



**July 2023**

3033 St. Croix Trail South  
P.O. Box 219  
Afton, MN 55001

## Afton 4th of July Parade Grand Marshal



The Afton Parade Committee is excited to announce this year's Grand Marshal. She is Carolyn DeRuyck, retired Afton-Lakeland teacher and resident of Afton for over 50 years. Carolyn has three sons, a daughter and eight grandchildren.

"My passion for children has been with me since I started school myself. I knew I would be a teacher before I finished first grade. After graduating from St Teresa's, I interviewed to teach in the inner-city. That experience influenced how I taught for the rest of my career. I married in 1972 and had four children in the next four and 1/2 years".

Carolyn was awarded the 'Teacher of the Year' award given to her by the St Paul Pioneer Press. She taught most grade levels before she settled into teaching 4th and 5<sup>th</sup> grade specializing in Writing, Computer Science and Language Arts.

"There was not a day in my teaching career that I did not enjoy. This job is as much about the philosophy and character of the teacher as it is about the curriculum. Stillwater School District allowed us to bring our own creativity into our lessons".



### City of Afton Dashboard A Summary of Current Happenings

- ◆ Please note that, for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade, main street in the Old Village will be closed to through traffic from approximately 12:45 p.m. until 2:00 p.m.
- ◆ The council is considering clarifications to the exterior storage ordinance, as well as requirements and restrictions regarding the use of shipping containers for storage. These topics will be discussed at an upcoming work session.
- ◆ The council is considering a draft ordinance amendment to significantly strengthen the Shoreland and Riverway Ordinances to prevent the illegal removal of trees, and directed the City Attorney to determine the extent of penalty fees and tree replacement requirements that can be included in the amendment.

SAR

*July 4, 2023 City Office Closed for Independence Day*

### CITY MEETINGS

**July 18, 2023**

City Council Meeting  
7:00 PM

**July 26, 2023**

Parks Committee Meeting  
6:00 PM

Public Participation Via Zoom Will Continue to be Available for City Council and Planning Commission Meetings.

Information on how to join the meetings will be posted on the City website along with the agenda and meeting packet.

### CITY COUNCIL

<u>Mayor:</u> Bill Palmquist	651-308-0569
<u>Ward 1:</u> Annie Perkins	651-592-3007
<u>Ward 2:</u> Lucia Wroblewski	651-436-3982
<u>Ward 3:</u> Stan Ross	612-720-6478
<u>Ward 4:</u> Randy Nelson	651-436-2479

### CITY HALL

651-436-5090

### CITY WEBSITE

[www.ci.afton.mn.us](http://www.ci.afton.mn.us)

### IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Animal Control	715-220-1332
Building Inspector	651-436-6469
Burning Permits	651-248-5103
Environmental Center	651-275-7475
Highland Sanitation	651-458-0043
Otter Lake Animal Care	651-426-8871
Fire Dept	651-436-7033
Sheriff's Dept	651-439-9381

**EMERGENCY 911**

## Notes from the Mayor

The new Oxbow Trails officially opened in June. Located at 2398 St. Croix Trail S, the public trails will be open every day from dawn to dusk. This has been a great partnership between the City of Afton, Belwin Conservancy, and Washington County. The potential for this area to showcase the many types of environments we have here is exciting. It includes bluff land, prairie, woods and lowland habitat. In addition to protecting a large portion of Valley Creek (the park does not offer access to the Creek itself) Belwin has already accomplished a great deal of restoration work, including buckthorn removal, with more being done this year. This work will better protect the water quality in the Creek. It will also improve the diversity of plants and animals by removing invasive species.

Although there are already some great trails on the site, we will continue to work with Belwin to secure funding for the second phase of this project. The second phase includes extending the trail across the oxbow wetland and connecting to the burr oaks and prairie that exist on the City's portion of this combined property. When complete, it will offer visitors a moderate hike that young people should be able to do with their parents to see three distinct environments. Portions of this additional trail section (crossing the oxbow area) will most likely need to be floating, and therefore expensive, so we will work with our partners and seek grants this year to make that happen.

I hope to see you at the 4th of July parade. Remember that it starts at 1pm now. There is still time to register to bring your fun ideas and be a participant. You just need to go to the website and let the committee know you will be an entrant. The website is [www.aftonparade.com](http://www.aftonparade.com).

Lastly, I know I say this every year, but as you celebrate the 4th, I would just ask that you be respectful of neighbors who might struggle with PTSD or other stress issues, or have pets or horses that are impacted by fireworks. We all expect and plan for fireworks as we celebrate on July 4, but in the days and weeks before and after, it can have an impact that none of us would want for people dealing with those issues.

-Bill

### I-94 to St. Croix Construction Project

Upcoming ramp closures through late July:

- On-ramp from Hwy 120/Century Ave. to EB I-94 is closed
- The ramp from Hwy 95/St. Croix Trail to WB I-94 is closed

Beginning 6 a.m. Sat, June 24 through 6 a.m. Fri, July 14:

- Off-ramp from WB I-94 to St. Croix Rest Area is closed

Visit the project website for the latest updates:

<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/metro/projects/i94oakdale-stcroix/>



### Spot Mowing & Spraying for Noxious Weeds

Washington County staff will be spot mowing and spraying for noxious weeds in the county's more than 220 miles of rural roadsides June 15 through July 30, and again in October.

This is being done to help comply with Minnesota State Noxious Weed law administered by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture. Mowing will be used to prevent seed set and the following herbicides will be used to spray mowed area: Escort XP, Milestone VM, and Liberate.

Property owners who do not want their roadside sprayed or mowed, and are willing to take responsibility for controlling and eradicating noxious weeds on the adjacent roadside, may visit the Washington County North Shop at 11660 Myeron Road in Stillwater Township to obtain signage, or call 651-430-4300. Be prepared to provide an address, the nearest cross street, and a description of where Do Not Spray signs will be located.

## Meeting Highlights

### June 5, 2023 Planning Commission Meeting

#### The Commission:

- Reviewed a draft ordinance amendment regarding exterior storage.
- Reviewed a draft shoreland ordinance amendment regarding tree protection and replacement.
- Reviewed a draft solar energy systems ordinance amendment.

### June 20, 2023 City Council Meeting

#### The Council:

- Reviewed the 2022 City Audit Report and adopted the audited financial statements.
- Approved the 2023 crackfill project for city streets.
- Selected an operator for the wastewater treatment facility.
- Discussed the draft ordinance amendment for exterior storage.
- Discussed the draft shoreland ordinance amendment regarding tree protection and replacement.
- Referred an amendment to the solar energy systems ordinance that clarifies size restrictions for residential solar arrays to the Planning Commission for a public hearing and recommendation.

MEETING PACKETS, VIDEOS AND APPROVED MEETING MINUTES ARE AVAILABLE AT:  
[www.ci.afton.mn.us](http://www.ci.afton.mn.us)

## Belwin Conservancy Upcoming Events

### Amphibians and Reptiles of Minnesota Saturday, July 29, 2023

10:00 am - 11:30 am  
 Presented in partnership with Saint Paul Public Schools Community Education  
 Belwin Conservancy Hilltop Classroom, 1553 Stagecoach Tr. S.  
 RSVP required  
 Cost: \$25

### Nature Memories Open House Tuesday, August 1, 2023

10:00 am - 1:00 pm  
 Presented in partnership with Family Means  
 Belwin Conservancy Wetlands Classroom,  
 1553 Stagecoach Tr. S.  
 Cost: Free

### Walk on the Wildside Wednesday, August 16, 2023

4:00 pm - 6:00 pm  
 Presented in partnership with Saint Paul Public Schools Community Education  
 Belwin Conservancy Education Site, 1553 Stagecoach Tr. S.,

### Music in the Trees Saturday, August 19th and Sunday, August 20th, 2023

11:00 am - 3:00 pm  
 Belwin Conservancy Education Site, 1553 Stagecoach Tr. S.  
 Cost: \$10 per car (cash or check)

**For details and to register for events contact:**

**Belwin Conservancy**  
**1553 Stagecoach Trail South**  
**Afton MN 55001**  
**651-436-5189**  
[www.belwin.org](http://www.belwin.org)



Afton Historical Museum,

**Book Release & Signing**  
**Cynthia Blomquist Gustavson**  
 Saturday, July 29th. - 2pm



Hear personal stories about the characters of Valley Creek and Afton during the '50s and '60s. Discover the richness of a Valley Creek childhood and the love of this special place. But don't be surprised when the memoir delves into long-held family secrets.

*"Reminiscent of Annie Dillard's exploration of Tinker Creek..." - Jan Airhart*

*"Read this book and live with new courage. - Kim Stafford"*

*Praise for 'Please Use this for Children'*



Afton Historical Museum, 3165 St. Croix Trail S., Afton, MN 55001

## Free Woodchips Available July 28—29

On Friday, July 28th and Saturday, July 29th, members of the community are invited to a free wood chip giveaway at Belwin Conservancy's Oxbow Trails (2398 St. Croix Trail South, Afton, MN 55001). Residents will be able to take wood chips from the large wood chip pile at the entrance of the trails between 8 am and 8 pm on Friday and Saturday. We recommend residents bring their own shovels. Please do not take wood chips for commercial use.

The wood chips come from trees removed from Oxbow Trails as part of ongoing restoration. These chips are primarily scotch pine and spruce, with some oak, elm, and box elder mixed in as well. There is a possibility that some of the wood chips contain buckthorn, which was also removed from the site.

For more information, email Justin Sykora, Belwin's Director of Operations, at [justin.sykora@belwin.org](mailto:justin.sykora@belwin.org).

