



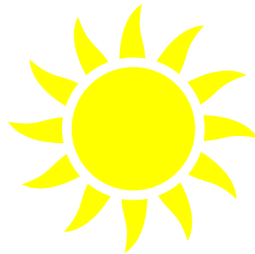
August 2024

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

City of Afton Dashboard
A Summary of Current Happenings

- ◆ The council approved a speed limit change from 55 mph to 45 mph on 45th Street between Trading Post Trail and Pasture Ridge Road.
- ◆ The council approved a crack sealing project for our local roads. Crack sealing is one of the most important steps we can take to extend the life of our roads.
- ◆ The council approved the elimination of animal licensing requirements.
- ◆ The council approved a 60-day extension of the variance at 3185 St. Croix Trail for a wellness and retreat center.

-SAR



Statewide Primary Election August 13, 2024

Vote early in-person (absentee voting)

In-person absentee voting for the statewide primary runs through August 12 at Vote Centers:

- Cottage Grove Service Center: [13000 Ravine Parkway, Cottage Grove.](#)
- Forest Lake Headwaters Service Center: [19955 Forest Road N, Forest Lake.](#)
- Washington County Government Center: [14949 62nd Street. N., Stillwater.](#)
- Woodbury City Hall: [8301 Valley Creek Road, Woodbury.](#)
- Oakdale City Hall: [1584 Hadley Avenue N., Oakdale.](#)

Hours:

Monday - Friday: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Saturday, August 10th: 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Monday, August 12th: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

The polling location for Afton residents on Election Day is Shepherd of the Valley, 14107 Hudson Rd S. from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Tuesday, August 13.

Sample ballots

The sample ballot shows a list of the candidates and ballot questions you'll be voting on. This information is posted about 45 days before an election at: [Minnesota Secretary Of State - What's On My Ballot?](#)

Register to Vote or Check your Registration at:

www.sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting/register-to-vote

CITY MEETINGS

August 5, 2024

Planning Commission Meeting
7:00 PM

August 6, 2024

Natural Resources & Groundwater
Committee
5:00 PM

August 12, 2024

Parks Committee
6:00 PM

August 14, 2024

Heritage Preservation Commission
6:00 PM

August 20, 2024

City Council Meeting
7:00 PM

August 26, 2024

Planning Commission Meeting
7:00 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

Mayor: Bill Palmquist 651-308-0569

Ward 1: Annie Perkins 651-592-3007

Ward 2: Lucia Wroblewski 651-436-3982

Ward 3: Stan Ross 612-720-6478

Ward 4: Randy Nelson 651-436-2479

CITY HALL

651-436-5090

CITY WEBSITE

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

Notes from the Mayor

The rain held off just long enough for the 4th of July Parade to get up and down main street, and for our Grand Marshall Mary Divine to get knighted by the St. Paul Winter Carnival royalty in Town Square Park. Then it poured! But it was a fun day thanks in large part to the great volunteers who put on the event. Thank you all for dealing with the less than ideal weather and welcoming all the visitors who came to enjoy the day.

At its July meeting the Council voted to eliminate the requirement for dogs and cats to be licensed. When this requirement was originally enacted, the small fee was meant solely to cover related costs. The major goal of the ordinance was to help provide one more way for a lost pet to be reunited with its owner before animal control took it to the pound. This can result in large fees for the owner and the hope was to reduce the number of times that happened. In the end, that goal was not reached. We had very few opportunities to use that license information to locate the owner and found very few pet owners obtained licenses. This meant we had an incomplete database when residents called after finding lost pets. Due to this it was decided the staff time required was greater than the benefit we were seeing.

A few months ago I mentioned the City was adding a page to its website listing local farm stands in our community. That page is now up and we have our first few local farm stands listed. To view it, from the Home page hover over the Community Resources Tab and you will find the Local Farm Stands link under Ag Resources. Hopefully that list will continue to grow. At the June meeting the Council amended the Home Occupation Ordinance to allow retail sales of food prepared by residents who have obtained a tier-one Cottage Food license from the State of Minnesota. In this way more local food options beyond fresh fruits and vegetables may now be available.

I attended the Lumber Jack Days Parade in July, and the organizers selected Gary Kriesel as the Grand Marshal which was a great selection! Gary has served as our Washington County Commissioner for many years and has been a great partner to our city. Gary has always been open and available and served with integrity and hard work. He has chosen not to seek reelection so I want to take a moment here to thank him, and let you all know how much help he has been over the years to Afton. From our long-term goals for open space preservation, to our commitment to maintaining our infrastructure, Gary was always ready to help when there was an opportunity to work with the county to reach those goals. Thank you, Gary!

-Bill

Afton City Elections

City offices, to be voted on at the **November 5, 2024 General Election**, will open in the City of Afton for Mayor and two Council seats as follows:

Mayor – at-large – 2-Year Term
Ward 1 City Council – 4-Year Term
Ward 4 City Council – 4-Year Term

The filing period opens on Tuesday, July 30, 2024, and closes at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 13, 2024.

- The filing fee is \$2.00.
- All candidates must be at least 21 years of age when assuming office.
- Candidates for Ward 1 or 4 must reside in the ward in which they seek election, and will have maintained residence in the ward 30 days before the election.
- Council positions serve a four-year term.
- Mayoral position serves a two-year term, commencing on the first Tuesday in January, 2025.

An Affidavit of Candidacy MUST be filed at the Afton City Office during the filing period. If you'd like to file by mail, contact the office and we will send you the forms. You also may schedule an appointment to come to City Hall and file in person. The filing fee is \$2.00. All City Council seats are non-partisan. Candidates may withdraw from the election by filing an Affidavit of Withdrawal no later than 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 15, 2024.

Preliminary results of 2024 Afton Water Sampling Program

Of the 150 test kits made available for Afton residents, 68 were picked up and 59 returned. Nitrate levels measured were typically low in the south and east areas of Afton, and higher to the west (more agricultural areas). Nineteen samples grew Coliform bacteria (including one with E. coli). There did not appear to be any correlation between nitrate levels and Coliform bacteria growth (as has been seen in the past). Final data along with maps of the results will be in a future newsletter, and will be available on the City of Afton website.

-Natural Resources and Groundwater Committee

Join the Stop Food Waste Challenge

Did you know that about 40% of food is wasted somewhere along the supply chain? That's like stepping out of a grocery store with five bags of food and dropping two in the parking lot. You may not think you waste that much food at home, but the little bits here and there add up.

The Stop Food Waste Challenge is a month-long effort starting August 1 to help you notice when you are wasting food, commit to actions that will have the greatest impact in your household, connect you with helpful resources, and provide support and motivation along the way.

Sign up at:

<https://stopfoodwaste.ecochallenge.org>

stop
food waste
challenge

Meeting Highlights

The **July 2024 Planning Commission Meeting** was canceled due to lack of agenda items.

July 16, 2024 City Council Meeting

The Council:

- Approved a speed limit recommendation of 45 mph on 45th Street east of St. Croix Trail, and approved warning signage with a recommendation of 35mph at the west end of 30th Street.
- Approved an Ordinance amendment to eliminate the animal licensing requirement.
- Approved the 2024 street crackseal project.

MEETING PACKETS, VIDEOS AND APPROVED MEETING MINUTES ARE AVAILABLE AT:
www.ci.afton.mn.us

Belwin Conservancy Upcoming Events

MUSICIANS TAKE TO THE TREES AT BELWIN THIS AUGUST

Belwin's Two-Day Live Music Event will be ticketed this year

Belwin Conservancy is excited to host Music in the Trees, a two-day outdoor event showcasing a diverse group of instrumentalists and vocalists, from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on **Saturday, August 17, and Sunday, August 18**, in and among the red pines near Belwin's Hilltop Classroom (Belwin Education Site, 1553 Stagecoach Trail S., Afton).

First held in 2019, Music in the Trees has been gradually growing in popularity. This year, for the first time, Belwin is asking guests to purchase tickets beforehand to help with the flow of attendees. To buy tickets, go to belwin.org/events. Tickets will be available on a sliding scale for \$10, \$20, or \$35 per car

For details and registration contact:

Belwin Conservancy
1553 Stagecoach Trail South
Afton MN 55001
651-436-5189
www.belwin.org

Afton Museum Speaker Series

3165 St. Croix Trail S, Afton, MN 55001



Dr. Kate Thomas, Historian

Presents *The First 70 Years: A History of the Valley Creek Women's Club in Afton*

Thursday, September 19, 2024

6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Light refreshments served

Free event, Museum donations appreciated

RSVP by September 16: 651-346-9494 or linda@aftonhistoricalmuseum.com

Dr. Kris Hansen, Analytical Chemist, Consultant

Presentation on PFAS—the forever chemicals in our environment, followed by Q&A

Thursday, October 10, 2024

6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Light refreshments served

Free event, Museum donations appreciated

RSVP by October 7: 651-346-9494 or linda@aftonhistoricalmuseum.com

Note: a waitlist will be started if capacity is reached. For information on giving a presentation, contact Leslie Thomas at leslie@aftonhistoricalmuseum.com

Support Local First-Year Educators – Monetary Donations and Classroom Supplies Needed for Teacher Kits



community thread

Community Thread is dedicated to supporting educators in our community. In preparation for the 2024-2025 school year, Community Thread is seeking monetary donations and classroom supplies for Teacher Kits, aiming to help 70 first-year teachers in the Stillwater area.

Teacher Kits are designed to ease the financial burden that many teachers experience when preparing their classroom for a year of learning and growing with their students. According to USA Today, a staggering 90 percent of teachers spend their own money on classroom supplies, tools, and materials that are not covered by their salary or a district budget. In fact, the National Education Association estimates that teachers spend nearly \$800 of their own money to support their students throughout the year.

Community members can make a monetary contribution to help purchase Teacher Kits supplies online or can shop via the Teacher Kit Amazon Wish List at <https://communitythreadmn.org/education-support/>. Donations will be accepted through August 5 and can be dropped off at Community Thread, 2300 Orleans St. W. Stillwater, MN 55082, Monday – Friday, 9am-4pm.

Community Thread's mission is to maximize resources and engage volunteers to improve the quality of life for adults and families in our community. Since 1967, Community Thread has worked to leverage volunteers around unmet community needs, in addition to providing essential services to older adults and adults with disabilities and other special needs. To learn more visit www.CommunityThreadMN.org or call 651-439-7434.



**SAVE
THE
DATE!**

**Field of Bands
Washington County Fairgrounds
September 21, 2024**



CITY OF AFTON
3033 ST CROIX TRAIL SO
P.O. BOX 219
AFTON, MN 55001

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
AFTON MN 55001
PERMIT NO. 15

Valley Library Events & Important Dates

Did you know your last chance to submit your Washington County Library Summer Activity Program game card is August 17th? Washington County Library celebrates everyone - Kids, Teens, and Adults – and we have prizes for each age group. Use the Search term “summer” at washcolib.org for more information.

Washington County is collecting gently used school supplies for a swap in August. The Valley Library will accept your donations through August 2. Go to washcorecycles.com/reuse for the list of accepted items.

The Valley Library Art Cart is available whenever the library is open. We provide the supplies and you provide the creativity!

For Adults:

The Valley Library Book Club meets 5:00-6:00pm on the 4th Thursday of every month. The title selection for the **Thursday August 22nd** meeting is “Plainsong” by Kent Haruf. Copies are available to borrow at the Valley branch.

For Kids:

Every Monday 10:30-11:00 am Storytime
Join us at 10:30 a.m. on Mondays for Storytime at Valley Library. This storytime is for children of all ages and their caregivers.

Super Storytime on August 12 10:30-11:30 – Storytime plus a fun craft activity.

Monday, August 5 and August 19th 1:00-2:30
Brick Buddies

Thursday, August 8th 4:00-6:00 Ages 10+
Registration Required DIY Teen – Sew Your Own Pizza Pillow

Saturday, August 10th 11:30-12:30 Ages 5+
Summer STEM – Engineering Day

Wednesday, August 14th – Summer Readers Book Club 11:00-12:00

Saturday, August 17th Bill the Juggler 11:00-12:00 All ages

Saturday, August 17th End of Summer Party

Tuesday, August 20th 2:30-4:00 Tween and Teen Craft Camp Ages 10+

Thursday, August 29th 2:30-4:00 Drop-In Seed Art program All ages

For complete information and to register for programs contact:

**Valley Library 651-436-5882
www.washcolib.org**

**PATRON
AFTON, MN 55001**

Online payments are now available for city permits & fees including Building Permits and Sewer Payments,
www.ci.afton.mn.us



Please recycle this newsletter after use.

KNOTWEED

Knotweeds (*Polygonum Spp.*) are a shrub-like, fast-growing perennial that spreads rapidly, degrades habitats, alters waterways, and displaces native vegetation. They can grow through cracks in pavement and foundations causing costly property damage.

Afton has a few known infestations of Knotweed. In order to prevent its spread and succeed in eradication, **we need your help!**

For more information, please visit:
<https://www.mda.state.mn.us/plants/pestmanagement/weedcontrol/noxiouslist/knotweed>



Photo by Minnesota Department of Agriculture

**IS THIS PLANT ON
YOUR PROPERTY?**

Schedule a site visit with WCD staff to discuss monitoring & control:
www.nwcd.org/site-visit-signup-form • 651-393-6600