RIVER CITY NEWS

TRI-ANNUAL NEWSLETTER OF THE CITY OF MASON CITY, FALL 2009

Mason City Launches Redesigned Website

The City of Mason City launched its new website! Residents visiting www.masoncity.net will see a new design showcasing community photographs on the home page. The layout directs visitors through easy to use categories, providing ease in navigating throughout the site with quick access to a broad array of services, documents, and programs. The redesign offers a significant opportunity to more efficiently and effectively deliver services to citizens 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The E-notices subscription service allows citizens to subscribe to a variety of news, bid notices, job postings and information to keep citizens informed of City updates and events.

Citizens using the City's Service Request Center can report incidents or direct questions to staff ranging from street conditions to street lights or suspected code violations. Staff will investigate the request and provide a response to the citizen.

Other features of the new website include:

- A detailed calendar of events with description linkable to the source;
- A complete list of City staff and City Council contact information;
- FAQ section with answers to questions frequently asked by citizens;
- A range of online forms to volunteer, apply for a job or board/commission, or provide information to staff;
- Access to important City documents through Document Central;
- Agendas, minutes, packets and newsletters, current and archived.

Citizens are encouraged to provide input to your city government at www.masoncity.net, click on 'Contact Us' in the upper right hand corner.

'CodeRED' Emergency Notification System

The City of Mason City partnered with the City of Clear Lake and Cerro Gordo County to provide an emergency notification system to its residents. The CodeRED system is a high-speed notification service designed to deliver emergency messages or important notifications to the citizens in all or specific areas of the city or county. This will provide city officials the ability to quickly deliver messages via phone to targeted areas of the city or to the entire city.

Residents are encouraged to register for this service by visiting www.masoncity.net and following the link on the 'CodeRED' button on the left side of the home page. Those without internet access can obtain a form at City Hall or the Mason City Public Library. Completed forms can be returned with your City utility payment or dropped off at City Hall at 10 1st Street NW. There is no fee for residents to receive this service.

Required registration information includes first and last name, physical street address (no P.O. boxes), city, state, zip code, and primary phone number. Additional phone numbers or cellular phone numbers can be entered as well. All businesses should register as well as individuals who have listed or unlisted phone numbers, who have changed their phone number or address in the past year, and those who use a cellular phone as their primary phone number should register their number to insure they are listed in the database.

The calling system is geographical based, so street addresses are needed to select which phone numbers will receive an emergency notice in any given situation. When a call is launched, if a recipient does not answer the call, the message will be delivered to voicemail and answering devices. A call launched by the CodeRED system will appear on a caller ID as (866) 419-5000.

Mason City officials plan to use the service to notify residents when the Alternate Side Parking is implemented in the winter, emergency construction projects, and other important information of concern to residents.

INSIDE THIS EDITION:

2 Construction Updates
Awards and Achievements
Contact your Mayor and Council
New Feature at Elmwood Cemetery

3 Volunteer Mason City
Snow Removal Guidelines
Census 2010

4 Calendar of Events
New Employees
Retirements

River City News Gets New Look

River City News will be published and distributed with the City of Mason City utility bills three times per year. To see more current City news, visit www.masoncity.net. Current and previous editions of *River City News* are available at www.masoncity.net under the Residents tab.

Suggestions and comments are always welcome. Please contact:

City Administrator's office
10 1st Street NW
Mason City, IA 50401
(641) 421-2701 (phone)
(641) 424-7189 (fax)
cityinformation@masoncity.net

Construction Updates

The reconstruction of the **intersection at Highway 122 and Village Green Drive** has been a city initiative for the past several years. The plan layout and design was created with input from the local business owners in the area. Though the process of bringing the project to fruition was time consuming, it was completed in early fall. The project relocated the frontage road back, away from the highway, therefore creating additional space for vehicle stacking. The project also opened the intersection to provide safer and more efficient flow for traffic by utilizing additional lanes and a new traffic signal system.

The **19th Street SW Overpass and South Pierce Avenue Intersection** Improvements project is progressing with an estimated scheduled completion date in November of this year. The completion and opening of the overpass will be a tremendous improvement for traffic flow on 19th Street SW by alleviating long delays caused by train traffic. The widening and addition of signalization at the Pierce Avenue intersection will also increase safety for traffic entering and exiting 19th Street SW at Pierce Avenue.

Awards and Achievements

Lieutenant Rich Jensen of the Police Department recently graduated from the Northwestern University Police Staff and Command School. The 10-week program was held at the Louisiana State Police Academy.

Mason City Police Department was recently awarded over $175,000 in federal funds from the Bureau of Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program.

The *Edward Byrne Memorial JAG* will fund equipment and training to enhance investigations when reconstructing vehicle collision and crime scenes. *The Recovery Act JAG* will retain one officer assigned to the North Central Iowa Narcotics Task Force for one year and provide funds to purchase surveillance equipment and crime mapping technology. The *Rural Law Enforcement Recovery Act* will provide for an experienced criminal investigator, construct a criminal intelligence database, and enhance the ability to share information with and provide data to other intelligence networks.

New feature recently dedicated at Elmwood–St. Joseph Municipal Cemetery

Take a moment to relax and enjoy the beautiful setting in a new landscape feature in the Crown Hill section of Elmwood Cemetery.

This feature, with a scenic view of the grounds, was built through a bequest by Eunice Park in memory of her mother Mary Ellen Ward. The cemetery grounds are open from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. each day.

HOW TO CONTACT YOUR MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mayor: Roger Bang
(641) 421-3600
mayor@masoncity.net

At-Large: Scott Tornquist
(641) 423-4803
Scott@TornquistForRiverCity.com

At-Large: Max Weaver
(641) 423-6888
atlargea@masoncity.net

First Ward: Jeff Marsters
(641) 424-5845
wardone@masoncity.net

Second Ward: Steve Tynan
(641) 210-9665
wardtwo@masoncity.net

Third Ward: Don Nelson
(641) 423-3896
wardthree@masoncity.net

Fourth Ward: John Jaszewski
(641) 423-6166
wardfour@masoncity.net

New Hours

MacNider Art Museum

Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday: 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Thursday: 9 a.m. – 9 p.m.
Sunday and Monday: Closed

H1N1 Information

Get the facts about H1N1 and keep yourself protected. Visit the Health Department site at www.masoncity.net under the 'Your Government' tab or call the Disease Prevention staff at (641) 421-9300.

Sanitation Notes

There will not be City sanitation service when City offices are closed in observance of specific holidays. The make-up day for sanitation pick-up will be the Wednesday during the week of the holiday.

Offices Closed/No Sanitation Service	Make-up Sanitation Day
Friday, December 25, 2009	Wednesday, December 23, 2009
Friday, January 1, 2010	Wednesday, December 30, 2009
Monday, February 15, 2010	Wednesday, February 17, 2010

Holiday trees will be collected on Wednesday, January 13, 2010.

Yard waste pick-up season ends on Friday, December 4, 2009 and begins on March 29, 2010.

United States Census 2010

Mason City has partnered with Cerro Gordo County and other communities within the county to promote awareness about the census, why it is important, and to encourage citizens in our communities to be counted.

Why It Is Important

- **Census affects funding in your community**
  Census data directly affects how more than $400 billion per year in federal and state funding is allocated to communities for neighborhood improvements, public health, education, transportation and much more. That's more than $4 trillion over a 10-year period. Spending just a few minutes to fill out your census form will help ensure your community gets its fair share of federal and state funding. Over the 10 years between census counts, a community loses more than $12,000 for each uncounted citizen.
- **Census affects your voice in Congress**
  Mandated by the U.S. Constitution, the census is also used to apportion seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and to redistrict state legislatures.
- **Census affects your representation in state and local government**
  Census data are used to define legislature districts, school district assignment areas and other important functional areas of government.
- **Census informs your community's decisions**
  The census is like a snapshot that helps define who we are as a nation. Data about changes in your community are crucial to many planning decisions, such as where to provide services for the elderly, where to build new roads and schools, or where to locate job training centers.

The 2010 Census will be a **short-form** only census and will count all residents living in the United States as well as ask for name, sex, age, date of birth, race, ethnicity, relationship and housing tenure – taking just minutes to complete. **All information is kept confidential!**

IT'S IN **OUR HANDS**

By participating in the census, you can help create a better future for you and those important to you. Complete and return your form when it arrives. Census forms will be mailed to citizens in March, 2010. Census Day is April 1, 2010. To learn more, visit: http://2010census.gov.

Counting Everyone Once — and Only Once — and In the Right Place

Volunteer Mason City

As the City Volunteer Program enters into its eighth year, we look forward to continuing working alongside our enthusiastic volunteers and welcoming new volunteers to partner with City staff on upcoming projects.

So far in 2009, volunteers have donated nearly 4,950 hours to municipal projects; up considerably from this same time last year. Individuals, families and service groups have made up a large part of our volunteer data base in the past, and we are seeing growth in corporate volunteerism. Perhaps this can be contributed to the nation's desire to give back, resulting in the boost to volunteerism locally and across the country.

Our new web site makes volunteering easier than ever before. You can sign up for e-mail alerts to be made aware of new volunteer opportunities within the City organization. Or go to the *Your Government tab* at www.masoncity.net. Simply click on the Volunteer Program to learn about volunteerism and to complete the on-line Volunteer Interest Form, which is user friendly and outlines a variety of municipal projects that may spark your interest and encourage you to volunteer today helping Make Mason City *"Sparkle."*

Sidewalk Snow Removal Guidelines

"When it snows in Mason City, the City depends on its citizens to be helpful, responsible, and aware of the need to remove all snow and ice from public sidewalks including walks and ramps leading to crosswalks," says Pat Otto, Neighborhood Development Specialist.

During the winter months, many Mason City residents need to be able to safely use public sidewalks. This means that all snow and ice should be removed from the entire constructed width of all public sidewalks.

Property owners are reminded that:

1. All snow and ice must be removed from the entire width of abutting sidewalks within 48 hours of the end of a snow, ice, or wind event.
2. If it is not practicable to remove the accumulations of snow and ice frozen to the sidewalk, the abutting property owner or occupant shall keep and maintain fine cinders and/or sand on the full width of the sidewalk to provide traction for pedestrians.
3. It is a violation to remove accumulations from private premises and deposit the same upon any public street, alley, and public square or traveled area within the city.
4. During extreme cold, please exercise caution and care when shoveling.

If any citizen has a concern regarding sidewalk snow removal 48 hours after the end of an accumulation greater than one-inch, Neighborhood Services is ready to help. Citizens may call 641-421-3380 (24-hour voice mail), or fill out a Citizen's Service Request found on Mason City's web site at www.masoncity.net to report locations that may be in violation of the city snow removal ordinance.

Alternate Side Parking

Mason City's Alternate Side Parking ordinance was amended to allow City officials the opportunity to suspend alternate side parking at their discretion. This would occur in the event no considerable snowfall is received for a period of time. When the ordinance is in effect, the same provisions will apply; vehicles may only be parked on the *even numbered side of the street on an even numbered calendar day* and on the *odd numbered side of the street on an odd numbered calendar day*. The changeover period to move vehicles is between the hours of 4:00 and 7:00 p.m.

Thank you for your continued cooperation in observing the alternate side parking ordinance. Your assistance allows Street Department staff to remove snow more efficiently to provide safer driving conditions and to maximize on-street parking for residents and visitors.

Residents registered with the CodeRED system will be notified when the Alternate Side Parking ordinance is placed in effect and also when it is removed. Other sources of the status of the parking ordinance include the City's website at www.masoncity.net, the 24 hour recorded phone line at (641) 424-7188, or City Hall during regular business hours at (641) 421-3600.

Citizens can access more detailed information about the ordinance by visiting www.masoncity.net, click on the 'How Do I' tab and select 'Comply with Alternate Side Parking'.

New Faces

John Arp was appointed as the Electrical Inspector for the Building and Neighborhood Services Department in September of 2009. John is a graduate of North Central High School, NIACC, and the University of Northern Iowa. He is a State licensed Journeyman Electrician and is pursuing a Master Electrician License and certification.

Jennifer Barr was hired as a Police Officer in April of 2009. She is a graduate of Mason City High School, NIACC, and Buena Vista University.

Kim Birling joined the Building and Neighborhood Services Department as a Secretary in August of 2009. She is a graduate of Neenah High School and Kaplan University and recently completed an Externship in the Building and Neighborhood Services Department.

Martha Hendrickson joined the Youth Task Force as an Office Assistant in July of 2009. Martha is a graduate of St. Ansgar High School and NIACC. She previously held the position of Youth Intern with the Youth Task Force.

Jeremy Hitzhusen was hired as a Refuse Collector with the Operation and Maintenance Department in June of 2009. He is a graduate of Rockwell-Swaledale High School and attended NIACC and the University of Northern Iowa.

Stephen Martin was appointed as a Meter Reader/Repair person for the Water Supply Division of the Engineering Department in June of 2009. Stephen is a graduate of Charles City High School, NIACC and the University of Northern Iowa.

Susan Mertes was hired as a Buyout Administrator for the Growth Development & Planning Department in August of 2009. She is a graduate of Simley High School and the University of Minnesota.

Brett Michels was appointed as a Police Officer in April of 2009. Brett is a graduate of Osage Community High School and attended NIACC. He recently served as a Reserve Officer for the department.

Jamie Simon was hired as a Support Services Clerk for the Police Department in July of 2009. Jamie attended Clear Lake High School and is a graduate of Copper Mountain College.

Shane Uhl joined the Fire Department as a Firefighter/Paramedic in April of 2009. Shane is a graduate of Lawton-Bronson High School and Kirkwood Community College. He is a Certified Firefighter I and holds a Certified EMT-B Certification.

Erin Wickre was hired as an Assistant for the City Attorney and Human Resources Department in May of 2009. Erin is a graduate of Dubuque Senior High School and the University of Dubuque.

Retirements

The City of Mason City would like to extend a thank you to the following employees who retired after their years of service:

Wayne Anderson, Police Department
Dan Brown, Recreation Department
Edwin "Chip" Hendrickson, Water Supply Division
Randy Logan, Sanitation Division
Bill Ruehlow, Street Division
Mark Suby, Parks Department
Dave Tyler, Police Department
Jean Walker, Youth Task Force

Calendar of Events

DECEMBER 2009

1 Zoning Board of Adjustment, 4 p.m.
1 City Council Regular Meeting, 7 p.m.
3 Human Rights Commission, 12 noon
3 Historic Preservation Commission, 4:30 p.m.
4 Yard Waste pick-up season ends
4 MacNider: Off-the-Clock Holiday Open House, 5-7 p.m.
6 MacNider Museum Holiday Open House Family Day, 1-4 p.m.
8 Park & Recreation Board, 6 p.m.
8 Planning & Zoning Commission, 7 p.m.
9 North Iowa Diversity Appreciation Team, 4 p.m.
10 Elmwood-St. Joseph Cemetery Board, 8 a.m.
14 Airport Commission, 4 p.m.
15 Library Board, 4:15 p.m.
15 Museum Board, 7 p.m.
15 City Council Regular Meeting, 7 p.m.
22 Environmental Stewardship Advisory Commission, 5 p.m.
23 Sanitation Make-up Day for December 25
25 City offices closed
30 Sanitation Make-up Day for January 1

JANUARY 2010

1 City offices closed
5 Zoning Board of Adjustment, 4 p.m.
5 City Council Regular Meeting, 7 p.m.
7 Human Rights Commission, 12 noon
7 Historic Preservation Commission, 4:30 p.m.
11 Airport Commission, 4 p.m.
12 Park & Recreation Board, 6 p.m.
12 Planning & Zoning Commission, 7 p.m.
13 Holiday tree pick-up by Sanitation Divsion
13 North Iowa Diversity Appreciation Team, 4 p.m.
14 Elmwood-St. Joseph Cemetery Board, 8 a.m.
19 Library Board, 4:15 p.m.
19 Museum Board, 7 p.m.
19 City Council Regular Meeting, 7 p.m.
26 Environmental Stewardship Advisory Commission, 5 p.m.

FEBRUARY 2010

2 Zoning Board of Adjustment, 4 p.m.
2 City Council Regular Meeting, 7 p.m.
4 Human Rights Commission, 12 noon
4 Historic Preservation Commission, 4:30 p.m.
8 Airport Commission, 4 p.m.
9 Park & Recreation Board, 6 p.m.
9 Planning & Zoning Commission, 7 p.m.
10 North Iowa Diversity Appreciation Team, 4 p.m.
11 Elmwood-St. Joseph Cemetery Board, 8 a.m.
15 City offices closed
16 Library Board, 4:15 p.m.
16 Museum Board, 7 p.m.
16 City Council Regular Meeting, 7 p.m.
17 Sanitation Make-up Day for February 15
23 Environmental Stewardship Advisory Commission, 5 p.m.

MARCH 2010

2 Zoning Board of Adjustment, 4 p.m.
2 City Council Regular Meeting, 7 p.m.
4 Human Rights Commission, 12 noon
4 Historic Preservation Commission, 4:30 p.m.
8 Airport Commission, 4 p.m.
9 Park & Recreation Board, 6 p.m.
9 Planning & Zoning Commission, 7 p.m.
10 North Iowa Diversity Appreciation Team, 4 p.m.
11 Elmwood-St. Joseph Cemetery Board, 8 a.m.
16 Library Board, 4:15 p.m.
16 Museum Board, 7 p.m.
16 City Council Regular Meeting, 7 p.m.
23 Environmental Stewardship Advisory Commission, 5 p.m.
29 Yard Waste pick-up season begins

This calendar is subject to change. For more information, visit www.masoncity.net or contact staff at (641) 421-3600.