

minnetonka memo

A Newsletter from the City of Minnetonka
March 2015

Volunteer to adopt a park sign this year

MINNETONKA'S ADOPT-A-PARK-SIGN program is a great way for individuals, families and organizations in the community to come together and share their gardening talents with others by planting flowers around city park signs.



The city collaborates with a local greenhouse to provide some annuals/perennials of the volunteers' choice to plant and maintain during the 2015 growing season. Last year's volunteers will be given first priority to adopt the sign they cared for in 2014.

The participating park signs and their availability will be updated periodically at www.eminnetonka.com. If you are interested in adopting a park sign or would like more information, call the facilities division at (952) 939-8390. ☺

Spring break at Williston Center

NEED SOMETHING FUN FOR YOUR KIDS ages 6-12 to do while school is out April 1 and 2? Look no further than the Williston Fitness Center! Each day the kids will take part in arts & crafts, gym games, swimming in the pool, play time in the Williston Treehouse play area and a movie. Participants should bring a swimsuit, towel, socks and gym shoes, as well as two snacks and a lunch. Drop off is from 8-9 a.m. and pick-up is from 4-5 p.m. \$40 per day; register for one or both days. Call Recreation Services to register at (952) 939-8203 or visit www.eminnetonka.com. ☺

Natural Resources presents the 2015 Eco Walks and Talks Series

THIS SPRING, PARTICIPATE IN A SERIES of workshops and plant walks offered by the city of Minnetonka's natural resources division. The following outlines the upcoming events for March and April. Unless otherwise indicated, all sessions take place at the Minnetonka Community Center, 14600 Minnetonka Boulevard, Minnetonka.

Get buckthorn on the march

Tuesday, March 4, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Did you know that stumps of the invasive buckthorn can be killed with herbicide in March? If properly applied, the cut-stump treatment works throughout winter until spring bud break, which is usually mid- to late-April.

Learn how to save time, effort and money by implementing buckthorn control methods that work the first time. Learn best practices for woody invasive species control: how to avoid the most common errors made during buckthorn removal; measures to save and protect high-value remnant native plants; how to reduce erosion on slopes; and re-planting using native species indigenous to the Twin Cities. Minnesota's native ecological vegetation regions and forest structure will set the stage for this workshop.

Workshop is offered in March to allow up to five weeks of stump-treatment control

before the buds break in spring. RSVP required. Call (952) 988-8400 or register online at www.eminnetonka.com.

Creating a Pollinator-Friendly Garden Habitat with Native Plants

Wednesday, March 18, 7-8 p.m.

Join Heather Holm, author of *Pollinators of Native Plants*, to learn about the types of native pollinators that visit gardens and how to foster all parts of their life cycles, including providing food, water and nesting habitat. The top native plant species for pollinators will also be discussed.

Heather Holm is the owner of a Minnetonka-based landscape design and consulting business specializing in native landscapes. She is a passionate advocate for the use of native plants to attract and support pollinators, beneficial insects, and wildlife in home landscapes, organic farms, and restored landscapes.

RSVP required. Call (952)988-8400 or register online at www.eminnetonka.com

Shallow Lakes Forum

April 25, 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Landscape Arboretum
3675 Arboretum Drive, Chaska

Shallow lakes are the most common type of lakes in Minnesota and are found throughout the landscape. They provide multiple benefits from wildlife habitat to

recreation, which makes the management of shallow lakes complex.

Plants are often seen as a nuisance in lakes, but can play an essential role in the health of shallow lakes. The 2015 Shallow Lakes Forum will focus on both aquatic and terrestrial plant management and what you can do to help promote water quality.

RSVP required; visit www.arboretum.umn.edu to register. A \$15 fee is required. Enter your registration as an affiliate of a sponsor organization.

Garlic Mustard Workshop

April 30, 6:30-8 p.m.

By now most Minnetonka residents know that garlic mustard is the number-one most invasive species in the herbaceous layer of our woods and untended edges. If you recently moved to a home with a bit of woods, this is the plant to know. Garlic mustard can take over everything growing in the ground layer, crowding out remnant wildflowers, sedges and other plants that are vestiges of woodlands of the past. It can take over your garden plants, too.

There are multiple methods for controlling garlic mustard. If your method or timing is off you will see it return annually. Learn how to control garlic mustard in order to save time, energy and frustration. ☺

Attend a MAM concert in March

THE MUSIC ASSOCIATION OF Minnetonka (MAM) offers three free concerts in March

Friday, March 6, 7 p.m.

Minnetonka Community Center, 14600 Minnetonka Blvd., Minnetonka

Saturday, March 14, 3 p.m.

Unitarian-Universalist Church of Minnetonka, 605 Rice St. E, Wayzata
The Minnetonka Civic Orchestra performs Dvorak's Slavonic Dance No. 1, Beethoven's Symphony No. 1, Bartok's Suite of Romanian Dances, Vaughan Williams' Rhosymedre, and Fantasia on Greensleeves and the Holst St. Paul's Suite for strings. Conductor: Dr. William Mayson.

Sunday, March 22, 3 p.m.

Arts Center on 7,
Former Minnetonka High School band director Dan Geldert conducts the Minnetonka Concert Band for their annual winter concert.

Admission to MAM concerts is free, but donations are appreciated. MAM welcomes interested musicians of all capabilities to contact us at mamoffice@musicassociation.org about auditions and rehearsal times. ☺

Burwell House volunteers needed

MINNETONKA'S HISTORIC CHARLES H. Burwell House at 13209 E. McGinty Road is a treasured city resource, and tours led by volunteers play a critical role in bringing this site to life for visitors of all ages.

If you are interested in learning more about becoming a volunteer tour guide, please attend a spring tour guide open house event Tuesday, April 21, 5:30-6:30 p.m., or Tuesday, April 28, 10:30-11:30 a.m. at the Burwell House. You'll take a tour of the house and learn what it takes to become a tour guide. High school students are welcome to volunteer at the house.

Volunteering at the Burwell House is a great way to connect with the community and to share this special site with others. To RSVP or to volunteer as a tour guide, contact Jacque Larson at (952) 939-8207 or jl Larson@eminnetonka.com. ☺

Calling all dog walkers in the city

THIS SPRING, MINNETONKA'S NATURAL resources division will begin a campaign designed to educate residents about the relationship between pet waste and water quality and to encourage neighborly, environmentally responsible behavior among pet owners. Pet waste diminishes the beauty and health of our natural environment and also pollutes local waterways with excess nutrients and pathogens.

Many other cities nationwide are working to reduce the volume of pet waste in public spaces, but it's hard to determine *how much* waste is produced every year. We've chosen to test this question by hosting a pet waste pick-up event. Join us at Purgatory Park Saturday, March 14, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. with your boots, plastic bags, a scooper – and your pooch! Together, we'll clean up the park while gathering valuable data.

Questions? Call Christine Petersen, natural resources division, at (952) 988-8407. ☺



Looking for a job with the city?

IF YOU'RE INTERESTED IN FULL-TIME, PART-time or seasonal employment with the city, visit www.eminnetonka.com and click on "About Minnetonka" then "Employment" to be connected with all of the current job opportunities. You can then complete and submit your job application online. Questions? Call (952) 939-8200. ☺

The etiquette of pets and parks

If you often bring your dog to a Minnetonka park, you might find it confusing to understand where off-leash and leash-required areas are located since there are no fenced off-leash areas in city parks. The following guidelines may be helpful.

Leash your dog in:

- Parking lots
- While on or within 15 feet of a paved or gravel trail
- On mowed grass
- Near picnic areas
- Near playground areas

Dogs may be off-leash in:

- Non-mowed grassy areas
- Dirt paths created by people and pets in the non-mowed areas.

While in the off-leash area, dog must at all times be in sight of the owner/handler and be under voice command.

While at the park:

- Carry a leash with you. This doesn't include "electronic leashes."
- Please pick up after your dog in all areas of the park. For your convenience, "Mutt Mitt" stations are located in several locations around the park; however, it's a good idea to bring your own supply of bags as well. Be sure to have a bag with you at all times to pick up after your dog, which is required by city ordinance. Bagged waste must be disposed of properly in the trash can. Please do not leave bags of waste on the side of the trail or by the trash can.

Thank you for helping to keep our parks safe and clean. ☺

An update on city street construction


IN 2014, MINNETONKA REHABILITATED APPROXIMATELY 2.7 MILES OF STREET AND utilities as part of its Local Street Construction Program.

The 2014 project included improvements to the storm sewer system, spot repairs to the sanitary sewer and water mains, and addition of concrete curb and gutter. These streets tie into Sparrow Road, which was reconstructed in 2013, to complete improvements to the Sparrow Road area.

- Lynwood Terrace
- Johnathan Circle
- Highpath Lane
- Beaverwood Trail
- Beaverwood Road
- Hermitage Way
- Lamplighters Lane
- Woolman Drive
- Timber Ridge Drive
- Timber Ridge Place
- Timber Ridge Court
- Parson's Close
- Turnberry Circle
- Priory Lane
- Ridge Court
- Windwood Way
- Old Excelsior Boulevard from Deephaven to Lynwood Terrace

2015 Rehabilitation Project

The next section of the Local Street Reconstruction Program includes three miles of street and utility repairs in various neighborhoods within the city. This year's project will include full replacement of the existing water main, spot repairs to the sanitary sewer system, and improvements to the storm sewer system. See sidebar for streets included in this years projects.

The project is currently in final design and is anticipated to be bid in March. Work is expected to start in spring 2015. All road rehabilitation projects in the city are paid via existing property taxes with no additional assessments. 

2015 Street Projects

- Laurel Road
- White Birch Road
- Indian Road West
- Council Circle
- Tribal Trail
- Totem Trail
- Tonkawa Trail
- Oakland Place
- Crowne Hill Road
- Crowne Hill Lane
- Forest Meadow Drive
- Forest Meadow Circle
- Meadow Circle
- Blenheim Way
- Blenheim Circle
- Kemrich Circle



Before street reconstruction



After street reconstruction

2016 Street Projects

- Woodlawn Avenue
- Shores Boulevard
- Larchmore Avenue
- Highland Avenue
- Fairchild Avenue
- Prospect Place
- Lake Shore Boulevard
- Cottage Grove Avenue
- Beverly Place
- Edgewood Avenue
- Park Lane
- Tonka Trail
- Tonkaha Drive
- Meadowbrook Lane
- Gray's Bay Boulevard from Cottage Grove Avenue to Minnehaha Creek

Winter tree pruning drop-off opens

THE CITY FORESTER RECOMMENDS November through March as the ideal time to prune oak trees, when they are least susceptible to oak wilt. This is also a great time to prune other trees, since insects and diseases are not active.

To assist residents who conduct winter pruning, the brush drop-off site at Minnetonka Public Works, 11522 Minnetonka Boulevard, will be open Saturdays, March 7, 14, 21 and 28, from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Enter the brush drop-off at the northwest corner of the Public Works facility (Big Willow ball field side).

Branches up to 12" in diameter will be accepted. Christmas trees (without plastic bags, stands or any decorations) will also be accepted. Proof of Minnetonka residency (driver's license or Minnetonka utility bill) is required to drop off brush.

Please note: trash, grass, leaves, dirt, sod, lumber, fencing or wood scraps are not accepted.

No brush or trimmings will be accepted from commercial tree or lawn services.

The site is not open weekdays in March. The regular brush drop-off program starts Saturday, April 4.

For more information call Minnetonka Public Works at (952) 988-8400. ☺

Order rain barrels, compost bins

ORDER RAIN BARRELS AND COMPOST bins online at www.RecycleMinnesota.org. Select the St. Louis Park event location to place your order. Cost is \$69 plus tax for a rain barrel and \$55 plus tax for a compost bin. Orders will be accepted online until sold out.

The Recycling Associations of Minnesota (RAM) will be offering sales throughout the spring at other locations. Be certain to mark your calendar with the correct pick-up date/times and location you select when you place your order. No refunds are available. You don't need to be a Minnetonka resident to order. For questions visit www.recycleminnesota.org or contact RAM at ram@recycleminnesota.org ☺

Volunteer to cut buckthorn in Kelly Park

LOOKING FOR AN OUTDOOR VOLUNTEER opportunity? See the city's largest-known bur oak on park property while also helping control buckthorn as part of a habitat restoration project Sunday, March 15, 2-4:30 p.m. at Kelly Park. This park is not high priority for restoration, so volunteers can make a difference in the mighty oak tree's woodland.

Buckthorn was cut in Kelly Park about six years ago, but many stumps were untreated. While the need to re-cut stumps sprouts can be quite annoying, there is one advantage for those who'd like to craft something out of wood. Many re-sprouted stems have grown very straight and are well-suited for making walking sticks, trellises and arbors. Those who assist may take straight wood home for their own woodworking.

Volunteers will cut second-growth buckthorn with loppers or bow saws, contain the black berries with seeds, delimit straight branches for re-use and make dense wind-rows of slash. Don't know what all this means? Come find out!

Volunteers should dress in winter layers; you might get warm and will need to shed a few layers! Wear sturdy winter boots for working on a woodland slope, snow pants or long underwear, safety glasses and thick winter work gloves. The city will provide a limited number of tools, instructions, snacks and drinks. All volunteers will be

required to sign a release form.

Kelly Park is located directly east of the Minnetonka Public Library at 17524 Excelsior Boulevard. Park in the library lot. Volunteers will work in the woods east of the lot.

RSVP is required so the work date can be re-scheduled if weather conditions are unfavorable. Call (952) 988-8400 to sign up. FFI call Janet Van Sloun at (952) 988-8423. ☺



Above, buckthorn for walking sticks

Finding the right tree care company

LOOKING FOR A TREE COMPANY? The city provides a list of tree contractors for residents at www.eminnetonka.com. These companies have to submit proof of liability insurance, a list of their services and proof they are on the state-mandated Tree Registry.

Each tree company structures their business differently. Some require all of their tree workers to be certified through the International Society of Arborists (ISA) while others use ISA arborists only for the the initial consultation with the homeowner.

What questions should I ask the tree company?

- Are you and your crews ISA certified?
- What type of training/education and how many years of experience do you and your crews have?

- What type of equipment do you plan to use on my property? Will you climb the tree or use a bucket truck? If you climb the tree, will you use ropes or spikes? *Tip: If they say they'll use spikes when pruning a healthy tree, move on to another company.*

- What are the pruning objectives for my tree(s) & shrubs?
- Do you have local homeowner references that I can call and ask about your work?

Once you ask a few questions and get a sense for how the company operates, be sure they provide a written price quote itemizing the work proposed and a timeline. ☺



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Programs and services for those 55+
March 2015 Newsletter

Senior Health Check

Thursday, March 5

8 a.m. – 12 p.m.*

Get a free health check at the semi-annual Senior Health Check event. Enjoy educational presentations, health screenings and refreshments.

Health Screenings:

Appointments recommended

Balance Screening

No appointment needed for:

Computerized nerve scans (neck region), blood pressure, hearing, hand massage & skin checks

Presentations:

- Home Health Care Services, 9 a.m.
- Nutrition to Boost Brain Function, 11 a.m.

Supported by:

Brookdale Living, Maximized Living Health Center, Live Your Life, & Hearing Solutions Group.

Appointments can be made by phone or in person.



St. Patrick's Day

Tuesday, March 17, 12 p.m.

Celebrate St. Patrick's Day with us!

Menu: Corn beef, cabbage, potato, Irish soda bread & dessert.

Sponsored by: Minnetonka Assisted Living

Cost: \$7 due Friday, March 13.

(Course #35631)

The Search for Senior Housing: What you need to know

Monday, March 23, 10:15 a.m.

Join us for a presentation that will define and compare different types of housing options for seniors. Experts will break down services offered at each housing type, payment options and financial assistance. Provided by Lake Minnetonka Senior Care Providers: Community Connections.

Free! (Course #36892)

Online Selling: The Basics

Monday, March 30, 10:30 a.m.

Looking to clear the clutter or sell your handmade crafts? Learn the basics of various online venues for selling. Discover the pros and cons of each site and things to consider before entering the world of online sales from Abigail Key, professional organizer and online selling specialist.

Cost: \$2 Please RSVP by Friday, March 27 (Course#36175)

Tax-Free Investing

Thursday, April 9, 6 p.m.

Join us for an educational presentation on the benefits and considerations of choosing investments with tax advantages. It's not what you make, it's what you keep!

Supported by: Edward Jones

Cost: \$2 Please RSVP by Wednesday, April 8 (Course#36879)



Lunch and a Movie:

Maleficent

Friday, April 24, 12 p.m.

A classic fairy tale, retold. Learn the story of *Sleeping Beauty* from Maleficent's point of view and the cruel blow that created the vengeful fairy.

Menu: Ham buns, bean salad, fruit & a treat.

Cost: \$5 due Tuesday, April 21

(Course #36885)

Summer Registration

(April - July)

Residents: Monday, March 2

Non-Residents: Tuesday, March 3

- Registration is available online, over the phone, by mail or in person.
- Online: www.eminnetonka.com, first-time users should call for a PIN number.
- Phone: (952)939-8393, payments can be made with Visa, MasterCard or Discover.
- Mail: 14600 Minnetonka Blvd
Minnetonka, MN 55345
- In person: Monday - Friday 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Scholarships

- Limited scholarships are available for Minnetonka residents age 55+.
- Scholarships will be kept confidential.
- No questions will be asked regarding details of finances.
- Up to three scholarships per brochure totalling nine per year.
- Up to 50% for programs, classes and events.
- Up to 50% on one day trip per year.

Lunch and a Movie:

And So It Goes

Friday, March 6, 12 p.m.

Michael Douglas and Diane Keaton star in a story of wealthy and self-absorbed Oren who suddenly becomes the caretaker of his previously unknown granddaughter.

Luckily, neighbor Leah comes to the rescue.

Menu: Pizza, salad, garlic bread and dessert

Cost: \$5 due Tuesday, March 3

(Course #36272)

Fish Dinner

Friday, March 13, 5:30 p.m.

Enjoy a great food with great friends!

Menu: Cod, potatoes, vegetable & dessert.

Sponsored by: Meridian Manor

Cost: \$7 due Tuesday, March 10.

(Course #35630)



Tech Fair

Wednesday, April 22, 1 - 3 p.m.

Save the date for the Computer Club's annual event. This free event features educational presentations, demonstrations and hands-on learning!



Fitness Programs

Over 50 & fit

Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, 9 a.m.

Join this social group and enjoy music and fitness three days a week!

- Annual Fee: \$12 (Course #35680)

Tai Chi Chih

Susan Sobelson

Mondays, March 30–April 27

Practice a series of 19 easy-to-learn movements and one pose. Moving meditation can improve balance, flexibility, reduce stress, increase energy and more.

- Beginner (Course #35650)
\$25, 10–11 a.m.
- Intermediate (Course #35651)
\$25, 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Continuing Line Dance

Annette Fragale

Learn to “hitch” and “vine” and dance in a line! No partners needed. Six previous lessons needed for continuing beginning level course; 50 previous lessons required for intermediate course.

- Continuing Beginner (Course #35656)
\$20, Thursdays, Mar. 5–26,
12:30–1:30 p.m.
- Intermediate (Course #35657)
\$20, Thursdays, Mar. 5–26,
1:45–2:45 p.m.

Tai Chi for

Health and Wellness

Ron Erdman-Luntz

Thursdays, April 9–May 21

(no class 5/7), 6–7 p.m.

Tai Chi short-form movements have many health benefits and are fun to learn. The slow circular movements of Tai Chi help to improve balance and relaxation. Must be able to walk comfortably for an hour. Wear comfortable clothes and athletic shoes.

- \$54 (Course #35653)



E-mail Updates

Stay up-to-date on the latest events! Receive weekly e-mail updates on senior happenings! Send your e-mail address to spieh@eminnetonka.com.

Register Early

Programs can fill well in advance or may be cancelled due to low enrollment. Registering early is the best way to secure a spot in programs and events.

Beginning & Intermediate Yoga

Nancy Holasek

These gentle classes are geared toward the older adult, with lots of stretching and warm-ups. Yoga postures help increase flexibility. Guided breath work and visualization help to release, relax and restore the body and calm the mind.

Please bring a yoga mat or towel to class.

Chair-Supported Yoga

9:45–10:45 a.m.

Most of the class takes place while seated on a chair.

- Tuesday, April 28–May 26
\$30 (Course #35637)
- Thursday, April 30–May 28
\$24 (Course #35638) (no class 5/7)

Intermediate Yoga Class

11 a.m. – 12 p.m.

This class includes standing and balance postures. Students should have the ability to get down to and up from the floor for postures completed while on the belly or backside of the body.

- Tuesday, April 28–May 26
\$30 (Course #35637)
- Thursday, April 30–May 28
\$24 (Course #35638) (no class 5/7)

Zumba Gold

Jan Gamble

1–2 p.m.

Zumba Gold offers a complete body workout while learning the basic steps to salsa, meringue, cha-cha and other rhythms. No dance experience is necessary. Comfortable clothing and workout shoes are recommended. Bring water; you will sweat!

- \$20 Monday, March 2–30
(Course #35662)
- \$20 Wednesday, March 4–April 1
(Course #35663)

Athletic Activities

Indoor Pickleball

October - May

Try the fun and social game of pickleball. Limited racquets and balls are available.

- Tuesdays & Fridays, 8–10 a.m.
- Thursdays, 8–9:30 a.m.
- Saturdays, 1–3 p.m.
- Free for Williston Silver Sneaker and Silver & Fit members. \$4 per day for non-members.

**Williston Fitness Center
14509 Minnetonka Drive**



Leisure Programs

Essential Oil Creations:

Citrus Body Scrub

Wednesday, March 4

1–2 p.m.

Spring fever? Put some spring in the air using fresh lemon scents! Learn about the benefits of essential oils and how single notes and synergistic blends can enrich our health and well being.

\$6 due Monday, March 2

(Course #36104)

Mah Jongg

Carole Harris

Wednesdays, April 8–May 20

10–12 p.m.

Learn to play the intriguing game of Mah Jongg, a game of chance and skill. The Chinese ruling class developed this game of tiles in the time of Confucius, but it has been modernized, simplified and Westernized for all to enjoy. Played previously? Refresh your skills.

- \$54 (Course #35678)

Art Programs

Space and Dimension

Gin Weidenfeller

Wednesdays, March 18 & 25

1–3 p.m.

Explore and apply basic methods in linear perspective, overlap, size, value and contrast change to create three-dimensional space in your drawings and paintings. Use graphite, charcoal and watercolor to depict the depths of interior spaces (i.e., bird nests, broken egg shells, etc.) or bold scenes from the exterior world of nature, still life, and land/city scapes.

- \$40 (Course #35664)

Negative Painting

Sandra Muzzy

Tuesdays, March 3 & 10

9–11:30 a.m.

Learn the technique to define a shape or object by painting around it instead of painting the shape or object itself. Using traditional watercolor techniques, start with light washes, gradually getting darker as we define the subject by painting the negative space around it. Bring regular watercolor paints and a sheet of 140lb Arches cold press watercolor paper to the first class. Some previous watercolor experience is preferred.

- \$50 (Course #35667)

History Programs

British History: Royal Kingdoms I

Terry Kubista

Thursdays, March 5–26

1–3 p.m.

Trace the unique relationship between the British monarchy and the country, from the ancient kingdoms of Sussex, East Anglia, Kent, and Wessex over a thousand years of turbulent history.

- \$28 (Course #35671)

World War I in Europe

Dan Hartman

Wednesday, March 11,

10:30 a.m.

Examine the Western front, the Christmas truce and day-to-day life in the trenches and technological advances.

- \$3 Please RSVP by Monday, Mar. 9 (Course #36138)

Education Programs

Defensive Driving

Attend and save 10% on car insurance! Pay the instructor at class with a check or exact cash. Register through MN Highway Safety Center, 1-888-234-1294, or visit www.mnsafetycenter.org for all classes.

Four hour renewal sessions:

- \$20, Tuesday, March 3, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
- \$20, Monday, March 16, 5:30 – 9:30 p.m.
- \$20, Tuesday, March 31, 5:30 – 9:30 p.m.

Nutrition:

Gut Reaction: Restore Digestive Health through Nutrition

Do you suffer from heartburn, gas, bloating, indigestion, constipation or diarrhea? Do you have an autoimmune disorder, depression or out-of-control sugar or bread cravings? Put an end to these uncomfortable health issues by healing your digestive tract with real food, selected vitamins and amino acids. Discover the connection between what you eat and how you feel.

- \$22 due the Monday prior to program.
- Thursday, March 5, 6–8 p.m. (Course #35676)
- Wednesday, March 11, 1–3 p.m. (Course #35677)

Navigating Medicare

Wednesday, April 8, 6:30 p.m.

Learn to navigate Medicare Parts A, B & D. Offered in cooperation with Senior Community Services and open to those considering retirement and to current Medicare users.

- \$10 due Monday, April 6. (Course #36886)



Interest groups

For more information on these groups and a calendar of events, please visit www.eminnetonka.com or stop by the community center.

Bird Club

1st Friday, 10 a.m.

Craig Mandell: *Birds of Brazil*

Book Club

3rd Thursday, 1 p.m.

Ordinary Grace by William Kent Kruger.

Bulls & Bears Investment Club

1st & 3rd Monday, 1 p.m.

Learn about investing.

Chess

Thursdays, 12 p.m.

If you have general knowledge of chess, join us in the Burwell Room.

Literary Book Club

4th Tuesday, 7:15 p.m.

The Diary of a Nobody by George and Weedon Grossmith.

Single Mingle

3rd Tuesday, 3:30 p.m. at Tuttle's in Hopkins for a monthly planning meeting. Monthly flyers are available at the Senior Center regarding additional outings

Tale Spinners

Thursdays, 1 p.m.

New members welcome!

Wood Carvers

Thursdays, 10 a.m.

Group members share ideas and work independently.

Income Tax Assistance

This free tax program is designed to help moderate and low income individuals with basic taxes. Please call senior services at (952) 939-8393 to schedule an appointment.

- Mondays & Thursdays, February 9–April 13
- Appointment times available include: 12:30, 1:45 & 3 p.m.
- Bring a photo I.D. last years taxes and social security card

Senior Day Trips



Gerten's Greenhouse Tour & Outlet Shopping

Thursday, April 23

Feel the sensations of spring at Gerten's Greenhouse in Inver Grove Heights. Learn about the plant growing process on a behind-the-scenes tour. Enjoy lunch at Jensen's Restaurant in Eagan before perusing the new Twin Cities Premium Outlets. This trip includes walking for up to a hour in a working garden center please wear appropriate footwear.

Menu: A simple and fresh seasonal, chef-created menu will be served.

Course# 36057

- **Cost:** \$52 includes tours, lunch, transportation & escort
- **Estimated trip time:** 9 a.m. - 2:45 p.m.
- **Registration deadline:** Friday, Apr. 3.

Sips & Songs

Sips and Songs offers light refreshments and socializing before taking in local entertainment. Live it up, reserve your seat today!

Steven

Marking: Sinatra Tribute

Wednesday, April 29, 10:30 a.m

Cost: \$3 (Course #35603)

Sponsored by: Avinity Senior Living



11280 Wayzata Boulevard

(763) 591-4868

Handcrafted items by Minnetonka residents 55 and older.

Wednesday - Saturday, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.,
Thursdays until 8 p.m.



Contact & Registration Information

Register in person, over the phone, online or by mail.

Minnetonka Senior Services

(952) 939-8393

14600 Minnetonka Blvd.
Minnetonka, MN 55345

www.eminnetonka.com

Office hours:

Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Administrative Staff

Kate Egert

kegert@eminnetonka.com

Senior Services & Activities Manager

Steve Pieh

(952) 939-8366

spieh@eminnetonka.com

Senior & General Programs Manager

Janelle Crossfield

(952) 939-8369

jcrossfield@eminnetonka.com

Program locations

Meet at Minnetonka Senior Services unless otherwise noted.

Registration information

- **Program cancellations**
Refunds will only be made if registration is withdrawn before the advertised deadline. If no deadline is given registration must be withdrawn at least two business days prior to the start date of the program. Partial credit will be considered if injury or serious illness occurs. In such case a physician's verification may be required.
- **Trip cancellations**
Full refund requires cancelling prior advertised deadline. Cancellations after deadline are refunded after a \$5 fee per registration, only in the event a participant is found to fill the space.

Services

Blood Pressure Screenings

1st & 3rd Fridays; 2nd Wednesdays
9:30-11:30 a.m. Free!

Provided by volunteer nurses.

Happy Feet

1st, 2nd, 3rd & 4th Fridays,
9 a.m. - 3 p.m., \$35

Provided by nurses specializing in foot care.
For appointment call (763) 560-5136.

Senior Community Services

Senior Outreach Social Worker

2nd & 4th Tuesdays, Free!

Discuss finances, transportation, personal care, medical care, home maintenance, and more with Mary Ann, m.lundberg@seniorcommunity.org. For appointment call (952) 939-8393.

Health Insurance Counseling

1st & 3rd Mondays, Free!

Discuss Medicare, Social Security, long-term care, resources and more! For appointment call (952)939-8393.

HOME

Household and Outside Maintenance for Elderly (HOME) is available for Minnetonka residents 60+. For more information call (952) 746-4046.

CareNextion

www.carenexion.org.

This online communication tool brings together the support needed to help live a vital and engaging life.

Extended Trips

For information call Senior Community Services at (952) 767-7899 or visit www.seniorcommunity.org.

- **Holland Tulip Festival** (May 7- 10)
Cost: \$600 per person, double occupancy.
- **Shipshewana** (May 11-15)
Cost: \$ per person, double occupancy.

Our mission: To develop and promote programs and services in our community to meet the diverse needs of those 55+.

Sneak preview: summer arts in the park

START THINKING SUMMER BY MARKING your calendar for this year's music, movies and theater at the Minnetonka Civic Center outdoor amphitheater, 14600 Minnetonka Boulevard, Minnetonka.

Theater in the Park

Enjoy the musical "Oklahoma, Jr.", featuring a cast of Minnetonka elementary school fourth- and fifth-grade students. Hit songs include "Oh What a Beautiful Mornin'," "The Surrey with the Fringe on Top," "People Will Say We're In Love" and "Oklahoma!"

Performance times are Friday, June 12, 10:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. and Saturday, June 13, 10:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. Bring a blanket or folding chair. Concessions will be available for purchase. Weather questions? Call the city's weather hotline at (952) 939-8355 or visit www.eminnetonka.com.

Music in the Park

Concerts are Tuesdays, 7-8:30 p.m. and feature area performers playing a wide variety of music. Bring a blanket or lawn chair and enjoy an evening of free entertainment for the whole family. For more information about the groups, visit www.eminnetonka.com.

- June 16: Plymouth Concert Band (50-piece band)
Sponsored by MinnWest Bank. Member

FDIC.

- June 23: MN Sings
A vocal contest sponsored by the Glen Lake Optimists, featuring solo performers with background music. Look for more information this spring about participation.
- June 30: Salsa del Soul (Cuban, salsa, 9-piece band)
- July 7: Brio Brass (50-piece brass band)
- July 14: Calhoun Isles Community Band (60-piece band)
- July 21: Jeff Dayton and Friends (Nashville country artist & former Glen Campbell band leader)
- July 28: John Phillip Sousa Memorial Band (Rags, marches, novelties: 45-piece band)
- August 4: Maple Grove Jazz Ensemble (18-piece jazz band)
- August 11, 6:45-8:15 p.m.: Tim Patrick and His Blue Eyes Band (11-piece band, Frank Sinatra style)
- August 18, 6:45-8:15 p.m.: Minneapolis Commodores (60-member barbershop harmony choir)

Prepare for spring

ATASTE OF SPRING IS IN THE AIR AND now is a great time to get your house in order. Start by removing combustibles around water heaters, dryers and furnaces. Three feet is the recommended distance between storage areas and these appliances.

Additionally, spring flooding can be a concern.

Clean your neighborhood sewer drains and keep window wells, gutters and downspouts clear of debris.

Removing excess snow from around your home's foundation is also a good idea.

If you're worried about flooding, move valuables out of lower levels as this is the first place to receive damage. Also, be sure your sump pump is operational before the melting begins. Now is also a good time to review your insurance coverage. Flood insurance is often additional coverage above your standard insurance coverage. Contact your agent for specific questions or to purchase flood insurance.

For more safety tips from the Minnetonka Fire Department's What If? Program, visit www.eminnetonka.com.



Remember that trees are more than trunks and branches

IF YOU'VE EVER HIT ONE WITH A SHOVEL, you can testify that trees definitely have roots. Yet how many of us think of a tree's root system when planning a new addition or landscaping project or even enjoying some of the shade, privacy, or other benefits that tree may provide? Like a good home foundation, trees need a solid, healthy root system to survive. Let's look at how you can help protect the trees you love while tackling that next project.

Where are the roots?

The root system of a tree often extends well beyond the branches (or crown) of the tree. You may have heard about protecting the "dripline" or "critical root zone" of a tree. The dripline of a tree is simply the outer line to which the branches extend. However, as the branches of a tree do not necessarily reflect the root system below, it is better to calculate the critical root

zone. The critical root zone is the area that extends 1.5 feet from the trunk for each inch of trunk diameter. For example, a tree with a 10-inch diameter trunk has a critical root zone that extends 15 feet from the trunk of the tree. Although the entire root system may extend well beyond it, the critical root zone is the area that is most critical to the tree's survival.

Be wary that the small, fibrous roots that are less easily seen (but easily damaged) take in much of the nutrients, air and water passed by the root system to the rest of the tree. Soil compaction by heavy equipment and materials can reduce the ability of these small roots to absorb which can affect the health of the tree. If it affects enough of the root system, the tree may eventually die.

What can I do?

It is unlikely in most cases that you can avoid impacting the entire root system of

a tree, and most healthy trees will tolerate some impacts within the critical root zone (up to about 30% impact for most species). However, it is important to protect as much as possible if you don't want to lose your trees over time. Avoid designing structures or grade changes where the total impacts (including earth work and equipment access) will have significant impacts on the root systems. Define work areas with temporary construction fencing so that you can limit impacts. Watering trees deeply during and after construction or landscaping activity as well as mulching over the root system can help reduce stress on an impacted tree and may help it recover.

If you will be hiring a contractor, be certain to discuss your desires and concerns with them so they can also help protect your valued trees.

2015 Market Value Notice

(Your market value notice applies to property taxes payable in 2016.)

Minnetonka home values continue upward

The real estate market continues to stay strong for the second year in a row. Last year home values in Minnetonka were up just over 5% and they continued at just over that 5% pace again this year. Townhouses in the city saw growth similar to single-family homes, while condominiums saw larger increases of around 14%. The commercial property sector saw only an overall modest change. Nonetheless, the premium office market is the strongest it has been in years with higher rents and occupancy, resulting in greater values. It's important to remember that individual properties may vary greatly, and that adjustments vary by market, thus some properties may experience increases in value while other may still experience a decrease.

Market value based on 2014 data

Property tax in Minnesota is a complicated process strictly governed by Minnesota state law. Although the city of Minnetonka administers the assessment, the city's work is overseen by Hennepin County and the Minnesota Department of Revenue. The state-mandated schedule requires that the values on your property, reflected in your 2015 Market Value Notice sent to you in March, are based upon analysis of market information from 2014.

How is market value determined?

The Minnetonka Assessing Division maintains records for every property in the city. Adjustments are made to the market values of most properties, based on actual real estate sales from the past year for comparable properties. At least 20% of all properties are physically inspected each year, and adjustments to these are made based on the results of that inspection. Market value adjustments are also made for building additions, remodeling and other improvements.

What if I don't agree with my property's market value?


If you have questions or concerns about your property's market value notice or the assessment process, please call the Minnetonka assessing staff at (952) 939-8220. The staff can review property records and sales information with you.

Based on this discussion and review, the appraiser may or may not make a change to your market value. If not, you have the right to appeal.

How does the appeal process work?

The value subject to appeal is the estimated market value. Two avenues of appeal are available. Property owners may appeal directly to the State Tax Court. More common, however, is an appeal through the local Board of Appeal and Equalization, and if desired, then to the Hennepin County Board of Equalization.

The Minnetonka City Council convenes each year as the local Board of Appeal and Equalization and has local real estate professionals serve as its advisors. To make an appeal to the local board, you should first discuss your property's market value with the Minnetonka assessing staff. After that, you may make an appeal to the local Board of Appeal and Equalization by March 27 simply by asking that your property be listed for appeal. However, it is important to know that the local and county boards have the authority to raise or lower an appealed market value.

Remember, if you have questions or concerns about your property's market value or about the assessment process, please call the Minnetonka assessing staff at (952) 939-8220. 

What do these numbers mean?

In March, Minnetonka property owners will receive their 2015 market value notices.

Estimated Market Value

The assessor's estimate of the total market value of the property, or what the property would likely sell for on the open market during the year ending September 2014.

Disabled Veterans Exclusion

Qualifying disabled veterans may be eligible for a valuation exclusion on their homestead property, which would reduce the amount subject to taxation.

"This Old House" Exclusion

This figure shows that portion of the value of improvements made to an older home under the former "This Old House" law. This program expired with the 2003 assessment. However, property may still be receiving the value exclusion under this program.

Taxable Market Value

This is the value that your property taxes are actually based on, after all reductions, exemptions and deferrals are taken out.

Homestead Market Value Exclusion

Applies to residential homestead and to the house, garage and one acre of land for agricultural homesteads. The exclusion is a maximum of \$30,400 at \$76,000 of market value, and then decreases by nine percent for value over \$76,000. The exclusion phases out for properties valued at \$413,800.

2015 Property Taxes

Help is available for property taxpayers

Several state programs, described below, exist to assist eligible residents with the rising cost of property taxes. For additional information and links to the government agencies that run these programs, visit the city's website at www.eminnetonka.com or call the Minnesota Department of Revenue's tax helpline at (651) 296-3781.

Property tax refund program

The first program is the **property tax refund program**, or "circuit breaker." For taxes paid in 2015, homeowners with 2014 household incomes up to \$107,150 are eligible for a refund, and the maximum refund is \$2,620. Some renters with 2014 household incomes up to \$58,060 are also eligible for a refund. The maximum refund that may be available to a renter is \$2,030, and the amount provided also depends upon the total rent paid in 2014. There are additional eligibility allowances for renters/homeowners over age 65; those who are disabled; and for the number of dependents. Forms can be obtained from the Minnesota Department of Revenue (DOR) and must be filed with the DOR by August 15, 2016.

Special property tax refund program

A second state program is the **special property tax refund program** for homeowners whose property taxes payable in 2015 have increased by more than 12 percent and are at least \$100 over their 2014 taxes. The increase must not be attributable to new improvements, and homeowners must have owned and lived in their home on both January 2, 2014, and January 2, 2015. There is no limit on household income to be eligible under this program and the maximum possible refund is \$1,000. The special property tax refund form is also available from the Minnesota Department of Revenue (DOR) and also must be filed with the DOR by August 15, 2016.

Senior citizens property tax deferral program

The **senior citizens property tax deferral program** allows people 65 years of age or older, whose household incomes are \$60,000 or less, to defer a portion of their property taxes on their homes. The program limits the amount of property taxes to three percent of the total household income for eligible property owners, and the amount of taxes to be paid each year will not change for as long as the homeowner participates in the program.

However, this is **not a tax forgiveness program — it is a low interest loan from the state**. The deferred tax is paid by the state to the county, and a **lien will attach to your property**. Annually adjusted interest will be charged on the loan, but will never exceed five percent. Application forms are available from the Minnesota Department of Revenue, and must be filed with the Hennepin County Auditor's Office by July 1 the year before the deferral would begin.

Foreclosure prevention counseling

The city of Minnetonka provides foreclosure prevention counseling through Community Action Partnership of Suburban Hennepin County. Call (952) 933-1993 for information.

Tax Notices

Residents will receive two notices this month related to property taxes. One is the **market value notice** from the city, which will affect property taxes to be paid in 2016 and is explained on the facing page. The other is the **property tax bill** for 2015, which is mailed by Hennepin County and must be paid this year.

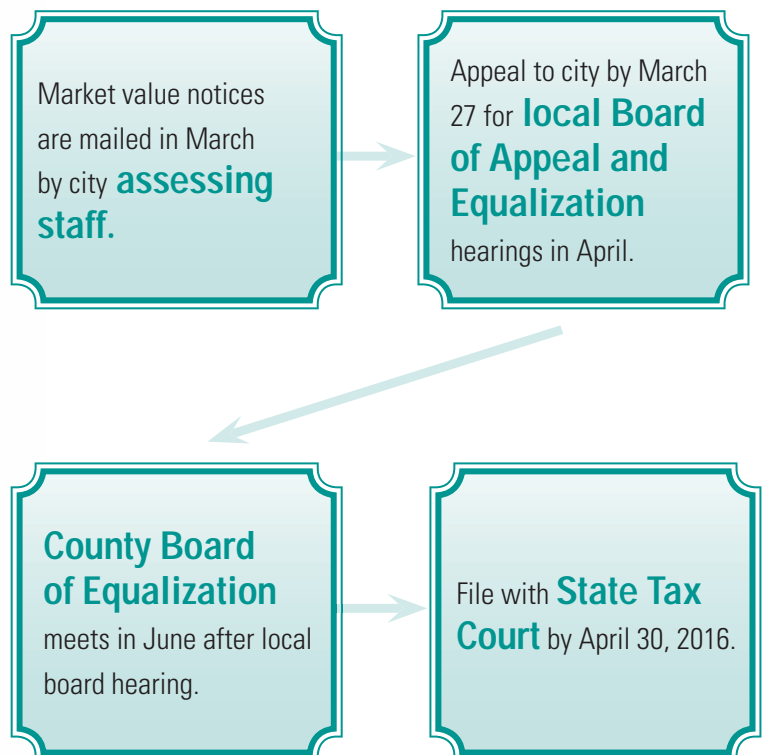
City Tax Bill

The city of Minnetonka continues to provide quality services at a reasonable price. The city provides a fuller range of municipal services than many other cities, and does not use special assessments to fund road and other improvements. More than seven of every ten dollars in city property taxes paid support streets and public safety, and most of the remainder is spent on parks and natural resources. Nevertheless, the city's tax rate remains among the lowest of comparable metro cities. Our residents continue to receive the high quality of services they have come to expect.

2015 homeowner's property taxes

The city of Minnetonka accounts for about one-fourth of a homeowner's total property tax bill. The remainder is comprised of taxes for your school district (33 percent), county (34 percent), and other jurisdictions (7 percent).

Market Value Appeals Process



minnetonka memo

March 2015

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Non-emergency(952) 939-8500 or 9-1-1	

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Calendar

City of
Minnetonka

March
2015

Call (952) 939-8200
for meeting
locations.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S	Call (952) 939-8200 for meeting locations.			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	2	City Council, 6:30 p.m.	19	Planning Commission, 6:30 p.m.
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	4	Park Board, 7 p.m.	23	City Council, 6:30 p.m.
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	5	Planning Commission, 6:30 p.m.	26	Economic Development Advisory Commission, 6 p.m.
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	16	City Council Study Session, 6:30 p.m.		
29	30	31								

All meetings listed above are open to the public. Meeting dates and times are subject to change – please check www.eminnetonka.com for the latest information.

Minnetonka City Council and Planning Commission meetings are broadcast live on cable channel 16 and via live videostreaming on www.eminnetonka.com. Cable channel replays are available Mondays and Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.; Fridays and Saturdays at noon, or any time at www.eminnetonka.com. Agendas for council meetings are available on the city's website by the Friday afternoon prior to the meeting, and planning commission agendas are available by the Monday prior to the meeting.

MnDOT hosts summer construction open house March 3

The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) is hosting an open house Tuesday, March 3, 5-7 p.m. at the Ridgedale Library, Robert H. Rohlf Room, 12601 Ridgedale Drive, Minnetonka.

MnDOT staff will present an overview of the eight-mile construction project on I-494 between I-394 in Minnetonka and the I-94/694 interchange in Plymouth and Maple Grove. Open house attendees will also learn about other construction projects on neighboring roads: Highways 12 and I-394.

The two-year project on I-494 will result in a third lane between Hwy. 55 and the I-94/694 interchanges, and safer, longer-lasting roads, ramps and bridges. The construction will require full weekend closures of the interstate, short- and long-term ramp closures and lane reductions on one side of the interstate (two lanes one direction, one lane in the opposite direction).

The Hwy. 12 project includes building an auxiliary lane on eastbound Hwy. 12 between County Road 15 and the eastbound Hwy. 12 ramp to I-494. The

auxiliary lane will help reduce congestion on eastbound Hwy. 12 during the morning peak hours and improve safety.

Can't make the March 3 open house in Minnetonka? Attend another open house Wednesday, March 4, 5-7 p.m., Maple Grove Community Center Banquet Room, 12951 Weaver Lake Road, Maple Grove. ☺

The paper in this newsletter was manufactured with electricity in the form of renewable energy (wind, hydro, and biogas).



March calendar

- 2 – City Council, 6:30 p.m.
- 4 – Park Board, 7 p.m.
- 5 – Planning Commission, 6:30 p.m.
- 16 – City Council Study Session, 6:30 p.m.
- 19 – Planning Commission, 6:30 p.m.
- 23 – City Council, 6:30 p.m.
- 26 – Economic Development Advisory Commission, 6 p.m.

All meetings listed above are open to the public. Meeting dates and times are subject to change – please check www.eminnetonka.com for the latest information.

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Order rain barrels,
compost bins**

**Extra from
Finding the right
tree company**



**Extra from Trees:
more than trunks
and branches**

**Extra from
MnDOT hosts**

