



minnetonka memo

A Newsletter from the City of Minnetonka
March 2014

Adopt a city park sign this summer

W your gardening talents with the community?

Minnetonka's Adopt-A-Park-Sign program is a great way for individuals,

families and community organizations to join together and plant flowers around city park signs.

The city collaborates with a local greenhouse to provide some annuals/perennials of the volunteer's choice to plant and maintain during the 2014 growing season. Last year's volunteers will be given first priority to adopt the sign they cared for in 2013, while new participants may sign up for the program starting Monday, March 3.

Park signs and availability will be posted at www.eminnetonka.com. If you are interested in adopting a park sign or would like more information, contact Kathy Kline at (952) 939-8391 or kkline@eminnetonka.com. ☺

Sign at Green Circle Park

Enjoy spring break at Williston Center

N kids to do while school is out for spring break? Look no further! Williston Fitness Center will host Spring Break Days Wednesday and Thursday, April 2 and 3, for kids ages 6 – 12 years old. Enjoy arts & crafts, gym games, swimming in the pool, play time in the Williston Treehouse and a movie. Participants should bring a swim suit, 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. Cost is \$40 per day; register for one or both days. Call (952) 939-8203 to register. Williston Fitness Center is located at 14509 Minnetonka Drive, Minnetonka.

Ride the Williston shuttle, earn free money!

To alleviate parking issues for both visitors to the Williston Center and for the surrounding neighborhood, overflow parking for Williston Center guests is available at the Minnetonka Community Center, 14600 Minnetonka Boulevard on **Mondays and Fridays, from 7:30 – 10:30 a.m.** A shuttle service is provided to pick-up and drive facility users to the Williston Fitness Center. The ride only takes a few minutes, and shuttles arrive every 10 minutes at the community center and

Williston Center. Shuttle picks up at the main doors of the community center (near the fountain) and drops off at the main entrance of Williston Center.

To encourage more use of the shuttle, Williston is offering \$20 in credit for three or more shuttle rides and \$30 in credit for six or more shuttle rides. Credit may be used toward any Williston Center or Recreation Services program, including Williston memberships, tennis court time, personal training, swimming lessons, summer programs and Shady Oak Beach passes. Each rider will turn in their "ride ticket" to the front desk. Tickets will be documented by Williston staff and credits will be applied in March 2014.

For more information, visit www.willistonfitnesscenter.com or find the Williston Center on Facebook (search Williston Fitness Center). ☺

Concert band performs March 23

E Association of Minnetonka's (MAM) Concert Band Sunday, March 23, at 3 p.m. at Eisenhower Community Center, 1001 Highway 7, Hopkins. In celebration of MAM's 40th anniversary, this concert features a performance of the Ellerby Clarinet Concerto by soloist Kent Barth. Other featured pieces will range from Sousa to Hungarian folk music, Russian choral music, Cole Porter, Henry Mancini and more.

The band will be under the direction of Conductor Dan Geldert, former band director at Minnetonka High School. Geldert commutes from Colorado twice a year to lead this band in a month of rehearsals, followed by this concert performance.

Please allow extra time for parking, which is a distance from the auditorium. A drop-off area is available just outside the community center. Admission is free, but donations are appreciated.

Want to join MAM? Interested musicians of all capabilities are invited to email mamoffice@musicassociation.org regarding auditions and rehearsal times, or call (952) 401-5954. ☺

Help with elections

W in the community? Consider serving as an election judge for the upcoming fall elections. You'll join more than 300 Minnetonka residents in ensuring the voting process is run effectively and with the greatest integrity. Serving as an election judge is a great way to meet your neighbors and protect one of our most cherished freedoms — the right to vote.

Judges are needed for both the August state primary and the November state general election. This is a paid opportunity and training is provided. For more information visit www.eminnetonka.com or call Laura Ronbeck at (952) 939-8219. ☺

All about 9-1-1: Tips from city dispatchers

Mcenter shares these tips with you for effectively using 9-1-1.

- Many people have eliminated landlines in their homes. However, cell phones aren't always ideal in an emergency. Batteries go dead and cell towers can fail. Consider adding a landline or a VOIP (such as Vonage or OOMA) that will be more reliable in case of a power failure, and also provide a physical address to dispatchers.
- You may have heard that all charged cell phones — even those without service — will allow a caller to dial 9-1-1. That's true, with one important caveat: cell phones without an active service agreement do not provide a valid call back number for dispatchers. This is very problematic and will cause a delay in emergency response. If you have to call 9-1-1, ideally do so from a landline or from a cell phone with an active service agreement.
- If using a cell phone to call 9-1-1, know your address and location. Cell phones only provide limited location information. Latitude and longitude is provided but the accuracy of that information varies widely. While dispatchers may be able to narrow the latitude and longitude to locate a caller, this takes time — which also delays emergency response.

Reporting non-emergencies

While it's tempting to call 9-1-1 to report a utility failure or to comment on city services such as snowplowing, please remember that this may prevent others with a serious emergency from reaching dispatchers. If you have an after-hours emergency that requires Minnetonka Public Works, such as a water main break, sewer gas odors, sewer backups or broken fire hydrants, call (952) 939-8510. During business hours contact Minnetonka Public Works at (952) 988-8400.

For other utility issues or emergencies, call these numbers:

- **Cable Television Outages: Comcast**
1-800-COMCAST (266-2278)
- **Broadband Internet**
(two providers — know your provider)
 - **Comcast:**
1-800-COMCAST (266-2278)
 - **Century Link:**
1-877-348-9007
- **Telephone Service (landline):**
Century Link, 1-877-348-9007
- **Electricity:**
Excel Energy, 1-800-895-1999
- **Natural Gas: CenterPoint Energy**
 - **Emergency Line:** 1-800-722-9326
 - **Gas Leaks:** 1-800-296-9815
 - **General Info:** 612-372-4727 ☺

Order rain barrels, compost bins from RAM

T partnering with the Recycling Association of Minnesota (RAM) to provide rain barrels and compost bins to residents at a discount. Rain barrels and compost bins offer great opportunities to reuse rainwater and compostable yard and kitchen wastes.

Order online through RAM at www.recycleminnesota.org. Select the St. Louis Park event location to place your order. Orders will be accepted online until sold out. Cost is \$69 plus tax for a rain barrel; \$55 plus tax for a compost bin.

Pickup is Saturday, May 3, 8 a.m. – 12 p.m. or Monday, May 5, 5 – 7 p.m. at Tree Trust, 2231 Edgewood Avenue South, St. Louis Park.

RAM offers sales throughout the spring, with pickup at locations other than Minnetonka. 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 do not need to be a Minnetonka resident to order. For questions visit www.recycleminnesota.org or email ram@recycleminnesota.org ☺

Boat slips available

D show and now need a place to dock it for the summer?

The city is accepting applications from Minnetonka residents to fill vacant Gray's Bay Marina boat slips for 2014. Once vacant slips are filled, applicants will be placed on a wait list.

Eligible applicants may either mail or drop off the completed application and \$100 deposit to City of Minnetonka Facilities Division, Minnetonka Community Center, 14600 Minnetonka Boulevard, Minnetonka, MN 55345. Applications will be accepted throughout the year for placement on the waitlist.

Once an applicant is accepted for an available boat slip,

the deposit will be applied to the first-year lease payment.

The application and other conditions outlined in the waitlist guidelines can be found at www.eminnetonka.com (search "Gray's Bay Marina").

Questions? Contact the Facilities Division at (952) 939-8390. ☺



Antiques appraisal show is April 15

T hosts an antiques appraisal Tuesday, April 15, at 7 p.m. at the Minnetonka Community Center, 14600 Minnetonka Blvd., Minnetonka.

Assessments will be conducted verbally with each exhibitor telling the story of their item for the audience.

Registrations will be accepted starting March 1. Space is limited. Visit www.minnetonka-history.org for a registration form. Include your name, phone number, e-mail address, description and/or picture of the item with a check for \$7 per item to Minnetonka Historical Society Antiques Appraisal, c/o Jacque Larson, City of Minnetonka, 14600 Minnetonka Boulevard, Minnetonka, MN 55345.

Limit two items per household. Walk-ins will not be accepted — you must be registered to participate. Appraisers cannot review stamps, sports cards, weapons, coins, dolls or fine jewelry. Please bring only items you can carry safely yourself — transport assistance will not be provided. ☺

Police offer tips to travel safe, travel smart for spring break

W (hopefully) coming to an end and spring break around the corner, many of you may be taking a vacation. Follow these tips to help ensure safe travel and a happy return to your home.

Before your leave

- Put lights on multiple timers. One in the living area during the evening and one in the early morning in a bedroom is a good idea.
- Stop mail and newspaper deliveries. Newspapers piled on your doorstep send the message no one is home and is an invitation to burglary.
- Ask a trusted neighbor or friend to check your home periodically.
- Make arrangements to have snow removed from your driveway.
- Register for the Minnetonka Police Department's vacation house check — it's free. Sign up online at www.eminnetonka.com or call (952) 939-8500.

- If travelling by car, prepare an emergency road kit with water, portable snacks, a flashlight and a first-aid kit.

At your destination

- Be aware of your surroundings. Check for local crime statistics and alerts which are widely available online through local law enforcement agencies.
- Check for the nearest fire exits in your hotel.
- Don't carry large amounts of cash.

Travelling alone?

- Stay connected. Make sure your phone has service at your destination, otherwise rent a phone that will work in your travel area.
- Keep others informed of your itinerary. Let someone know your route and when you plan to return.
- On travel days carry money, credit cards and passport separately. For instance, have money and a credit card in your

wallet or purse with a second credit card and additional cash in a money pouch hidden on your person. When sightseeing, leave your passport in your hotel safe.

- Ensure your lodging is safe. Never answer the door if you are not expecting anyone; call the desk staff to confirm who may be at your door.

Spring break safety

- Book your trip through a company you are familiar with or that someone else has used and referred you to.
- Avoid going out alone at night — there's safety in numbers. You and your friends can watch out for each other.
- Never swim alone.
- When travelling abroad, sign up for the U.S. Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (SMART), which enables the State Department to contact you with travel warnings for your destination. ☺

Sign up for home organics collection

I collection, two refuse haulers offer this service in Minnetonka: Randy's Sanitation and Recycling and Vintage Waste Systems, Inc. While there is an additional fee for weekly organics collection, many homes may offset this additional cost by reducing their garbage collection to the smallest container offered.

Organics collection includes food scraps (fruits and vegetables, meat, fish and bones, bread, pasta and baked goods, egg shells, dairy products and coffee grounds), food-soiled paper products (paper towels and napkins, paper plates and cups, milk and

juice cartons, pizza boxes, egg cartons, packaging from frozen and refrigerated foods, waxed paper and paper containers, coffee filter and tea bags), and other compostable items (full vacuum cleaner bags, dryer lint, tissue and cotton balls, floral trimmings and house plants).

Organics make up about 25 percent of the residential waste stream, and collecting this material for composting keeps it from being incinerated or dumped into landfills. For more information, call Randy's Sanitation and Recycling at (763) 972-3335 or Vintage Waste Systems, Inc. at (952) 472-0401. ☺

County offers business recycling grants

H of up to \$50,000 for businesses to start or improve programs to divert recyclables and organics (food and non-recyclable paper) from the trash.

Most businesses and non-profits in the county are eligible to apply. These grants can help with the purchase of containers, equipment purchase and installation, hauling service charges and minor improvements to loading docks and waste enclosures.

Hennepin County has staff available to answer questions about the grant application, review project ideas, evaluate potential costs and savings, and offer resources to start and improve recycling and organics programs. Applications are accepted three times a year on March 15, June 15 or October 15. For more information and application materials, visit www.hennepin.us/businessrecycling or call (612) 543-1316. ☺

Apply now for a watershed grant

T Minnehaha Creek watershed districts offer financial assistance for efforts that protect and improve water resources and natural resources within their districts.

These grants are only available to those who live in these watershed districts. For grant information visit www.ninemilecreek.org or www.minnehahacreek.org. Find out what watershed district you live in at www.eminnetonka.com (search "know your watershed"). ☺

Just a minute... for our email newsletter!

T newsletter was recently redesigned with a new quick-to-read format that works well on mobile devices. Learn what's new and important each week: subscribe to the *Minnetonka Minute* at eminnetonka.com. ☺

Burwell House volunteers needed

M Burwell House 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.

Tours take place on Saturdays, Tuesdays and Wednesday evenings from June through August; on Saturdays in September; and by special appointment. Tour guides also work with elementary school students each spring as they learn about Minnetonka's history by visiting the Burwell House. The house is air conditioned, and tour guides do not wear costumes. Training is provided.

If you are interested in learning more about becoming a tour guide, please attend one of our spring tour guide open house events: Tuesday, April 22 at 5:30 p.m., or Tuesday, April 29 at 10:30 a.m. Open house are one hour and take place at the Burwell House, 13209 E. McGinty Road. You'll receive a tour of the house and learn what it takes to become a tour guide. Refreshments will be served.

Volunteering at the Burwell House is a great way to get involved in the community and to share this special site with others. For more information, contact Laura Ronbeck at (952) 939-8219 or Ironbeck@eminnetonka.com, or Jacque Larson at (952) 939-8207 or jl Larson@eminnetonka.com. ☺

Tackle buckthorn control in March

A in March and April should range from 34 to 49 degrees, making January's polar vortex a distant memory. Days are growing longer, the sun is higher in the sky and mosquitoes are dormant. March is a great time to get outdoors and remove buckthorn! Learn more at a buckthorn workshop Wednesday, March 12, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. at the Minnetonka Community Center. (see article below).

At the workshop, you'll learn the best buckthorn control techniques to save you time and money. Can't make it to the workshop? See the tips below.

- Before you start, find and mark native plants so they aren't cut along with the buckthorn. Ribbon flagging or spray paint works well.
- Top priorities are to clear buckthorn from around native plants then use tree guards or fencing to protect them from rabbits and deer; and find and remove the female buckthorn with black berries because they produce seeds.

- In snow, cut stumps a foot or higher and use herbicide another day. Tall stumps are a visual reminder that herbicide has not yet been applied. Mark your calendar to re-cut stumps after the snow melts, but before late April. Re-cut to about one inch from the ground and apply herbicide to fresh-cut stumps.
- Glyphosate is a good water-based herbicide that breaks down quickly. It is the active ingredient in several herbicide brands. Apply it to stumps at 10 – 20% concentration.
- Wick (sponge) applicators are a great way to apply herbicide directly to the stump, reducing the risk of exposure to the applicator and the environment.
- Only the outer growth rings of the stump need to be treated with herbicide, but the cut must be fresh.
- Remove non-native honeysuckle, too. It's Minnesota's second most invasive woodland shrub.
- Don't scrape the woods clean. Recycle some of the wood by placing logs on slopes and chipping brush on site. This helps reduce erosion and retain soil moisture. ☺

Mark your calendars for these natural resource spring events

P workshops offered by the city of Minnetonka's natural resources staff. All workshops are held at the Minnetonka Community Center, 14600 Minnetonka Boulevard, Minnetonka.

Get buckthorn on the "March"

March 12, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Join city restoration specialist Janet Van Sloun to learn the right buckthorn control methods to save you time, money and effort. RSVP required. Call (952) 988-8400 or register online at www.eminnetonka.com. For more information, see buckthorn article above.

Landscaping with native plants

March 26, 7 – 8 p.m.

Are there areas of your yard where grass won't grow? A native garden may be the solution. Plant a variety of native plants or just a few, then enjoy your beautiful,

low-maintenance garden. Fred Rozumalski, landscape architect and ecologist, leads this workshop. Fred has worked on projects with native plant community restoration, stormwater harvesting and sustainable landscape design. RSVP required. Call (952) 988-8400 or register online at www.eminnetonka.com.

Tree sale pick-up

April 25 & 26

Did you order a tree through the city's spring tree sale? Be sure to pick up your trees on the following dates:

- Friday, April 25, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.
- Saturday, April 26, 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Pick up trees at Minnetonka Public Works, 11522 Minnetonka Boulevard, Minnetonka (east driveway). Be sure to bring your yellow confirmation postcard with you.

Rain barrel & compost bin pick-up

May 3 & 5

If you ordered a rain barrel or compost bin through the Recycling Association of Minnesota (see page 2), be sure to pick them up on the following dates:

- Saturday, May 3, 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.
- Monday, May 5, 5 – 7 p.m.

If you chose the St. Louis Park location, pick up your barrel or bin at Tree Trust, 2231 Edgewood Avenue South, St. Louis Park. Visit www.recycleminnesota.org for more information. ☺

Special events and programs

Fish Dinner is March 7

Friday, March 7, 5:30 p.m.

Enjoy a social outing with friends and a delicious catered meal of baked cod, baby red potatoes, mixed vegetables and dessert. Entertainment provided by Tim Patrick, Sinatra singer.

Cost: \$7 due Friday, February 28.
Course #32301

Traveling Naturalist: The Fox

Monday, March 10, 1 p.m.

Melanie Shipman presents the facts and stories about fox history.

Cost: \$2 due Thursday, March 6.
Course #32302

Author Presents

Wednesday, March 12, 10:30 a.m.

Joel Arnold will give a presentation on old trails specific to Minnesota, genealogy and his historical novel, *Ox Cart Angel*.

Cost: \$2 due Monday, March 10.
Course #32303

St. Patrick's Day Party

Monday, March 17, 12 p.m.

Enjoy a delicious traditional meal of corned beef, cabbage, Irish soda bread and dessert. Entertainment provided by Maggie McClure, Renaissance Festival street performer.

Cost: \$7 due Monday, March 10.
Course #33058

Dementia: There is Hope

Wednesday, March 19, 12 p.m.

Debbie Bachel of Creative Health Care Management shares the three Golden Rules to improve relationships and interactions with those suffering from memory loss.

Bring photos of you or your loved one's special memories for the "Photo Album" exercise. Sponsored by Homewatch CareGivers. A light lunch will be provided during the program.

Cost: \$6 due Monday, March 17.
Course #33059

Lunch and a Movie:

"The Guilt Trip"

Friday, March 21, 12 p.m.

As inventor Andy Brewster is about to embark on the road trip of a lifetime, a quick stop at his mom's house turns into an unexpected cross-country voyage with her. Thank you to Freedom Pointe for providing dessert.

Menu: Sandwich, chips, fruit and dessert.

Cost: \$5 due Wednesday, March 19.
Course #33060

Community Connections

Monday, March 24, 10:15 a.m.

In partnership with the Lake Minnetonka Senior Care Providers, Minnetonka Senior Services offers Community Connections. March's topic is depression and the winter blues. RSVP by Friday, March 21.

Course #33061

Dinner with Minnetonka

Firefighters

Tuesday, March 25, 5:30 p.m.

Meet new Fire Chief John Vance and other Minnetonka firefighters and tour the facility while savoring a grilled hot dog, chips and beverage. Event will take place at the fire station within the city campus, please park in the city hall parking lot.

RSVP to MSS by Friday, March 21.

Course #33062

Healing Chants and Soothing Lullabies: Afternoon Sing-Along

Thursday, March 27, 12:30 - 2:30 p.m.

Learn simple, healing chants and lullabies from around the world. All songs will be taught by ear, using a traditional call-and-response method. Non-religious focus. No experience necessary.

This event will be led by Betsy Sansby, Director of the One World Community Choir of Minnetonka. Live accompaniment will be provided by Al Dworsky on piano and cajon. Fees go to the Minnetonka Senior Center Scholarship Fund.

Cost: \$2 due Monday, March 24.
Course #33063

Navigating Medicare

Thursday, March 27, 6:30 - 9 p.m.

Thinking of getting ready to retire? Family member or caregiver to someone who has Medicare coverages? Already have Medicare and just want to know more about it?

Topics covered include Medicare Parts A, B and D. The class is an educational opportunity and not a sales pitch; it is offered in cooperation with Senior Community Services (SCS), a non-profit agency. Anyone can attend.

Cost: \$10 due Monday, March 24.
Course #31592

A Day in the Life of a Civil War Soldier

Tuesday, April 1, 10:30 a.m.

This presentation addresses what an average civil war soldier did during the civil war. Learn about uniforms, food rations, daily drill and

duties, how to load and fire a musket and other aspects of camp life including civil war medicine,

punishment, past times. Presenter is Dr Stephen Johnson, a local Civil War re-enactor and civil war enthusiast who volunteers his time to speak at schools and groups.

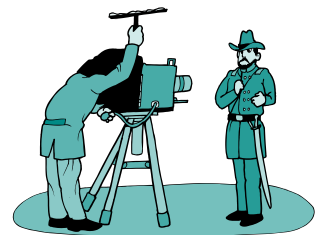
Cost: \$2 due Friday, March 28.
Course #33064

Downsizing: Don't Let Your Treasures become Trash!

Thursday, April 3, 10:30 a.m.

Learn ways to approach the sometimes daunting task of downsizing a lifetime of belongings. Jan Lehman, owner of Can the Clutter®, is a professional specializing in helping individuals downsize.

Cost: \$2 due Tuesday, April 1.
Course #33066



Classes

Beginning & Intermediate Yoga Nancy Holasek

These gentle yoga classes are geared toward the older adult, with lots of stretching and warm-ups. The 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, March 4 – 25, \$20
(Course #31565)
- Thursday, March 6 – 27, \$20
(Course #31567)

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, March 4 – 25, \$20
(Course #31568)
- Thursday, March 6 – 27, \$20
(Course #31570)

Evening Yoga Nancy Holasek

Wednesdays, March 5 – 26, \$20

Evening yoga classes have the same descriptions as the daytime classes.

- Chair Yoga, 6:15 p.m. ★★
(Course #31566)
- Intermediate Yoga, 7:30 p.m. ★★★
(Course #31569)

Beginning Quilting Cathy Goset

Tuesdays, March 11 – April 1,
9:30 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Ever wish you could make a quilt for a favorite new baby or use up some material you have around into a nice warm quilt? Learn the basics by attending this four-week class. You will learn about equipment to make the project easier, how to cut accu-

rately, sew seams together and how to put an individualistic style into each creation. Students are required to bring their own sewing machine and any other materials they have with them to class.

- \$40 (Course #33068)

Quilting Demo Cathy Goset

Wednesday, March 19, 1 – 3 p.m.

Already know the basics and have projects you need to complete? Perhaps all you need to finish a project is some room to spread out, or some hints on finishing your quilt. Join Cathy for this free demo class. Participants are required to bring their own sewing machine and any other materials they have with them to class.

- Free (Course #33069)

British History Terry Kubista

Wednesdays, March 6 – 27, 1 – 3 p.m.

March's class will focus on the Queen Mother, Elizabeth who influences the actions and decisions of the royal family even long after her death. Explore the life and legacy of this fascinating woman.

- \$25 (Course #31582)

Oil Painting Marcella Nordseth

Fridays, March 7 – April 25, 1 – 3:30 p.m.

Learn about composition, how to look at objects and how to mix colors. Bring supplies you have to the first class. For intermediate to advanced level students. Supply list will be provided in class.

- \$56 (Course #31579)

Tai Chi ★★★

Ron Erdman-Luntz

Wednesdays, 6 – 7 p.m., \$48

The slow circular movements of Tai Chi help to improve balance and relaxation. The mind is calm, the body moves in balance, breathing comfortably, you are quietly aware and alert. **Prerequisite:** Able to walk comfortably for an hour. Wear comfortable clothes and athletic shoes.

- March 13 – April 17 (Course #31576)

Save the date...

Summer registration begins Monday, March 3, for Minnetonka residents and Tuesday, March 4 for non-residents. See below for a listing of classes and trips.

Classes

- Yoga (April–July)
- Bridge II
- Line dance
- Mah Jongg
- Tai Chi Chih
- Tai Chi for Health and Wellness
- Outdoor Tai Chi
- Zumba Gold
- Art classes with Gin Weidenfeller
- British & Canadian History

Trips

- Shell Lake, WI Tour
- Spamown Belle Cruise
- Frank Disalvo Concert

Defensive Driving Classes

Please call the MN Highway Safety Center toll free at 1-888-234-1294, Monday – Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. to register, or visit www.mnsafetycenter.org for all defensive driving classes. Four-

hour renewal courses

cost \$20. Eight-

hour courses

cost \$24 and

are offered

two times

per year.

Pay the

instructor

at the time

of the class with

a check or exact cash. Checks payable to MN Highway Safety Center. Save 10% on your car insurance by taking these classes!

Day course (four-hour renewal)

- Tuesday, March 4, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Evening course (four-hour renewal)

- Monday, March 10, 5:30 – 9:30 p.m.
- Thursday, March 27, 5:30 – 9:30 p.m.



Trips

Tapestry Tour★★★

Thursday, April 10

A docent will present the tapestry on display at the Plymouth Congregational Church. Have lunch at Jax Cafe. Tour the Basilica of St. Mary.

Course #32118

- **Cost:** \$58 includes tours, lunch, transportation & escort.
- **Pick-up time:** 9:30 a.m.
- **Estimated return time:** 3:30 p.m.
- **Registration deadline:** Friday, March 21

Extended trips

For a further information and a full list of extended trip offerings and brochures, call Senior Community Services at (952) 541-1019 or visit www.seniorcommunity.org and click on programs and go to senior tours.

New Orleans (April 5 – 13)

Cost: \$1,450 per person, double occupancy.

Washington, DC & New York City (April 7 – 17)

Cost: \$1,850 per person, double occupancy.

Music Cities (April 22 – 29)

Cost: \$1,175 per person, double occupancy.

Message from Nicole Gorman, Script Editor

A Time for Goodbye—I have recently accepted an offer to work for the city of Farmington's recreation department. By the time you read this I will have already left my position with the city of Minnetonka.

I would like to take a moment to thank all of the wonderful people who have made my job so enjoyable for the past seven years. I will be leaving MSS with many good memories and experiences. I sincerely hope you will continue to enjoy this beautiful facility and the wonderful programs being offered here.

All My Best—Nicole

Income Tax Help Available

Complicated and time-consuming tax returns will not be completed at this site. The purpose of this income tax site is for simple, basic returns.

Mondays

Call to see if appointments are still available. Appointment times are 12:30, 1:45 & 3 p.m.

- February 10, 24
- March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31
- April 7, 14

Thursdays

Call to see if appointments are still available. Appointment times are 12:30, 1:45 & 3 p.m.

- February 6, 13, 20, 27
- March 6, 13, 20, 27
- April 3, 10

What to bring...

- Copy of last year's return and all necessary documentation
- Income forms: W2, 1099, brokerage statements, etc.
- If itemizing deductions, a summarized list of deductions with supporting documentation
- Rent credit form or property tax statement for 2013
- Any federal and state forms received in the mail
- Long-term health insurance premiums paid
- Two forms of ID (one picture ID) — driver's license, passport, Social Security card

Terms of service

- Minnesota residents only
- Age over 60 and low or moderate income
- No self-employed income unless expenses are less than \$5,000
- No farm or rental income
- No business partnerships or corporations
- Simple, basic, uncomplicated returns

Special Interest Group Highlight

Minnetonka Bike Club

The goal of the Minnetonka Bike Club is to provide moderate exercise under safe conditions and encourage social interaction and friendship. The club has created groups to accommodate different levels of riding ability. Please visit www.mtkabikers.org for descriptions of trail rides, schedules, biking advice and more.

The kick-off and information meeting will be held Thursday, April 3, 9:30 a.m. at the Minnetonka Community Center. There is an \$11 annual registration fee to belong to the club. For more information or to register call (952) 939-8393. New members are welcome!

The Landing Shop

Browse and buy handmade items crafted by Minnetonka residents 55 and older. Items available for sale include wooden toys, doll clothes and furniture, baby items, clothing, aprons, paintings, cards, books and much more.

The Landing Shop is located at 11280 Wayzata Boulevard, at the northwest corner of I-394 and Hopkins Crossroad/Cty. Rd. 73 in Westridge Market. Shop is open Wednesday-Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., with extended hours on Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Interested in selling your handmade items at the shop? Shop consignors must be at least 55 years old and reside in Minnetonka. Consignors may volunteer at the shop. Questions, call Kathy at (952) 939-8391.

Activity level scale

The following scale is an approximate guide of the activity level and physical ability required for a class or trip.

Activity scale

- ★ — Passive
- ★★ — Moderate
- ★★★ — Active
- ★★★★ — Brisk
- ★★★★★ — Vigorous

Registration

Ways to register

- **Walk-in**
Pay with cash, check or credit card (Visa, Discover & MasterCard)
- **Mail-in**
Send registrations to Minnetonka Senior Services, 14600 Minnetonka Boulevard, Minnetonka, MN 55345. Include your name, address, phone number and the name of the program, class or trip.
- **By phone**
Registrations are accepted at (952) 939-8393, with a credit card.
- **Online**
For more information, call the center at (952) 939-8393.

Cancellation information

- **Class cancellations**
Requires at least two business days prior to the start date of the class. Some classes may be cancelled due to insufficient enrollment.
- **Trip cancellations**
Requires cancelling prior to the registration deadline. If a cancellation is made after the payment deadline, the participant is refunded/credited everything but \$5 (administration fee) only if a replacement is found.

Trip registration

Participant can register up to four spaces on a trip. Trips are subject to change. If change occurs, participants will be notified.

Contact us...

Minnetonka Senior Services

(952) 939-8393

14600 Minnetonka Blvd.

Minnetonka, MN 55345

Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Senior Services & Activities Manager

Steve Pieh

(952) 939-8366

spieh@eminnetonka.com

Secretary

Kathy Kline

(952) 939-8393

kkline@eminnetonka.com

Interest groups

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

Bulls & Bears Investment Club

Monday, March 3 & 17, 1 p.m.

Featured Speaker: Ryan Sherwood

Topic: Overview of Investing

Parkinson's Support Group

Tuesday, March 4, 4 p.m.

Topic: Understanding and managing depression as you age.

Bird Club

Friday, March 7, 10 a.m.

Featured Speaker: Don Luce, Curator

Garden Club

Monday, March 10, 1 p.m.

Featured Speaker: Emily Ball

Book Club

Thursday, March 20, 1 p.m.

Montana 1948 by Larry Watson

Literary Book Club

Tuesday, March 25, 7:15 p.m.

The Man Who Would Be King by Rudyard Kipling

Services

Over 50 & t

Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, 9 a.m.

Annual Fee: \$12 (Course #32119)

Blood Pressure Screenings

1st & 3rd Fridays; 2nd Wednesdays

9:30–11:30 a.m.

Happy Feet

1st, 2nd, 3rd & 4th Fridays, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

To schedule or cancel an appointment, call (763) 560-5136. Cost: \$35.

Weekly E-mail Updates

To receive weekly e-mail updates on center happenings, send your e-mail address to spieh@eminnetonka.com.

Volunteer Opportunities

Please call senior services at (952) 939-8393 for more information or to volunteer.

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

Senior Community Services

Services listed below are provided by Senior Community Services, a local non-profit.

- **CareNextion**
Free, easy-to-use online tool and complimentary phone service for caregivers and their families. For more information visit www.carenexion.org or call (612) 770-7005.
- **Senior outreach**
Available by appointment on the 2nd & 4th Tuesdays of the month. Contact Mary Ann Lundberg at (952) 939-8393 or m.lundberg@seniorcommunity.org
- **Health insurance counseling**
Available by appointment on the 1st & 3rd Mondays of the month.
- **H.O.M.E.**
Household and Outside Maintenance for Elderly (H.O.M.E.) is available for Minnetonka residents 60+. For more information call (952) 939-8363.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<p>3</p> <p>Resident Registration 8:00 Exercise 9:00 Art Drop In 9:00 Tai Chi Chih 10:00/11:30 Zumba Gold 1:00 Rummikub 1:00 B&B Investment Club 1:00 Billiards 2:00</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Non-Resident Registration 8:00 Defensive Driving 9:00 Yoga 9:45 Poker Club 10:00 Craft Committee 10:00 Int. Yoga 11:00 Bingo 12:45 World War I History 1:00 Tale Spinners 1:00 Billiards 1:00 Parkinson's Support 4:00</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Exercise 9:00 Mah Jongg Group 10:00 Canadian History 10:00 Chorale 10:15 A.A./Al-Anon 10:30 Social Bridge 12:45 Dimension of Color 1:00 Zumba Gold 1:00 Billiards 2:00 Yoga 6:15 Int. Yoga 7:30</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Yoga 9:45 Carvers 10:00 Cribbage 10:00 Scribblers 10:00 Int. Yoga 11:00 Chess 12:00 British History 1:00 Int. Line Dance 1:45 Billiards 3:00 Duplicate Bridge 6:00</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Exercise 9:00 Happy Feet 9:00 Blood Pressure 9:30 Bird Club 10:00 Computer 10:00 Billiards 1:00 Oil Painting 1:00 Fish Dinner 5:30</p>
<p>10</p> <p>Exercise 9:00 Art Drop In 9:00 Tai Chi Chih 10:00/11:30 Ham Radio 10:00 Tonka Tale Tellers 10:00 Traveling Naturalist 1:00 Zumba Gold 1:00 Garden Club 1:00 Hand & Foot 1:00 Health Insurance 1:00 Billiards 2:00 Defensive Driving 5:30</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Beginning Quilting 9:30 Yoga 9:45 500 Cards 10:00 Advisory Board 10:00 Int. Yoga 11:00 Bingo 12:45 World War I History 1:00 Tale Spinners 1:00 Billiards 1:00 Senior Outreach 1:00</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Exercise 9:00 Blood Pressure 9:30 Mah Jongg Group 10:00 Chorale 10:15 A.A./Al-Anon 10:30 Author Presents 10:30 Social Bridge 12:45 Dimension of Color 1:00 Zumba Gold 1:00 Billiards 2:00 Yoga 6:15 500 Cards 6:30 Int. Yoga 7:30</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Yoga 9:45 Carvers 10:00 Cribbage 10:00 Scribblers 10:00 Legal Assistance 10:00 Int. Yoga 11:00 Chess 12:00 British History 1:00 Bunco 1:00 Int. Line Dance 1:45 Billiards 3:00 Duplicate Bridge 6:00 Tai Chi w/Ron 6:00</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Exercise 9:00 Happy Feet 9:00 Computer 10:00 Billiards 1:00 Oil Painting 1:00</p>
<p>17</p> <p>Exercise 9:00 Art Drop In 9:00 Tai Chi Chih 10:00/11:30 St. Patrick's Day Party 12:00 B&B Investment Club 1:00 Zumba Gold 1:00 Rummikub 1:00 Billiards 2:00</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Beginning Quilting 9:30 Yoga 9:45 Poker Club 10:00 Int. Yoga 11:00 Bingo 12:45 World War I History 1:00 Tale Spinners 1:00 Billiards 1:00 Single Mingle Club Mtg @ e Depot in Hopkins 1:30</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Exercise 9:00 Mah Jongg Group 10:00 Chorale 10:15 A.A./Al-Anon 10:30 Dementia Program 12:00 Social Bridge 12:45 Zumba Gold 1:00 Quilting Demo 1:00 Billiards 2:00 Yoga 6:15 Int. Yoga 7:30</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Yoga 9:45 Carvers 10:00 Cribbage 10:00 Scribblers 10:00 Int. Yoga 11:00 Chess 12:00 Book Club 1:00 British History 1:00 Billiards 1:00 Duplicate Bridge 6:00 Tai Chi w/Ron 6:00</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Exercise 9:00 Happy Feet 9:00 Blood Pressure 9:30 Computer 10:00 Lunch & Movie 12:00 Billiards 1:00 Oil Painting 1:00</p>
<p>24</p> <p>Exercise 9:00 Art Drop In 9:00 Tai Chi Chih 10:00/11:30 Comm. Connections 10:15 Zumba Gold 1:00 Hand & Foot 1:00 Health Insurance 1:00 Billiards 2:00 Health Insurance 6:00</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Beginning Quilting 9:30 Yoga 9:45 500 Cards 10:00 Int. Yoga 11:00 Bingo 12:45 Tale Spinners 1:00 Billiards 1:00 Senior Outreach 1:00 Dinner w/ Fire ghters 5:30 Literary Book Club 7:15</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Exercise 9:00 Mah Jongg Group 10:00 Chorale 10:15 A.A./Al-Anon 10:30 Social Bridge 12:45 Zumba Gold 1:00 Billiards 2:00 Yoga 6:15 500 Cards 6:30 Int. Yoga 7:30</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Yoga 9:45 Carvers 10:00 Cribbage 10:00 Scribblers 10:00 Legal Assistance 10:00 Int. Yoga 11:00 Chess 12:00 Singing Workshop 12:30 Billiards 1:00 Bunco 1:00 British History 1:00 Defensive Driving 5:30 Duplicate Bridge 6:00 Tai Chi w/Ron 6:00 Navigating Medicare 6:30</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Exercise 9:00 Happy Feet 9:00 Computer 10:00 Billiards 1:00 Oil Painting 1:00</p>
<p>31</p> <p>Exercise 9:00 Art Drop In 9:00 Tai Chi Chih 10:00/11:30 Historic eatre Trip 10:15 Zumba Gold 1:00 Rummikub 1:00 Billiards 2:00</p>				

Group	Meeting day	Information
Advisory Board	2 nd Tuesday at 10 a.m.	
AA/AI-Anon	Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m.	All ages welcome. New members welcome.
Billiards	Every afternoon - time varies	See calendar page for times.
Bingo	Tuesdays at 12:45 p.m.	
Bird Club	1 st Friday of the month at 10 a.m.	March 7–Don Luce, Curator
Book Club	3 rd Thursday of the month at 1 p.m.	March 20–Montana 1948 by Larry Watson
Social Bridge	Wednesdays at 12:45 p.m.	1 st , 2 nd & 3 rd place and grand slam prizes awarded.
Bunco	2 nd & 4 th Thursdays at 1 p.m.	Don't know how to play? They will teach you.
Duplicate Bridge	Thursdays at 6 p.m.	Partners needed.
Card Games	Mondays at 1 p.m.	Rummikub & Hand and Foot, alternating Mondays. See calendar page for game dates.
Chess	Thursdays at 12 p.m.	If you have general knowledge of chess, join us.
Chorale	Wednesdays at 10:15 a.m.	New members welcome.
Computer Interests	Fridays at 10 a.m. Website: mscig.wordpress.com	This group examines topics of interest. Experience ranges from beginner to expert.
Craft Committee	1 st Tuesday at 10 a.m.	
Cribbage	Thursdays at 10 a.m.	Bring your cribbage boards and a deck of cards.
500 Card Club	2 nd & 4 th Tuesday at 10 a.m.	2 nd & 4 th Wednesday at 6:30 p.m.
Mtka Community Garden Club	2 nd Monday at 1 p.m.	March 10–Speaker: Emily Ball. New members welcome!
Literary Book Club (Formerly Great Books)	4 th Tuesday at 7:15 p.m.	March 25– <i>The Man Who Would Be King</i> by Rudyard Kipling
Ham Radio	2 nd Monday at 10 a.m.	New members welcome.
The Landing Shop	Wednesday-Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. with extended hours on Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.	The Landing Shop is located at 11280 Wayzata Blvd. Phone (763) 591-4868. The Landing shop sells handmade items crafted by Minnetonka residents 55+.
Mah Jongg	Wednesdays at 10 a.m.	New members welcome.
Parkinson's Support	1 st Tuesday at 4 p.m.	March 4–Topic: Understanding and managing depression as you age.
Pickleball	Monday-Friday, times vary.	Indoor play available at Williston. For more information call (952) 939-8370.
Poker	1 st & 3 rd Tuesday at 10 a.m.	Join us for a good game of poker.
Scribblers	Thursdays at 10 a.m.	Attention all writers (amateur to professional), if you enjoy writing poems, storytelling, fiction or short stories come join us and share your work with fellow writers. New members welcome!
Single Mingle Club	3 rd Tuesday at 1:30 p.m. at The Depot	Various events scheduled monthly. Stop by the center to pick up a listing of events. New members welcome.
Tonka Tale Tellers	2 nd Monday at 10 a.m.	This group travels to elementary schools within the area to tell and animate stories.
Tale Spinners	Tuesdays at 1 p.m.	This group offers rapport and support for seniors interested in writing memoirs, fiction, etc.
Wood Carvers	Thursdays at 10 a.m.	Group members work independently but also share ideas with one another.

How to hire a quality tree care company

Ma difficult time hiring a tree company during last summer's storms because they didn't know what questions to ask to ensure they were receiving the best advice and tree care. Read more to find some quick tips to help you find the best tree company for your needs.

Finding a company

- The city provides an updated list of licensed tree contractors at www.eminnetonka.com. While the city doesn't license tree companies, opting for a company that has taken the time to submit proof of liability insurance, a list of services, and proof they are on the state-mandated Tree Registry gives them credibility as an established company. Be aware, not every company on the list employs certified arborists.
- Consider establishing a relationship with a tree care company rather than using coupons. In the wake of a storm, companies will provide service to their existing customers first. If you would like to start establishing a relationship with a company, a great time to get pruning estimates and work done is December, January and February.
- Beware of any company going door-to-door offering bargains for tree work, especially if they are pressuring you to get the work done quickly or to pay in advance. Most reputable tree companies are too busy to solicit work in this manner, especially in the summer.

About certified arborists

- Some companies require all of their tree workers to be certified through the International Society of Arborists (ISA), others just use ISA arborists for the initial consultation with the homeowner, with the actual tree work to be completed by someone else who may or may not be certified. Another company may have just one person who is ISA certified on the crew who is directing and perhaps performing some work as well.
- Like other professional certifications, it is important to remember the range of knowledge, skill, and individual professionalism varies widely among certified arborists. In order to take the certification exam, an individual must

have a minimum of three years of full-time experience in arboriculture, or at least a two-year degree in arboriculture and two years of experience, or a four-year degree and one year of experience.

- Many people who are ISA certified are working in diverse fields. For example, many landscape architects are becoming ISA certified because it's an important body of knowledge to manage a project, but they aren't necessarily the person who would show up and prune your tree.

Questions to ask

- Does the company have liability insurance? If they are on the city's list at www.eminnetonka.com, city staff has confirmed the company has liability insurance, and has a copy of company insurance certificate.
- Is the company ISA certified? Will the crew doing the work be ISA certified? Confirm this on the ISA website at www.isa-arbor.com, or by asking for proof of their certificate.
- What type of training/education and how many years of experience do the company crews have?
- What type of equipment do they plan to use? Are they climbing the tree or using a bucket truck? If climbing the tree, will they use ropes or spikes? If they use spikes to prune a healthy tree, move on to another company.
- What are the pruning objectives for tree(s) and shrubs? Raising the canopy for clearance under the tree, formative pruning to improve the structure of the tree, and crown cleaning to remove dead wood and broken/damaged branches are examples of good objectives.
- References from current customers?
- Ask for a written, itemized quote. Two or more opinions and estimates are often worth your time and effort. Estimates are usually free, but always ask when you set up the appointment.

For more information about hiring a tree company, visit www.eminnetonka.com or call city forester Emily Ball at (952) 988-8421. ☞

Protect tree roots

Absorbing the water and nutrients needed for the rest of the tree to survive. Severing the root system is similar to cutting off a branch. Cut or damage enough branches and you can weaken or eventually kill the tree by cutting off its ability to generate adequate food from sunlight. Cutting off the root system can have similar effects, but there are other, less obvious, ways to damage a root system.

Soil compaction and filling (raising the existing soil level) are two common ways that trees are affected during construction and landscaping projects. Repeated passes by equipment as well as large stockpiles can cause compaction by pressing out the small pore spaces in the soil that hold air and moisture. Raising the soil level over the root system (burying it deeper than it is currently) can cause compaction but it also can essentially suffocate the roots by preventing the absorption of air into the existing soil layer.

Estimate the "critical root zone" (CRZ) of a tree — the portion of the root system most critical to survival — by measuring 1.5 feet from the trunk of the tree for each inch of trunk diameter. For example, a tree with a trunk measuring 10 inches across would have a CRZ extending 15 feet from the trunk in all directions.

When hiring a contractor, work out a plan for equipment access. Be clear about where soils will be stockpiled and locations where the soil level will be changed. Look for ways to modify plans when possible to minimize impacts to the trees you want to save. Install orange construction limit fencing to keep equipment, stockpiling, and other activities out of the areas you want to protect. You also can consult with a private arborist regarding protection and possible treatment options once a tree has been impacted.

If your tree has been affected by construction or landscaping activities, providing proper watering and a layer of wood mulch are often the best and easiest ways to help the tree recover, but with trees, prevention is worth well more than a pound of cure. ☞

2014 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 2014, homeowners with 2013 household incomes up to \$105,500 are eligible for a refund, and the maximum refund is \$2,580. Some renters with 2013 household incomes up to \$57,170 are also eligible for a refund. The maximum refund that may be available to a renter is \$2,000, and the amount provided also depends upon the total rent paid in 2013. 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, 2015.

Special property tax refund program

A second state program is the **special property tax refund program** for homeowners whose property taxes payable in 2014 have increased by more than 12 percent and are at least \$100 over their 2013 taxes. The increase must not be attributable to new improvements, and homeowners must have owned and lived in their home on both January 2, 2013, and January 2, 2014. 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, 2015.

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 2015 and is explained on the facing page. The other is the **property tax bill** for 2014, which is mailed by Hennepin County and must be paid this year.

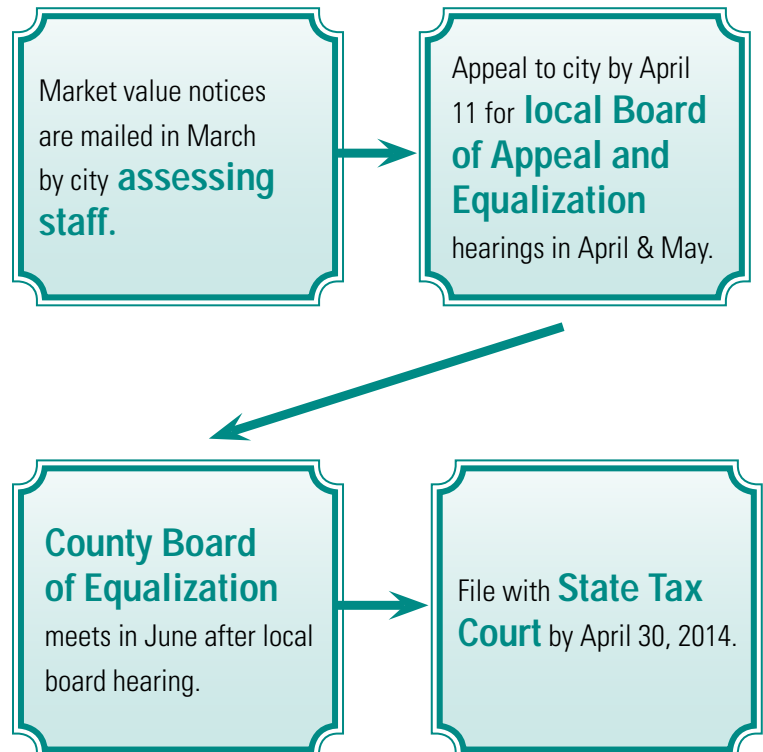
City Tax Bill

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.

2014 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



2014 Market Value Notice

(Your market value notice applies to property taxes payable in 2015.)

Minnetonka's home value decline slows

As with many locations in the metro area, Minnetonka's real estate has experienced an increase in market values this year for the first time since 2008. Following an overall decline last year of approximately 1.2 percent, the values of Minnetonka single-family homes increased by 5.9 percent on average this year. Both the condo and townhome market depend upon each individual housing complex. Changes in commercial property values will be different than residential properties. 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 some may still experience decreases.

Market values based on 2013 data

Property tax assessment in Minnesota is a complicated process strictly governed by state law. Although the city of Minnetonka administers the assessment, the city's work is overseen by Hennepin County and the State Department of Revenue. The state-mandated schedule requires that the values on your property, as reflected in the market value notice that you will receive in the mail this month, are based upon an analysis of real estate market trends during 2013. Changes this year will be reflected in the 2015 notices.

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. Approximately one-fifth of the 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 taxable 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 April 11 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 2014 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 2013.

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.

minnetonka memo

March 2014

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CITY OF MINNETONKA

A publication of the city of Minnetonka
14600 Minnetonka Boulevard, Minnetonka, MN 55345 • (952) 939-8200
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday – Friday

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

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bwiersum@eminnetonka.com

Ward 4: Tim Bergstedt . . . (952) 934-1769
tbergstedt@eminnetonka.com

ECRWSS
POSTAL PATRON

Calendar

City of
Minnetonka

March
2014

Call (952) 939-8200
for meeting
locations.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S	Call (952) 939-8200 for meeting locations.
						1	3 City Council, 6:30 p.m.
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	5 Park Board, 7 p.m.
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	11 Senior Advisory Board, 10 a.m.
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	13 Economic Development Advisory Commission, 6 p.m.
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	17 Joint study session of City Council, Planning and Economic Development Advisory commissions, 6:30 p.m. (Topic: Light rail transit & transit-oriented development); City Council study session, 7:30 p.m. (Topic: boards & commissions interviews)
30	31						20 Planning Commission, 6:30 p.m.
							24 City Council, 6:30 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.

Minnetonka City Council and Planning Commission meetings are broadcast live on cable channel 16, and replays are available Mondays and Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.; Fridays and Saturdays at noon, or anytime via videostream 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.

Apply now for city summer jobs

Looking for a job with the city? Visit www.eminnetonka.com to see full- and part-time summer job opportunities. Many positions involve working evenings, weekends and holidays.

To see jobs and to apply online, visit www.eminnetonka.com. On the left side, under "About Minnetonka," click on "Employment" then "Current Job Openings." Only online applications are accepted. ☺

Home repair, homebuyer loans available

Looking for repairs or improvements to your home, or are a first-time homebuyer who needs money for a down payment or closing costs, the city has a program for you!

The Minnetonka Home Enhancement program offers up to \$15,000 for home repair, green improvements and some additions. Welcome to Minnetonka

program offers up to \$10,000 for down payment and closing costs for first-time home buyers. Both loans are offered at only one percent interest. Pre-applications are now being accepted.

Pre-applications, program guidelines and an eligibility calculator are available at www.eminnetonka.com or by calling (952) 939-8285. ☺