

minnetonka memo

*A Newsletter from the City of Minnetonka
December 2004*

Holiday Happenings



Minnetonka Historical Society

You're invited to the Burwell House Sunday, Dec. 5, from 1 to 4 p.m., for a Victorian holiday tea hosted by the Minnetonka Historical Society. The event is free and open to the public. The Burwell House is located at 13209 East McGinty Road in Minnetonka. Parking will be available at St. David's Family Center. For more information, call Florence Bogle at (952) 938-3758.

ArtsCenter of Minnetonka

Minnesota Pipes and Drums
Saturday, Dec. 4, 7:30 p.m.
Call (612) 823-5082 for information.

Music Association of Minnetonka

This is only a partial list of performances. Call (952) 401-5954 for a full schedule of performances and ticket information.

Songs of the Season

Friday, Dec. 3, 7:30 p.m.
ArtsCenter of Minnetonka

A Toast to the Holidays

Friday, Dec. 10, 7 p.m.
Minnetonka Community Center
14600 Minnetonka Blvd.

Sounds of Youth

Friday, Dec. 10, 7:30 p.m.
ArtsCenter of Minnetonka

Juletide

Saturday, Dec. 11, 7:30 p.m.
ArtsCenter of Minnetonka

Minnetonka Symphony Orchestra

Winter Concert
Sunday, Dec. 12, 7:30 p.m.
ArtsCenter of Minnetonka

stages theatre company

"Madeline's Christmas" will be presented in the Mainstage Theater Nov. 19 through Dec. 28. Recommended for all ages. Call (952) 979-1111 or visit www.stagestheatre.org for performance information, ticket prices and reservations. □

Truth in Taxation set for Dec. 6

MINNETONKA RESIDENTS and property owners are invited to participate in the city's annual Truth in Taxation budget hearing set for Monday, December 6, at 6:30 p.m. in the city council chambers.

November's *Minnetonka Memo* provided information on our proposed 2005 budget as well as its potential impact upon property taxes. We are committed to providing citizens with accurate and timely financial information to allow for full public

disclosure and open discussions prior to finalizing decisions that affect the services provided by their city government and the costs for those services. The city council discussed these preliminary budget plans at two public meetings in August and November and plans to adopt our final budget on December 20.

Under the proposed plan, the city's budget would increase around 4 percent next year in order to address pent-up demands for city services that have been impacted by state revenue cuts in recent years. Almost nine of every 10 new dollars would be used to restore these services, particularly in the areas of public safety, street and park maintenance. In addition to city services, we must budget for fiscal

uncertainty created by the state's forecasted deficit, which may again result in the city being required to finance the state Market Value Credit property tax relief program.

The city's general tax levy would increase by 4.5 percent, which is one of the lowest increases proposed by comparable cities in the state. An additional tax levy of 2.3 percent is required to fund the voter-approved parks referendum.

Under the proposal, Minnetonka homeowners would experience variations to this overall rate of increase for several

reasons. Among those, city taxes account for only about one-fourth of your property tax bill. Other taxing entities such as the county and school districts account for the remainder.

Also, the state is phasing out a program that artificially held down assessed property values in prior years. This phase-out and the fact that the state's economic changes have resulted in faster growth in residential market values than in commercial values will result in a relative shift in tax burden to residential property owners.

Nonetheless, the city continues to ensure an ongoing capacity to provide quality public services to our residences and businesses at a reasonable price. Total proposed 2005 property taxes on the average valued home are roughly

Taxation Hearing *continued on page 4*

**Truth in Taxation Public Hearing
Monday, December 6, 6:30 p.m.
Minnetonka City Council Chambers
14600 Minnetonka Boulevard**

Election turnout tops 85%

MINNETONKA RESIDENTS exceeded the statewide turnout for Election Day 2004, with a little more than 85 percent of registered voters — about 39,000 people — casting ballots. Of those, nearly 5,500 were new voters who registered on Election Day. Thank you to everyone who turned out to vote, and to the many election judges who worked to ensure that all ballots were properly counted. □

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Remember to register security alarms

THE MINNETONKA POLICE Department reminds businesses and homeowners that it's time to register alarms systems for 2005. City ordinances require alarms to be registered with the police department by Jan. 1 of each year. The annual fee is \$10.

The purpose of the ordinance is not to discourage or eliminate the use of police and fire alarm systems, but to provide standards, requirements and sanctions for the approximately 10 percent of alarm users who cause 90 percent of false alarm activity in the city.

Alarm systems are only as effective as the residents or employees who are trained to use them. When alarm systems are properly operated and maintained, they can contribute to increased safety, crime prevention and apprehension of criminals.

Alarm registration pamphlets containing an application have been sent to alarm owners on record. If you do not receive one by Dec. 15, call (952) 939-8500 or visit www.eminnetonka.com for an online application. Upon receipt of the \$10 registration fee, new 2005 alarm stickers will be sent. □

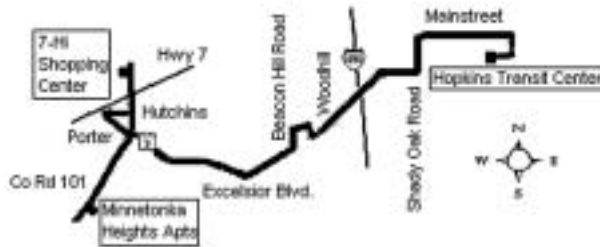
Minnetonka Police Reserve Unit looking for volunteers

ARE YOU WILLING to donate a portion of your spare time to your community? The Minnetonka Police Department needs adult volunteers age 21 and older for its Police Reserve Unit. Reserve officers assist full-time police personnel in performing community service tasks and during natural disasters and other emergencies. Training will be provided. For an application, visit www.eminnetonka.com (click Volunteer Opportunities) or call (952) 939-8212. The application deadline is Dec. 13, 2004. □

Get on the bus with Metro Transit

MANY METRO TRANSIT bus routes serve Minnetonka, and from time to time different routes will be featured in the *Minnetonka Memo*.

Route 612 provides wheelchair-accessible local bus service from the Minnetonka Heights Apartments on Highway 101 to the Hopkins Transit Center, with stops at SuperTarget (7-Hi), Glen Lake and downtown Hopkins. Connections can be made to other routes, including routes to downtown Minneapolis, at the Hopkins Transit Station. Full service is provided all day on weekdays with limited service on Saturdays. One-way fares are \$1.25 for non-rush hours and \$1.75 for rush-hour service. Route schedules and maps are available at Minnetonka City Hall, 14600 Minnetonka Boulevard or through Metro Transit—call (612) 373-3333 or visit www.metrotransit.org. □



Volunteer your time

WOULD YOU LIKE to become more involved with your city? Then consider participating in Minnetonka's new volunteer program. Share your skills and your time working with city staff on various projects, and in return you'll learn more about the city's operations and services.

Volunteers can range in age from teens to older adults. Positions currently available involve the following duties: grounds maintenance and general maintenance at the Williston Fitness Center and/or Minnetonka Community Center; supervisor and workers for the Hilloway Park Restoration Project; Minnetonka Mike mascot; storm drain monitors; and a utility billing assistant.

For more information visit www.eminnetonka.com (click on Volunteer Opportunities); or call Joan Post, volunteer coordinator, at (952) 939-8215. □

Outdoor rinks scheduled to open Dec. 20

WEATHER PERMITTING, SKATING rinks with warming houses at eight Minnetonka locations will open Monday, Dec. 20. Locations are Boulder Creek, Covington, Gro Tonka, McKenzie, Meadow and Spring Hill parks; and Gatewood and Glen Lake schools.

Hours are Saturday, noon to 9 p.m.; Sundays, 12:30 to 6 p.m.; and weekdays, 4:30 to 9 p.m. During school breaks, hours will be noon to 9 p.m.

Minnetonka rinks plowed on the first snow day include Meadow, Spring Hill



and Gro Tonka parks as well as Glen Lake School. Call the weather hotline at (952) 939-TELL (8355) weekdays after 4 p.m. for an update on rink conditions.

Hopkins and Minnetonka youth hockey associations and adult broomball leagues have reserved various hockey rinks for organized practices Monday through Thursday after 6 p.m. A schedule will be posted at each rink. To reserve outdoor ice time, please call the warming house coordinator at (952) 908-7052 after Dec. 16. □



2004 MINNETONKA RECYCLING UPDATE

Recycling tips for the holidays



The holiday season is an important time to continue practicing waste reduction, reuse and recycling, and to be conscientious

about buying items with recycled content. A little planning will help manage your trash during the holiday season.

- When buying gifts, food, or beverages, look for containers with little or no packaging or packaging that can be recycled. Avoid over-packaged products.
- Use returnable beverage containers whenever possible.
- For parties, use washable/reusable utensils and plates; and cloth napkins and tablecloths instead of single-use disposable paper or plastic. Reusable party supplies can be rented.
- Look for creative, alternative ways to wrap gifts by using recycled or recyclable materials. Use pages from newspapers or decorate paper bags for that personal touch. Place your gift in reusable gift bags, storage containers or new towels or tablecloths.

- Save and reuse wrapping paper, boxes, ribbons and bows for next season. Purchase reusable decorations and garlands.
- Look for cards and wrapping paper made with recycled paper.
- Give gift certificates or tickets for concerts, theater or sporting events. Give a home-made gift of food or a dinner invitation.
- Give environmental gifts such as cloth shopping bags, napkins, tablecloths, or handkerchiefs; supply of recycled-paper stationery, cards or gift wrap; compact fluorescent light bulbs; can crusher; or a donation to an environmental organization.
- Alternatives to real Christmas trees are artificial trees or potted trees or plants. Check with your refuse hauler about recycling Christmas trees after the holidays.

Make a New Year's resolution to reduce waste, recycle and pay attention to the amount of garbage your household produces. Recycling, waste reduction and reuse, careful shopping and purchasing practices at the home and office do make a difference!

For more information, see www.reduce.org (click on "At the Holidays"), or call Dean Elstad, recycling coordinator, at (952) 939-8217.

Recycling holiday trees

Check with your residential refuse hauler for pick up and recycling of your tree. There may be an additional fee, depending on the refuse company and your level of service.

Trees will be accepted when the brush drop-off program opens in mid April, 2005. Some private nurseries and private compost sites accept trees, for a fee. For more information, call your refuse hauler or Dean Elstad, recycling coordinator, at (952) 939-8217.

Recycling Reminder

To recycle corrugated cardboard boxes, just flatten them and set them alongside your recycling container. No need to cut up the boxes or to tie them in bundles.

Holiday Recycling Schedule

The Christmas and New Year's Day holidays will **NOT** change curbside recycling collection this year.

As a reminder, the 2005 holidays that will delay recycling one day are: Memorial Day, Independence Day and Labor Day.

State of the City event set for Jan. 19

MINNETONKA RESIDENTS ARE invited to attend Mayor Karen Anderson's 2005 State of the City address Wednesday, Jan. 19, 2005, from 7:30 to 9 a.m. at the Minnetonka Community Center, 14600 Minnetonka Blvd. A light breakfast will be served. Please RSVP by Friday, Jan. 14, to Karen Telega at ktelega@eminnetonka.com or (952) 939-8211. Check the January *Minnetonka Memo* for more information. □

Internet options for Minnetonka residents

A RECENT SURVEY SHOWED that 81 percent of Minnetonka residents have Internet access at home, demonstrating the importance residents place on having a home Internet connection. In light of that, the city has been seeking to improve the availability of faster Internet connections for residents.

City staff recently met with Qwest representatives regarding the availability of DSL Internet service and learned that over the past year, Qwest has installed additional remote terminals in Minnetonka. That has made DSL available to more customers in areas south of Highway 7 and west of I-494, and areas

near Cedar Lake Road, Greenbrier Road and Mayflower Avenue. Residents may check with Qwest to see if DSL service is now available to them.

Another current option for Internet access is Time Warner Cable, which provides the Road Runner Internet service throughout the city.

In addition, a wireless broadband company has approached the city about locating radio transmitters on the city's water towers. City staff is exploring the desirability of establishing an arrangement with this company and will provide further information as it develops. □

Calendar

City of
Minnetonka

December
2004

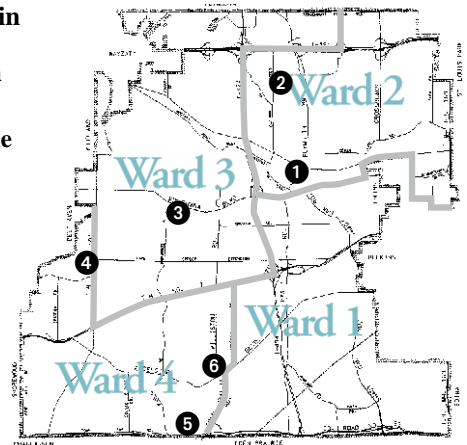
Call (952) 939-8200
for meeting
locations.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S				
			1	2	3	4	1	Park Board, 7 p.m.	16	Planning Commission, 6:30 p.m.
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	Planning Commission, 6:30 p.m.	20	City Council (adopt 2005 budget), 6:30 p.m.
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	6	City Council (Truth in Taxation hearing), 6:30 p.m.	24	Christmas observed, <i>city offices closed</i>
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	14	Senior Advisory Board, 10 a.m.; Economic Development Authority, 6 p.m.	31	New Year's Day observed, <i>city offices closed</i>
26	27	28	29	30	31					

NEW DEVELOPMENTS

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

- 1 Preliminary plat to combine three existing lots into two lots, **12918 and 12910 Rutledge Circle and unassigned.** (04005.04b)
- 2 Preliminary plat and variance for a lot division at **1927 Essex Road.** (04051.04a)
- 3 Preliminary plat for a two-lot subdivision at **15815 Minnetonka Boulevard.** (03061.04a)
- 4 Variance for a second wall sign for Minnetonka United Methodist Church at **17611 Lake Street Extension.** (92028.04a)
- 5 Variance to relocate an existing driveway at **6043 Fairwood Circle.** (04074.04a)
- 6 Guide plan amendment from low-density residential to institutional; rezoning from R-1 (low-density residential) to planned unit development (PUD); preliminary plat; and site and building plan review with parking stall variance at **5431/5439 Williston Road.** (04037.04a)



Taxation Hearing *continued from page 1*

similar to total 2001 taxes prior to the state's major tax reform several years ago.

For more information on our proposed budget, please call (952) 939-8200. If you are unable to attend the meeting, but would like to offer your comments, please contact Minnetonka Mike at either (952) 939-8586 or mike@eminnetonka.com. Your input is always welcomed and appreciated!

Fingerprinting services available

THE MINNETONKA POLICE Department provides public fingerprinting for business applications, INS documentation, adoption, and other purposes on a first-come, first-served basis Thursday mornings from 9 to 10 a.m. There is a \$10 fee per fingerprint card. Please call (952) 939-8500 for more information.

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8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday – Friday

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POLICE-FIRE: Emergency 9-1-1
Non-emergency (952) 939-8500 or 9-1-1

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