



April 2019

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

Flood Preparations

The City is working with the County to prepare for the rising water level of the St. Croix River as well as other localized flooding. The City has closed the flood gate opening in the levee at the east end of 33rd Street. The City's new levee provides flood protection to an elevation of 695. The most recent projection is that the St. Croix River will crest at 688 to 688.5 between March 31 and April 2. The lack of additional precipitation while the snow has melted has been very beneficial in moderating the projected flood level.

To enable the City to move quickly to increase the level of flood protection if the projection of the river's crest was to increase substantially, Mayor Palmquist declared a local emergency on Monday, March 25, and the City Council ratified and extended the declaration for a period of 30 days. The declaration provides flexibility to enable the City Council to quickly address emergency situations.

To keep up with information from the National Weather Service regarding forecasted precipitation and river levels, you can use the links below. To sign up to volunteer to help with flood preparations if needed, please send an email to [jyoho@ci.afton.mn.us](mailto: jyoho@ci.afton.mn.us)

www.weather.gov/mpx/

<https://water.weather.gov/ahps2/hydrograph.php?wfo=mpx&gage=stlm5>

FREE Water Testing This Spring for Nitrates and Total Coliform Bacteria

Afton residents are invited to have their drinking water analyzed for nitrates and total coliform bacteria. June 11 or 18 are the dates available for residents to take a sample of their water and bring it to City Hall.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE: Phone or email City Hall at 651-436-5090 or [jyoho@ci.afton.mn.us](mailto: jyoho@ci.afton.mn.us). Deadline for signing up is May 24, 2019!

Your name and address are needed so that you can receive in the mail, a sampling kit that consists of a bottle, a sample information form, and sampling instructions. Take your sample on either June 11 or 18, and then bring your fresh sample to City Hall between 7:00 and 9:30 a.m. that day. Volunteers will deliver the samples to Washington County for analysis. Your nitrate and total coliform bacteria results will be sent to you.

HELPFUL SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION ACCOMPANYING YOUR SAMPLE:

It is not required, but it is helpful for future data analysis if you can provide information such as well depth, construction date, casing material, casing diameter, aquifer, and distance from septic and/or drain field. Also, the section number where you live is very helpful.

This is a voluntary effort, and resident participation provides Afton with valuable information on the quality of our **invaluable water resource**.

- Afton Natural Resources and Groundwater Committee

CITY MEETINGS

April 1, 2019

Planning Commission Meeting
7:00 P.M.

April 2, 2019

Natural Resources & Groundwater
5:00 P.M.

April 16, 2019

City Council Meeting
7:00 P.M.

April 17, 2019

Heritage Preservation Commission
5:00 P.M.

April 24, 2019

Parks Committee
6:00 P.M.

All meetings are held at City Hall unless otherwise noted.

CITY COUNCIL

Mayor:	Bill Palmquist	651-436-2238
Ward 1:	Annie Perkins	651-592-3007
Ward 2:	Lucia Wroblewski	651-436-3982
Ward 3:	Stan Ross	651-436-1346
Ward 4:	Randy Nelson	651-436-2479

CITY HALL

Monday — Friday

9:00 a.m. — 4:00 p.m.
651-436-5090

CITY WEBSITE

www.ci.afton.mn.us

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Animal Control	715-386-7789
Building Inspector	436-6469
Burning Permits	248-5103
Environmental Center	430-6655
Highland Sanitation	458-0043
Mally's Sunshine Kennel	715-246-2467
LSCV Fire Dept	436-7033
Sheriff's Dept	439-9381

EMERGENCY 911

Notes from the Mayor

We left the snows of February behind us only to be greeted with the waters of March. We had by local accounts historic overland flooding issues across many areas of our city. Once again I have to thank the City and County crews who were working so hard to clear culverts and try to get the water off of the roads. It was an incredibly challenging situation.

I wish I could say there will be a break in April, but as I write this in late March we are making preparations for the potential of major flood issues on the St. Croix River. Although early projections included some fairly dire warnings, favorable weather patterns have helped. With the completion of our flood protection project last fall we are well positioned to meet this challenge, but we are also planning accordingly if conditions change. We have met with the Army Corps of Engineers as well as our partners at the county to plan and prepare. We have also been in contact with our state representatives. Seeing those people and resources coming together to help all of the river communities in our area is heartening.

We have made several appointments to our committees and commissions recently. I would like to welcome new Planning Commissioners Christian Dawson, Kuchen Hale, and Doug Parker; new Park Committee member Jed Housker; and new Natural Resources and Groundwater Committee member Valerie Stoehr. We actually had more applicants for the planning commission than we had openings! Thank you to everyone who applied. We still have openings on all of our other committees, so please visit the city website for details and apply if you are able.

Even with all of the issues we have dealt with recently, and are most likely still dealing with when this newsletter is delivered, April is a special time, soggy conditions and all. The dandelions and crocuses are coming, as is the maple syrup. As we dry out, you might want to take a moment to listen to all the birds returning for spring. One of the things I love about Afton is the incredible number of species we find here, either passing through or here to stay. By the end of the month we will have over 14 hours of daylight. I hope we will all be able to relax just a bit, and enjoy it.

~Bill

Getting Ready for Spring: Rinta Community Garden

Spring will be here soon; time for gardeners to get their hands dirty. The Rinta Community Garden has 20 plots available to residents of the Lower St. Croix Valley.

There is no charge for using a plot. Gardeners are asked not to use pesticides and to use organic fertilizers. There is no well water at the site, but 2 rain barrels collecting runoff from a small shed will hold 250 gallons of water for irrigation when necessary. The installation of a high fence has thwarted hungry deer.

If you are interested in a garden plot at Rinta, contact Afton City Hall or go to the Afton website for an application (Located under "Parks, Park Reservations & Special Events"). Complete and return it to Afton City Hall, 3033 St. Croix Trail, P.O. Box 219, Afton, MN 55001.

If you have additional questions, contact Barbara Ronningen at bjronningen@yahoo.com.



Keeping citizens informed.

Code RED is a web-based system allowing the City and County the ability to reach a large number of citizens in a very short time.

Emergency & community messages can be sent by phone or text to residents identified according to street, neighborhood, entire city or county-wide. Examples of messages may be lost persons, emergency evacuations and crime notifications.

Signing up on the system is easy — residents create their own account and add or remove numbers they want the system to call. Go online to: Washington County, Sheriff's Office, Divisions, 9-1-1 Communications **Code RED**.

Or follow link from the City of Afton's website: www.ci.afton.mn.us

March Meeting Highlights

March 4, 2019 Planning Commission Meeting

The Commission:

- Held a public hearing for the Kathy Bolton-Iverson application for minor subdivision and variance at 3632 St. Croix Trail.
- Held a public hearing for the Tim and Jacqueline Leba application for a variance for a driveway east of Neal at 22nd St.
- Held a public hearing for the Gary Narducci application for a variance and conditional use permit for construction of an accessory building at 3475 Neal Ave.
- Began discussion on pervious pavers and impervious coverage regulations.
- Began reviewing elements of the PLCD ordinance language.

March 19, 2019 City Council Meeting

The Council:

- Viewed a presentation from the Valley Branch Watershed District.
- Approved the Kathy Bolton-Iverson application for minor subdivision and variance at 3632 St. Croix Trail.
- Approved the Tim and Jacqueline Leba application for a variance for a driveway east of Neal at 22nd St.
- Approved the Gary Narducci application for a variance and conditional use permit for construction of an accessory building at 3475 Neal Ave.
- Discussed flood preparations.
- Approved a memorandum of agreement with the Minnesota Land Trust regarding co-holding the conservation easement for the Afton Creek Preserve PLCD.
- Approved an upgrade to the audio/video equipment in the council chambers.
- Re-scheduled the River Road Neighborhood meeting for April 15.
- Appointed Valerie Stoehr to the Natural Resources and Groundwater Committee.

MEETING PACKETS, VIDEOS AND APPROVED MEETING MINUTES ARE AVAILABLE AT:

www.ci.afton.mn.us

METAL & TIRE RECYCLING DAY

Mark your calendars ~ Metal and Tire Recycling Day is scheduled for Saturday, June 1, 2019 at the City Garage, 1675 Stagecoach Trail. 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Watch your May Newsletter for more details.



Enjoy guided fitness hikes in Washington County Parks

Explore the Washington County Parks trail system with guided fitness hikes, with the next hike at 10 to 11:30 a.m. Friday, April 19, at Lake Elmo Park Reserve. Meet at the Nordic Center.

The one-hour hikes involve a warm-up and fitness challenges along the way. Trails are a mix of turf, gravel, grass, snow, and pavement depending on trail conditions, time of year, and location. Plan to arrive 10 minutes early. If light rain or snow, hike will go on as scheduled. The program is for those ages 13 and older. All minors must be accompanied by an adult. Additional hikes will be:

- 10 to 11:30 a.m. Friday, May 24, at Lake Elmo Park Reserve
- 9 to 10:30 a.m. Saturday, June 1, at Pine Point Regional Park as part of Explore Your Parks Day when no vehicle permit is required.

These programs are free with a parks vehicle permit (\$7/day or \$30/annual) with the exception of Free Tuesdays. Follow Washington County Parks on social media at @WashCountyParks.

Belwin Conservancy Upcoming Events

Tuesday, April 16, 2019

Twilight Hike at the Creative Center

6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Come and experience early spring sights and sounds at Belwin Conservancy's beautifully restored oak savanna and prairie.

Information: Free for members, \$10 for non-members. Belwin Conservancy Creative Center, 795 Indian Trail S., Afton

Saturday, April 20, 2019

Early Morning Bird Hike

7:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.

Join us for an early morning bird hike to listen and watch for migratory birds returning home or passing through. Space is limited to 12 participants.

Information: Free for members, \$10 for non-members. Belwin Conservancy, 1553 Stagecoach Trail S., Afton

Saturday, April 20, 2019

Open Third Saturday Events

11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Participate in programs, meet Belwin staff, explore the trails, and connect with nature.

One-Hour Guided Experiences at 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. departing from the Education Center.

April topic: Hone your birding skills. Listen and look for early spring migrants. Learn about identification techniques including birding by ear. Bring binoculars if you have them.

Information: No fee to independently explore the Education Center and trails. Guided Experiences: Free for members, \$10 for non-members. Belwin Conservancy Education Center, 1553 Stagecoach Trail S., Afton

Wednesday, April 24, 2019

Frog Walk at Bulrush Slough

8:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

Enjoy the auditory magic of a spring evening at Belwin Conservancy's Bulrush Slough as we look and listen for chorus frogs, spring peepers and wood frogs. Space is limited to 12 participants.

Information: Free for members, \$10 for non-members. Belwin Conservancy, 1553 Stagecoach Trail S., Afton

Friday, April 26, 2019 (Rain date April 27)

Spring Galaxy Party

8:30 p.m. - 10:30 p.m.

Did you know spring is a good time to view other distant galaxies? This is because our Milky Way galaxy is at or below the horizon, giving us an unobstructed view of intergalactic space. Join Minnesota Astronomical Society members to view galaxy superclusters like Markarian's Chain in the Virgo, Leo and Coma Berenices constellations, and to learn about photography using telescopes.

Information: \$5/car. Belwin Conservancy Joseph J. Casby Observatory, 1553 Stagecoach Trail S., Afton

Saturday, May 18, 2019

Belwin Bison Festival

10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Belwin Conservancy

651-436-5189

www.belwin.org



CITY OF AFTON
3033 ST CROIX TRAIL SO
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AFTON, MN 55001



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**Valley Library Featured Events
for April 2019**

All Washington County Library branches will be closed on Wednesday, April 17 for staff training.

**STEM Saturdays: Wallowing Weather
Saturday, April 6 from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m.**

Summer, spring, fall and winter; the weather seems to change right along with the seasons, but what's the science behind all these temperature changes? During this program at Valley Library kids will wise-up on weather concepts through a variety of experiments and activities. Participants will get to act as meteorologists as they study the effects of air on the weather and the ultraviolet light from the beaming sun. No registration required.

Game Night at the Library

Wednesday, April 10 from 4 to 6 p.m.

Come play table top games with fellow game enthusiasts at the Valley Library! The library has a collection of games like Splendor, Carcassone, and Sagrada, or you can bring your own to share. You can also try the library's Oculus Go Virtual Reality headsets! No registration required.

Let's Make Stuff: Concrete Planters

Saturday, April 20 from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m.

This month at Valley Library we'll make planters out of concrete! Using a variety of molds and decorations, you can create a unique home for a new or favorite plant. Please register online, at Valley Library, or by calling 651-436-5882.

**Full Calendar of Events:
www.washcolib.org
Valley Branch Library
380 St. Croix Trail South
Lakeland, MN 55043
651-436-5882**

**PATRON
AFTON, MN 55001**

You may view this newsletter
IN COLOR
on the city website.



*Please recycle this
newsletter after use.*

County will conduct household hazardous waste collections

Washington County has planned satellite weekend household hazardous waste collections for 2019, in spring and fall. Satellite collections bring the services offered at the Washington County Environmental Center closer to residents, making it more convenient and practical for them to recycle and dispose their household hazardous waste and electronics.

Events planned for spring are:

- at the Hugo Public Works Garage, 8 a.m. to noon Saturday, April 13, 6900 137th St. N., Hugo
- at the Wildwood Elementary School in Mahtomedi, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, April 27, 8698 75th St. N., Mahtomedi, enter at the middle school/high school driveway
- at the Cottage Grove Public Works Garage, 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, May 4, 8635 W. Point Douglas Road S., Cottage Grove
- at Lily Lake Ice Arena in Stillwater 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, May 18, 1208 S. Greeley St. Stillwater
- at the Forest Lake Transit Center, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, June 8, 19987 Fitzgerald Trail N., Forest Lake.

Confidential document shredding will be available at all events.

In addition to the satellite collection events, five dates have been set for confidential paper shredding at the Washington County Environmental Center, Wednesdays 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.:

- Wednesday, April 17
- Wednesday, June 5
- Wednesday, July 31
- Wednesday, Sept. 18
- Wednesday, Nov. 6.

In addition to remote-site collections, the Washington County Environmental Center, 4039 Cottage Grove Drive in Woodbury, provides residents with a free and convenient disposal option for household hazardous waste, electronics, and recyclables all year round.

It is open Tuesday 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., Thursday 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Friday 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Saturday 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

City of Afton

Find us on Facebook!

