with hate sites are just a few small examples. Internet gaming has exploded and people all over the world can participate in real-time with others. Some of these games are benign recreation that promote good sportsmanship, but some involve the players engaged in unlawful behavior like stealing cars, mortally wounding people and sexual assault. I have a concern that games with these negative themes do a part in desensitizing the players from socially accepted behavior.

Online exploitation of children is a serious potential hazard. Online predators use “grooming” techniques to entice children in chat rooms, by text messaging, by email, by online gaming, or by other internet-based communication. Use of social networking sites like Facebook and MySpace should be monitored by adults and contact lists and messages on these sites should be reviewed often for inappropriate communication, unknown persons or suspicious content. Social networking sites are also potential sources of cyberbullying and identity theft.

Another type of predator targets adults, typically women. These adult predators typically are looking for money. They will establish an online relationship and after a period of time, they will express the need for money for some urgent need or emergency. This is a “red flag” for fraud. These predators usually have multiple victims whom they are communicating with, and leaching from, simultaneously.

Technology based exploitation can be devastating to children and adults alike. Online predators attempting to “cross over” and make physical contact with children is considered one of the ultimate potential online dangers. Parental involvement in children’s use of the internet is probably the best defense to these dangers. Some experts suggest placing computers used by children in common areas of the home – not the child’s bedroom. Some suggest that if a computer is in a child’s bedroom, it should be used with the door open and the monitor facing the doorway.

There are a number of websites with information to help parents ensure the online safety of their children. NetSmartz.org is a program of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children and is an excellent source for up to date information for parents and children. Another good source for information is the United States Department of Justice’s cyber-crime.gov. They have a section

intended for children (www.cybercrime.gov/rules/kidinternet.htm) that helps children understand the “do’s” and “don’t” for etiquette and safety on the internet.

On a final note, many of us have wireless networks in our homes so that our computers can access the internet without wires. Typically, the wireless signal from a home network can be reached as far as 300 feet away from the wireless router. In many cases this extends a long way from the confines of one’s home. Activating the router’s encrypted security can help limit unauthorized access to your home network. Without encrypted security, “squatters” can easily access your network for purposes of using your internet connection, and could possibly collect personal information from your computers. The best line of defense to prevent squatters is to implement wireless security for your wireless network. If you are uncertain how to do this, check the website of the manufacturer of your router or call a professional for assistance.

Here are a number of websites with good information on internet safety:

- National Center for Missing and Exploited Children NetSmartz website (www.netsmartz.org)
- The FBI Cyber Crime website (www.fbi.gov/about-us/investigate/cyber/cyber)
- United States Department of Justice’s Cyber Crime website (www.cybercrime.gov)





Mayor's Corner-South Main is Open!

I would like to begin by expressing my gratitude to the residents that live along the South Hwy 67 road project. The contractor responsible for the work repeatedly informed us of the cooperation and the willingness to put up with troublesome delays brought on by the weather that the residents showed. Although the project did not progress as far as we had planned, we are fortunate that all the water and sewer lines were in the ground and secured against the elements before the snow and cold weather arrived. Work will begin again next spring to finish the project when the weather allows, but until then we ask everyone to be especially careful while driving in that project area.

The railroad crossing is being repaired as I am writing this report. In speaking with a BNRR representative it was explained that

in testing the "rails" at the crossing site they were found to be defective and had to be replaced, which is what is now being completed. Once the rails are in place and the backfilling of the crossing is completed to county highway specifications it is planned that the crossing will be opened for through traffic.

We have had several members of the community asking that we make the temporary 4-way stop at the intersection of Centennial and Walker a permanent stop option. I concur with this request as it is especially difficult to see oncoming traffic when there are vehicles parked along Centennial and one is attempting to cross or turn onto Centennial. In addition it is especially dangerous for school aged children to have to cross that intersection following their dismissal from school. In speaking with the Ottertail County Highway Department they have informed us that you don't put in an additional stop sign just because there has been a request for one. There has to be a formal request made by the city, which we have now done, followed by a survey and investigation of all traffic and problems which have occurred at that site. Once all the

data has been evaluated then a determination will be made as to whether an additional 4-way stop at that site is warranted. Hopefully the investigation of data will be completed before our Hwy 67 project is finalized and that stop option will become a reality.

The final item that I would like to address is the responsibility of property owners keeping sidewalks clear of snow. Several years ago the City passed an ordinance (No. 106) addressing this problem. In the ordinance it states that "the owner/occupant of any property adjacent to a public sidewalk shall use diligence to keep the walk safe for pedestrians." Snow, ice, dirt, and rubbish are to be removed within 24 hours after its' deposited onto the sidewalk. If a property owner/occupant fails to abide with this ordinance the City has the right to have the snow removed and all costs incurred being passed onto the property owner. Please do your part in keeping our pedestrians safe and off the roadways by removing any snow that accumulates on sidewalks. I'm sure that your neighbors will greatly appreciate it. With that in mind, have a safe and happy new year.

"Please do your part in keeping our pedestrians safe and off the roadways by removing any snow that accumulates on sidewalks."

Public Works Update

Roger Salo, Public Works Director

I hope everyone had a blessed holiday season! Now that winter months are here, we should try and enjoy the season. As I have said in the past, safety is a big concern with everyone, especially the Public Works Department. We received a notice from the Department of Public Safety (Mn. Office of Pipeline Safety), entitled Safety Alert: Prevent Snow, Ice, and Water Damage. The notice specifically discusses the importance of preventing snow and ice from causing damage to gas meters and regulators. We, in Public Works would appreciate if the public would be aware of the gas meter set and try to keep

the ice and snow from accumulating near it. If you have any questions, you can call us.

Also I have mentioned before that natural gas appliances such as furnaces and water heaters should be serviced by your plumbing/heating specialist to maintain safety in your home. Everyone should have carbon monoxide detectors. It is also important is to keep the sewer vents open on the roof of your house, so that sewer gas has a way to escape.

Spring is a few months ahead, and we all know that the South Main street project was not completed. The street there may not be as wide as in the past because of water, sewer and gas valves

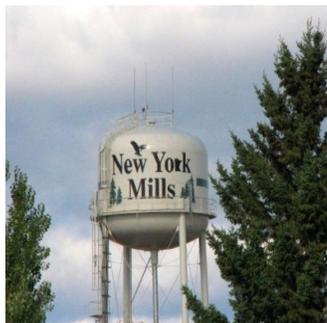
that may be above ground. Also snowmobilers should use caution crossing driveways as valves are above ground in many locations. As you read this article, the railroad and Otter Tail County should have opened the crossing at South Main. Please exercise caution as the conditions there may not be perfect!

With all the small snow falls, it has been difficult to maintain the streets as well as some years. With all the ice under the snow, the corners can become slippery. Everyone should drive as if it was winter! I hope you all have a safe, fun winter and that the skiing, snowmobiling, hunting and fishing are productive and fun.



CITY OF New York Mills

M I N N E S O T A



PO Box H
28 Centennial 84 Drive West
New York Mills, Minnesota 56567

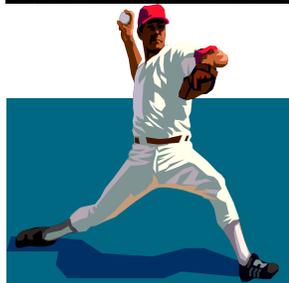
Phone: (218) 385-2213
Fax: (218) 385-2315
E-mail: nymcity@lakesplus.com

**CAN'T MAKE IT
INTO PAY YOUR
BILL DURING
OFFICE HOURS?**

You can now pay your monthly utility bill by automatic withdrawal from your bank account! For more information, contact Jenny at the City of New York Mills!

We're on the Web! Visit us at
www.newyorkmills.govoffice2.com

Community Calendar



- Jan 8 Open Bowling Tournament** at Mills Lanes at 12:00 noon. Everyone Welcome!
- Jan 8 Artist Reception for "Happenstance" and "Paper Plains"**, featuring four artists including former resident Heather Price from 3-6 pm at the NYM RCC
- Jan 11 City Council Meeting** 4:30 pm in the City Hall Council Chambers, Public Forum begins at 5:00 pm
- Jan 12 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
- Jan 17 City Offices Closed-Martin Luther King Day**
- Jan 23 4H Water Park Fun Day-Thumper Pond Resort, Ottertail.** 1-7 pm (must arrive by 3 for group rate) \$5 per person, open to 4H families and friends. Call 385-5420 to register.
- Jan 31 NYM Public Library Book Club-7 pm** in Library Meeting Room-Free admission. To join book club, call 385-2436.
- Feb 3 MIRC (Minnesota Intelligent Rural Communities) Sponsored Hands On Workshop "Roadside Advertising for the Digital Age"** at 5:30 pm at the NYM High School Media Center-Contact Lynn Kasma at 385-4060 or lrkasma@hotmail.com for reservation.
- Feb 8 City Council Meeting** 4:30 pm in the City Hall Council Chambers, Public Forum begins at 5:00 pm
- Feb 8 Open Mic Night** at the NYM RCC 7:00 pm
- Feb 9 CPR Course-Healthcare Provider CPR @ 5:30 pm** at Perham Area EMS Training Room, Cost \$45 -call 346-4485
- Feb 12 Talvijuhla Winter Celebration-**sponsored by NYM Regional Cultural Center
- Feb 13 Annual 4-H Roller Skating Day-1-3 p m** \$3.50/person-open to 4H families and friends. Call 385-5420 to register.
- Feb 17 "Carl Franzen and Band",** Contemporary/Jazz music at the NYM RCC 7:30 pm
- Feb 21 City Offices Closed-President's Day**
- Feb 26 "Art Stevenson and High Water",** Blue grass music at the NYM RCC 7:30 pm
- Feb 28 NYM Public Library Book Club-7 pm** in Library Meeting Room-free admission. To join book club, call 385-2436