



minnetonka memo

*A Newsletter from the City of Minnetonka
February 2008*

Visit Minnetonka Kids' Fest Sunday, February 10

FAMILIES, YOU'RE INVITED TO KIDS' FEST SUNDAY, FEB. 10, FROM 1 to 5 p.m. at the Minnetonka Civic Center campus, 14600 Minnetonka Blvd., Minnetonka.

All activities are free and include dog sled rides, dance instruction, face painting, ice carving demonstrations, outdoor nature walks, open swimming and ice skating, and more!

Please bring canned goods to help area families in need—collections will be received at the Minnetonka Community Center. Proceeds from concession sales will be donated to the Richard Wilson Recreation Services Scholarship Fund.

For ease of parking, a free shuttle will run every 15 minutes among the three facilities at which activities take place: the Minnetonka Community Center, the Ice Arena, and the Williston Center, located at 14509 Williston Drive. Visitors may park at any one of these facilities for the afternoon.

For more information, visit www.eminnetonka.com or call (952) 939-8203. ☺

Tell us about your heritage!

AT THIS YEAR'S KIDS' FEST, THE MINNETONKA COMMUNITY Commission invites kids and parents to the Shady Oak Room to tell their family's story; draw a leaf to add to the "heritage tree;" and browse a display of children's books about diversity, hosted by Hennepin County Library.

Your chance to be a star!

Children of all ages are invited to think about the following questions, then tell their story on videotape during Kids' Fest:

- What are traditions?
- What is diversity?
- What do you think culture is?
- Tell about a tradition in your family that has been handed down through generations.

Once compiled, the videotape will be edited and shown on cable channel 16 and the city's Web site as part of the Minnetonka Community Commission's effort to showcase the range of diversity and heritage in Minnetonka. The first 100 children to tell their story on tape will receive a free copy of "Ruby Lu: Empress of Everything" to take home and read. Then, return in April for a parent-child book discussion, hosted by the Minnetonka Community Commission and Hennepin County Library.

Add your leaf to the diversity tree

Also in the Shady Oak Room, draw a leaf using your hand as an outline, then draw pictures or write words that reflect your family's heritage. Then, cut out your leaf and add it to the "heritage tree," which will be displayed just inside the Minnetonka Community Center entrance. Find out how many different leaves it takes to make up a strong, community tree! ☺



Kids' Fest Schedule of Events

All events are at the Minnetonka Community Center unless otherwise indicated. Activities and performances are subject to change without notice.

- 1–2:15 p.m.** Dog sled rides (first come, first served)
- 1–2 p.m.** Amazing Nathan (strolling magician)
Batting cage (grades 4 and up) —
Williston Fitness Center
- 1–4 p.m.** Shady Oak Beach season pass sales
Early childhood sensory activities (Hopkins ECFE)
- 1–4:30 p.m.** Concession sales; bonfire and s'mores
- 1–5 p.m.** Facepainting
Ice carving
Dance Instruction
Hennepin County Library display
Heritage activity (see article at left)
- 1:15–1:45 p.m.** Johneyo Yo-Yo performance
- 2–2:45 p.m.** Amazing Nathan (magic show)
- 2–4 p.m.** Open swimming —
Williston Fitness Center
- 2–5 p.m.** Old-fashioned valentine crafts
- 2:30–3 p.m.** Q & A with the Dog Sled Musher
- 2:30–4:30 p.m.** Ice skating/skate rental —
Minnetonka Ice Arena
- 2:45–3:15 p.m.** Mime performance
- 3–4 p.m.** Amazing Nathan (strolling magician)
- 3:15–5 p.m.** Dog sled rides (first come, first served)
- 3:15–4 p.m.** Bill the Juggler
- 4:15–5 p.m.** Bingo — win great prizes
- TBD** Two outdoor nature walks led by city natural resources staff

Concerts are Feb. 24, March 2

THE MINNETONKA SYMPHONY Orchestra presents its 26th Annual Young People's Concert featuring MAM's Young Artist Competition Winner, Adam Birdsall. Concert dates are Sunday, Feb. 24, at 3:30 p.m. at the Arts Center on 7, 18285 Hwy. 7, Minnetonka; and Sunday, March 2, at 3:30 p.m. at Mount Calvary Lutheran Church, 301 County Road 19, Excelsior. For more information call (952) 401-5954 or visit www.musicassociation.org

Don't forget the photo contest!

KEEP YOUR DIGITAL CAMERAS HANDY throughout the seasons and continue to take photos with the city's fall photo contest in mind! Even if you don't win the contest, the city uses all of the submitted photos on the Web site and in other places, and photos of winter scenes are always in short supply. If you have a photo you can't wait to share, email it to jlanson@eminnetonka.com or mdrummond@eminnetonka.com and we'll consider it for use on the home page of the city's Web site at www.eminnetonka.com. Happy snapping!

Creek corridor open house is Feb. 21

IN THE FALL OF 2007, THE MINNETONKA City Council and Park Board, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board, Three Rivers Park District Board, and Hennepin County's area commissioner met to discuss a partnership to implement a shared vision for the Upper Minnehaha Creek Corridor. The agencies agreed to appoint a policy steering committee, consisting of representatives from the four partners, to provide guidance during the planning and implementation process.

The concept plans being developed for the Upper Minnehaha Creek Corridor included the following:

- Natural preserve
- Recreational and educational waterway
- Network of walking and biking trails
- Scenic parkway through the historic Minnetonka Mills District

Visit the home remodeling fair Feb. 24

MINNETONKA RESIDENTS are invited to attend the 16th annual Home Remodeling Fair Sunday, February 24, from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Eisenhower Community Center, 1001 Highway 7, Hopkins.

Sponsored by the cities of Minnetonka, Golden Valley, Hopkins and St. Louis Park, as well as Hopkins, St. Louis Park and Minnetonka Community Education, the Home Remodeling Fair is designed to promote improvements to these communities' housing stock.

Fairgoers can visit more than 75 displays by remodeling contractors, architects, electricians, landscapers, tool rental services, roofers, siding and window contractors, and lenders. Minnetonka planning department staff and city inspectors will also be at the fair.

Architects and landscape designers will staff the "Ask the Pro" booth and provide free, no-obligation advice to visitors. Fairgoers are encouraged to bring their photos or sketches.

Seminar topics include kitchen and bathroom remodeling trends; decks and porches; window replacement and retrofitting options; finishing a lower level;



landscaping; "green" remodeling products and others. Do-it-yourselfers can attend seminars on home color coordination, ceramic tiling and laminate flooring installation, and more.

Advance registration is not required and admission is free. Food concessions will be available at the Wetlands Café.

Fairgoers may park at Eisenhower Community Center or take the free shuttle bus from the Oak Ridge Country Club parking lot, 700 Oak Ridge Road.

Directions to Oak Ridge Country Club: From Eisenhower Community Center/Hwy 7, go east on Hwy. 7 to Oak Ridge Road/5th Avenue, then turn left on Oak Ridge Road. The parking lot is one block north of Hwy. 7 on the west side of Oak Ridge Road. Look for signs.

For more information, visit www.eminnetonka.com or www.homeremodelingfair.com, or call (952) 939-8200.

Attend a comp plan open house Feb. 20

ACITIZEN STEERING COMMITTEE AND city staff are continuing work on the comprehensive guide plan, a document that will set the stage for future development of the city through 2030.

Currently, the steering committee is tackling the question of what possible changes might happen along Highway 7 and along the I-394 corridor in Minnetonka.

The steering committee would like to hear what you think about this topic! Please attend an open house Wednesday, Feb. 20, anytime between 5:30 and 8 p.m. at the Minnetonka Community Center, 14600 Minnetonka Boulevard.

For more information about the comprehensive guide plan process, please visit www.eminnetonka.com.



UPPER MINNEHAHA CREEK CORRIDOR

To learn more about the initial ideas and to provide your feedback, please plan to attend an open house Thursday, February 21, from 5:30–7:30 p.m., with a brief presentation at 6 p.m., at the Minnetonka Community Center, 14600 Minnetonka Boulevard, Minnetonka. For more information about the Upper Minnehaha Creek Corridor, visit www.eminnetonka.com or see the December 2007 edition of the *Minnetonka Memo*.

Planning a building project? Go green!

IF YOU'RE PLANNING A HOME BUILDING or remodeling project this winter, consider using "green" building techniques! Building green involves using environmentally sound and natural resource friendly techniques during construction to help make houses more comfortable and efficient, as well as healthier places to live.

Remember, a major renovation isn't required to make your existing home greener. Many of the ideas below can be incorporated into an existing home with minimal effort or cost. Be certain you or your contractor contact the city before you begin any new construction projects to obtain the necessary permits and comply with city codes.

Planning ahead

- Think carefully and creatively about the actual space you need. You may be able to find additional room by relocating existing walls, reorganizing your furniture, placing items in storage, or finishing your existing basement. Remember that smaller, intimate spaces require fewer resources to build and maintain.
- Design your construction project to minimize wasted materials. Reconfiguring your design may result in substantial cost and material savings.
- Seek out designers and contractors who use green building methods and materials — visit the Feb. 24 home remodeling fair in Hopkins (see page 2) to find out more about these designers and contractors.
- For inspiration, visit Web sites and local stores specializing in green building.
- Look for ways to reuse existing materials.

Selecting materials

- Deconstruct rather than demolish. Deconstruction services will remove and will accept reusable materials such as windows, doors, cabinets, etc.
- Shop for used building materials. You can often find unique sinks, bathtubs, wood flooring, and light fixtures. Some items can be refurbished for much less than the cost of new materials and offer greater variety.
- Choose materials that are recycled, recyclable, renewable, reusable, and long-lasting whenever possible, including natural linoleum, bamboo, cork, glass, steel, and natural fibers such as cotton

and wool. Countertops made from recycled paper or colored glass are an attractive alternative to quarried stone.

- Purchase lumber harvested from sustainable forests. It should have a certification label from the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).
- Select products manufactured without toxic materials and that produce low or no fumes. You can purchase insulation made from recycled paper or cotton as well as paints and adhesives that emit little or no volatile organic compounds (VOCs).

View photos and read about an extensive private green remodeling project in Minnetonka at www.livegreenlivesmart.org. For more green building links, visit www.eminnetonka.com.

Saving energy

- Buy locally produced and available materials — transporting materials consumes energy.
- Use energy-efficient materials wherever existing materials cannot be reused. Larger initial costs are often paid for by long-term savings.
- Incorporate natural lighting though the use of clerestory windows, skylights, and solar tubes. Use compact florescent or LED bulbs where artificial light is needed.
- Consider alternative energy sources such as geothermal, solar, or wind. Power companies often allow customers to purchase electricity generated by alternative energy sources such as wind.
- Add energy-saving devices to your heating and cooling systems. Heat exchangers, programmable thermostats, zone controls, and other devices can often be added to existing systems with few modifications.
- Plant trees and shrubs to help shade your house in the summer and protect it from winds in the winter.
- Buy or replace older appliances with Energy Star® rated models. Tankless (on-demand) water heaters can save both energy and water.

Conserve water

- Choose appliances and fixtures that conserve water. Dual-flush toilets save water by allowing selection of two different flush volumes. Gray water systems are used to filter wash water from sinks and showers to be reused for toilets or irrigation.
- Install rain barrels or cisterns to capture water for irrigation. Constructing a rain garden or replacing existing pavement with pervious pavers will help absorb runoff and recharge groundwater.
- Consider planting a green roof. Green roofs can add interest to an ordinary roofline, last longer than standard roofing materials, improve insulation, and absorb rainwater. Consult an expert to see if a green roof would be compatible with your shed, garage, porch, or entire home.
- Plant native vegetation in your yard. Native trees, shrubs, wildflowers, and grasses require less maintenance and generally no irrigation once established. They also provide greater aesthetic interest and can attract desirable wildlife such as birds, butterflies, turtles, and frogs. ♪

Visit Minnetonka's Eco Fair March 8

BY NOW MOST RESIDENTS ARE aware of buckthorn, but what do you know about Minnetonka's other nasty invasive plants? Would you like to learn more about native plants for your yard, proper tree care, environmentally friendly solutions for the home, or identify the insect or disease attacking your trees or shrubs?

If so, then plan to attend Eco Fair Saturday, March 8, from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Minnetonka Community Center, 14600 Minnetonka Blvd., Minnetonka. A variety of workshops will be offered on these and other natural resource topics.

The event will also include seminars and displays by city departments and outside vendors. For more information and a full schedule see the March *Minnetonka Memo*. ♪

Personal safety for children

CHILDREN ARE OUR NATION'S MOST PRECIOUS RESOURCE, BUT as children, they often lack the skills to protect themselves. Every parent should teach their children about safety and protection measures.

How should I discuss personal safety with my child?

- Listen to your children. Know your children's daily activities and habits. Listen to what they like and what they don't like. Encourage open communication. Let your children know they can talk to you about any situation. Reassure your children that their safety is your #1 concern.
- Teach your children. Set boundaries about places they may go, people they may see, and things they may do. Reinforce the importance of the "buddy system." Let children know it's OK to say no — tell your children to trust their instincts.
- Get involved. Know where your children are at all times. Your children should check in with you if there is a change in plans. There is no substitute for your attention and supervision.
- Practice safety skills with your child. Rehearse safety skills so that they become second nature.

Home safety tips

- Children should know their full name, home phone number and how to use the telephone. Post your contact information where your children will see it: office phone number, cell phone, pager, etc. Children should have a trusted adult to call if they're scared or have an emergency.
- Choose babysitters with care. Obtain references from family, friends, and neighbors. Once you have chosen the caregiver, drop in unexpectedly to see how your children are doing. Ask your children how the experience with the caregiver was, and listen carefully to their responses.

Neighborhood safety tips

- Make a list with your children of their neighborhood boundaries, choosing significant landmarks. Interact regularly with your neighbors. Tell your children whose homes they are allowed to visit.
- Don't drop your children off alone at malls, movie theatres, video arcades, or parks.
- Teach your children that adults should not approach children for help or directions. Tell your children that if they are approached by an adult, they should stay alert.
- Never leave children unattended in an automobile. Children should never hitchhike or approach a car when they don't know and trust the driver.
- Children should never go anywhere with anyone without getting your permission first.

School safety tips

- Be careful when you put your child's name on clothing, backpacks, lunch boxes or bicycle license plates. If a child's name is visible, it may put them on a first-name basis with an abductor.
- Walk the route to and from school with your children, pointing out landmarks and safe places to go if they're being followed or need help. Make a map with your children showing acceptable routes to school, using main roads and avoiding shortcuts or isolated areas. If your children take a bus, visit the bus stop with them and make sure they know which bus to take.

For more information on child safety visit the Web site for the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, www.missingkids.com ∞

Second annual

BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND AFTER ITS VERY SUCCESSFUL inaugural year, the city of Minnetonka tree sale will help you celebrate spring and Arbor Day. In order to keep our community green and to encourage replanting of trees lost to disease, the city is pleased to offer residents a selection of ten species at below-cost prices.

Each year, the species composition offered will differ in order to encourage residents to plant a wide variety of trees. If you planted a maple last year, consider planting a hackberry this year — it provides food for birds, has a lovely vase-shaped canopy, and its yellow fall color contrasts nicely with a showy maple.

Planting a diversity of tree species makes your yard and the city's community forest more resilient. Most forest pests are very selective, with insects and diseases tending to thrive on specific tree species, so tree diversity allows a community to recover from a forest health setback and help avoid future, wide-spread damage to tree cover.

Visit www.eminnetonka.com for more information about tree species, and to choose the right tree for your yard. For those without Internet access, a tree information packet will be available at Minnetonka City Hall, 14600 Minnetonka Blvd., and Minnetonka Public Works, 11522 Minnetonka Blvd. Order forms may be mailed in or dropped off at Minnetonka Public Works Monday-Friday, between 7 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.

Please follow these steps when ordering:

- Quantities are limited, and based on availability. Order early to help ensure you will get your first choice.
- Rank your alternate tree choices in the event your top choices are sold out at the time we receive your order.
- Orders must be postmarked by Monday, March 17, 2008. Orders received thereafter will be filled if trees remain, but will be returned to sender if trees are sold out.
- **You may order up to two trees per property.**
- Along with the tree order form, please fill out your name and address on the postcard stapled into this edition of the *Minnetonka Memo*. Enclose the postcard in an envelope with your order form and check. This will ensure you receive a confirmation reminder two weeks prior to the tree pick-up.
- If you represent a homeowner's association or have questions, please contact Emily Barbeau, city forester, at ebarbeau@eminnetonka.com or (952) 988-8400 prior to placing your order.
- This offer is only open to Minnetonka residents.

Tree pick-up instructions:

- **Location:** 11522 Minnetonka Boulevard, Minnetonka Public Works
- Two pick-up dates: Friday, May 2, between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. and Saturday, May 3, between 8 a.m. and 12 p.m.
- We will offer some assistance loading vehicles, but please order a tree that you can realistically transport home.
- We will provide written planting and care instructions for each order.
- Unlike a retail nursery, these trees do not have a warranty. ∞

tree sale: order by March 17

Tree Order Form

This offer available only to **Minnetonka residents.**

Name: _____
First Last

Address: _____
House number Street Zip code

Daytime phone number: (____) _____ **Last name on check:** _____

Check # _____ **Amount enclosed:** _____

Rank preference	Species	Stock type	Height	Weight	Price	Quantity	Subtotal
* Rank alternatives — 1, 2, and 3 — in case first selection is sold out			* Height at time of purchase				
Large Shade Trees							
	Sugar Maple	Container	6–8 ft.	55 lbs.	\$30		
	Swamp White Oak	Container	3–5 ft.	30 lbs.	\$30		
	Red Oak 'Sienna Glen'	Container	5–7 ft.	55 lbs.	\$30		
	River Birch 'Heritage' (clump)	Container	3–4 ft.	30 lbs.	\$30		
	Hackberry	Container	5–7 ft.	55 lbs.	\$30		
	American Basswood	Container	3–5 ft.	30 lbs.	\$30		
Ornamental trees— suitable for planting under powerlines							
	Redbud (Minnesota strain)	Container	3–4 ft.	30 lbs.	\$30		
	Japanese Tree Lilac (clump)	Container	4–6 ft.	55 lbs.	\$30		
Large shrubs/small trees — suitable for habitat restoration							
	Serviceberry 'Autumn Brilliance' (clump)	Container	4–5 ft.	40 lbs.	\$30		
	Nannyberry	Container	4–5 ft.	40 lbs.	\$30		
Supplies							
	Plastic Tree Guard (will protect trunk from deer, rodent and lawn mower damage)	3–5 ft tall with a 2–3" diameter			\$3		
Totals							
Help us plan: If offered, would you attend a free tree planting/care workshop held on an April evening? (please circle)						Yes	No

Please mail (or drop off) order form, check, and postcard to:

Minnetonka Public Works
 Attn: City Forester
 11522 Minnetonka Blvd.
 Minnetonka, MN 55305

Before you mail the order, please confirm:

- Filled out order form completely?
- Enclosed check for exact amount?
- Filled out and enclosed postcard for city to mail your confirmation?

TRAFFIC CORNER

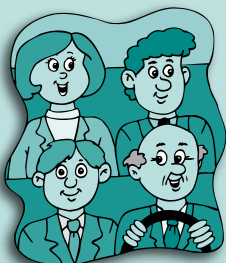
Understanding HOV lanes

THE HIGH OCCUPANCY vehicle lanes along I-394 from Wayzata to downtown Minneapolis were originally designed to improve the operating efficiency of Minnesota's roadways by reserving a lane strictly for carpoolers and buses containing more than one occupant.

To increase the lane use and improve traffic efficiency, legislation was passed in 2003 allowing single-occupant vehicles to use this lane by paying a user fee. With this new legislation came the creation of MnPass, a project that is not only the first of its kind in Minnesota, but a new and significant change in highway management. MnPass is an electronic toll collection system that allows drivers to lease a small electronic transponder that attaches to the vehicle windshield behind the rearview mirror. The toll is then automatically deducted from the user's pre-paid MnPass account by toll recording equipment located on the roadways.

Fees may vary in amount by the time of day and the level of traffic congestion. Carpoolers and buses still have free access and priority use of the lanes, but drivers of single-occupant vehicles may now choose to use these lanes on an as-needed basis by paying a fee. The MnPass system was designed to improve operating efficiency in the I-394 corridor and effectively manage the express lanes using the latest technology.

For more information and the latest updates, visit www.mnpass.net.



Visit these February senior center events

IF YOU'RE A MINNETONKA RESIDENT who's 55 or older, don't miss out on the fun and friendship at Minnetonka Senior Services! Located at the Minnetonka Community Center, 14600 Minnetonka Blvd., Minnetonka, Senior Services offers a wide variety of classes, programs, and activities for active older adults. For more information, or to sign up for the free monthly newsletter, the *Minnetonka Script*, visit www.eminnetonka.com.

Call (952) 939-8393 to register for events and classes, for more information, or to learn about volunteer opportunities. All class registration and payments should be directed to Minnetonka Senior Services. VISA or MasterCard are now accepted. Payment must be submitted at the time of registration for classes, trips or programs.

Defensive Driving Classes

Call the Minnesota Highway Safety Center at 1-888-234-1294 to register.

Four-Hour Day Course

Tuesday, Feb. 19, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Refreshments provided but no lunch.

New Special Interest Groups

The following new special interest groups will start in February:

- Join a Men's Discussion group Mondays, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. Topics will be of a non-political, non-religious nature. Refreshments provided.
- Digital camera one-on-one help will be provided Tuesdays from 9 to 11 a.m. in half-hour segments by Glen Keener. Call (952) 939-8393 for an appointment. Bring your camera to your appointment.
- The senior center is trying to start up four new special interest groups in 2008: garden club, bowling group, recipe club and card club. If any of these groups interest you please call (952) 939-8393.

Special Events

Call (952) 939-8393 to register.

Valentine's Day Party

Thursday, Feb. 14, 12 p.m.
Join the annual Valentine's Day party and enjoy entertainment provided by Jim Berner. Lunch includes baked lasagna, garlic bread, Italian dressed tossed salad and mixed vegetables. Cost is \$8, register by Feb. 6.

Winter Hike to Jidana Park and Cookout

Thursday, Feb. 21, 10:30 a.m.

Enjoy a two-mile round-trip hike from the Minnetonka Community Center to Jidana Park. Walk along Minnehaha Creek and Deer Island, then enjoy roasting hot dogs over a campfire. Bring your snowshoes if snow depth is adequate — winter boots also should work. Cost is \$4, register by Feb. 18.

Rethink Recycling: Water Resources

Tuesday, Feb. 26, 10:30 a.m.
Join Jim Malone and Jo Coleran of Minnetonka Public Works as they explain water production for the city of Minnetonka; the infiltration and inflow initiative; and ways to promote natural water resources. Lunch included. Cost is \$2, register by Feb. 22.

Income Tax Help

Income tax appointments will be available starting in February. Call (952) 939-8393 for an appointment.

Pruning trees? Drop off brush in March

THE IDEAL TIME TO PRUNE OAKS IS between November and March, since pruning outside this time makes oak trees extremely susceptible to oak wilt disease. This is also a great time to prune other trees, since insects and diseases are not active.

To assist residents who conduct proper winter pruning, the brush drop-off site at Minnetonka Public Works, 11522 Minnetonka Boulevard, will be open every Saturday in March from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Dates are March 1, 3, 15, 22, and 29. The site will not be open any weekdays in March — only Saturdays. The regular brush drop-off program, which includes weekday hours, will begin April 12.

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

The following are not accepted at the brush drop-off: trash, grass, leaves, dirt, sod, lumber, fencing, or wood scraps.

In addition, no brush or trimmings will be accepted from commercial tree or lawn services.

For more information call Dean Elstad, city of Minnetonka recycling coordinator, at (952) 988-8430.

Habitat restoration expands in Purgatory Park

ONCE AGAIN, PURGATORY PARK IS abuzz with chainsaws and wood chipper activity. Restoration began at Purgatory Park in a brome grass meadow in 1998; the meadow is now a prairie. The first large buckthorn clearing took place in late 2001, with the second big invasive species cut starting in December 2007 with plans to continue through much of the winter.

New areas under chainsaw attack are all over the park. Various sizes of buckthorn are being removed along the main trails, into adjacent woods and prairie. Non-native honeysuckle is being removed, too. The largest concentration of this second-most-invasive woody species is in a brushland area northwest of the central wetland. Remember, even though honeysuckle is available at nurseries, most varieties are invasive. Please don't plant non-native honeysuckle near Minnetonka's natural areas!

Oak ridge

In 2001, the first big buckthorn cut in Purgatory Park took place on the oak ridge, located in the south half of the park and stretching from the east park boundary on Stodola Road to the west boundary at 58th Street West. The ridge feature large old oaks, ironwood, black cherry, hackberry, and more. Since the first cut, many people have commented that the buckthorn has come back worse than ever. This second generation of buckthorn that has grown over the past few years germinated from the extensive seed bank in the soil. Mature buckthorn trees have been dropping black fruits with seed for decades; so when stands are cut, new seedling growth can be tremendous. The dense brush that has re-grown on Purgatory's oak ridge holds four- to six-year-old saplings and some stump re-sprouts. They seem formidable, but are under control.

Control vs. eradication

Invasive species are controlled by preventing their spread by seed or other means. Young re-growth of buckthorn is not producing seed, so it is temporarily under control — in fact, new seedling germination is using up the seed bank. Literature says buckthorn seed is viable for about six years. By keeping the larger plants under control, the seed bank will eventually be reduced. Eradication means killing all target plants. Eradication of buckthorn in Minnetonka is not possible, but control is possible.



Above, a Prairie Restorations crew chips buckthorn at Purgatory Park.

Control techniques

Prairie Restorations, Inc. is doing the current work in Purgatory Park, using three techniques that vary depending on the habitat features that need protection or improvement. Each technique has its advantages. For example, many of the female buckthorn branches with black fruit are dragged to burn piles where viable seed is destroyed. Buckthorn without berries is being chipped on site and blown uniformly into the woods. Wood chips along the trails are aesthetically pleasing, conserve soil moisture, and break down more quickly than other materials. Further from the trails, the cut-slash method is used, where brush is cut into smaller pieces and dropped low to the ground. Brush with soil contact decomposes faster than brush in piles. It also helps reduce soil erosion on slopes and provides habitat for amphibians, reptiles and small mammals.

Restoring remnant native plants

Areas with remnant native trees and shrubs have been marked with yellow or white ribbon-flagging. Work crews have been instructed to avoid these areas. The goal is to hand remove all invasive species that are intermingled with the natives. While this is a tall order that may take years to achieve, some of this work has begun with small groups of volunteers under the direction of natural resources staff. Most volunteers

enjoy restoration work, because we are identifying native plants up close and can immediately see the results of our efforts.

The bird thicket

South of the main parking lot and main trail is a special area being restored to a songbird thicket. City staff started to control poison ivy here in early fall 2007. Volunteers flagged native nannyberry, choke cherry, black cherry, gray dogwood and prickly ash being squeezed out by non-native buckthorn. Each of these native species create wonderful songbird habitat, provide flowers for pollinators, and fruit for birds and wildlife. Prairie Restorations cut the woody invasives and treated stumps in December 2007. Wood chips were blown back into the natural area for mulch. A good start has been made to restore the bird thicket, with the hard work completed. Future tasks include spreading the woodchips thinly so wildflowers and sedges can push through; hand-pulling young buckthorn, garlic mustard and weeds; and cutting stump re-sprouts. Thank you to the volunteers who have helped us reach this point.

To assist with these or other park restoration projects, call the city of Minnetonka natural resources division at (952) 988-8400. Guided spring plant walks will be held in three parks in 2008 — visit www.eminnetonka.com in April for more information. ♻️

Calendar

City of Minnetonka

February 2008

Call (952) 939-8200 for meeting locations.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S	Call (952) 939-8200 for meeting locations.
					1	2	4 City Council Study Session, 6:30 p.m. (Topic: Development process, Glen Lake streetscape plan)
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	6 State of the City, 7:30–9 a.m.; Park Board, 7 p.m.
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	7 Planning Commission, 6:30 p.m.
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	10 Kids' Fest, 1–5 p.m. (see page 1)
24	25	26	27	28	29		11 City Council, 6:30 p.m.
							12 Senior Advisory Board, 10 a.m.; Economic Development Authority, 6 p.m.
							13 Comprehensive Guide Plan Steering Committee, 5:30 p.m.
							18 President's Day (city offices closed)
							20 Comp Plan Open House, 5:30–8 p.m. (see page 2)
							21 Planning Commission, 6:30 p.m.; Creek corridor open house, 5:30–7:30 p.m. (see page 2)
							25 City Council, 6:30 p.m.
							27 Comprehensive Guide Plan Steering Committee, 5:30 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 Web site by the Friday afternoon prior to the meeting, and planning commission agendas are available by the Monday prior to the meeting.

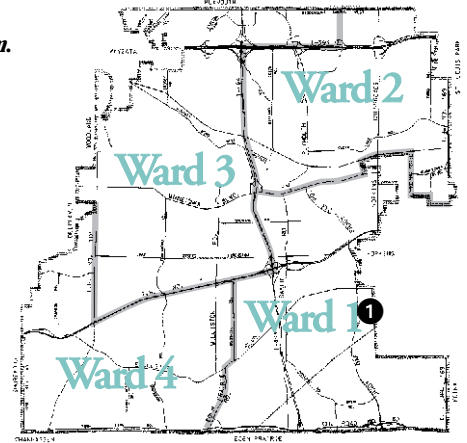
NEW DEVELOPMENTS

The following items are tentatively scheduled to come before the Planning Commission in February. Please call (952) 939-8200 for updated information or visit the city Web site at www.eminnetonka.com. Meeting agendas are posted on the site the Friday prior to each commission meeting.

- 1** Preliminary plat for a three-lot subdivision of an existing industrial property at 11501 K-Tel Drive. (07065.07a)

Questions about I and I inspectors

AS INFILTRATION AND INFLOW (I AND I) INSPECTIONS CONTINUE, MINNETONKA PUBLIC Works has received several calls from residents checking on the legitimacy of inspectors from SL-serco, an outside company hired by the city of Minnetonka to conduct I and I inspections and to install new water meters. All SL-serco contractors involved in inspections in Minnetonka have undergone and passed a background check by the Minnetonka Police Department. SL-serco contractors will be wearing clothing with the SL-serco name and have photo ID badges. If you have any questions about a contractor, please contact SL-serco at (612) 782-9716.



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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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