

May, 2016

Volume 10, Issue 3

Gem Lake News

Gretchen Artig-Swomley, Newsletter Editor

Special Interest Articles:

- *Water Project Begins in Business District*
- *Scholarship Awarded*
- *City News Page 4*
- *"Trash to Treasure" Event*

Upcoming Recycling Dates:

- *May 11*
- *May 25*
- *June 8*

Tip: put out your bin the night before for 7 a.m. pick-up.

Nate Tessier Wins Gem Lake Scholarship

Nate Tessier, high school senior and Gem Lake resident, has been awarded \$1,000 through the Gem Lake Scholarship Program. The award was made after review of his application at the Gem Lake City Council Meeting on April 19.

The Gem Lake Scholarship Program was started in 2010 to provide funds to graduating high school seniors for their post-secondary education. In its six-year existence, the program has awarded \$500-1000 to a variety of students, and in a couple of years, multiple candidates received the award. The funds can be used for any type of post-secondary education, such as college or technical school. This year's deadline was April 1. Applicants must be in their senior year of high school and must be residents of Gem Lake.

Nate Tessier's application showed an impressive commitment to academic excellence and
(continued on page 2)



Gem Lake "Trash to Treasure Day" April 30

Gem Lake is going to be joining in a popular event held annually by White Bear Township, when it holds its own "Trash to Treasure" Day on Saturday, April 30. This fun event is the ultimate in recycling. Residents put out items on the curb that they are trying to pass on to someone else (also known as getting rid of), with a sign that says "free." You can download a free sign from the Gem Lake City website. (GemLakemn.org.)

Then the fun begins, with people picking up treasures all day. Our only rule for the "Trash to Treasure" event is that if no one picks up your items, you need to remove them at the end of the day. White Bear Township and surrounding communities have been holding this popular event for years, with great success. Many folks wait for the annual treasure hunt and then have fun driving around with a trailer, looking for items they might want to own themselves. Items should be clearly marked as free, just so there is no confusion about those lawn ornaments that you do want to keep!



Nate Tessier Wins Gem Lake Scholarship (continued from page 1)

other school activities and community outreach.

For instance, Nate achieved the "A" Honor Roll in 9th, 11th and 12th grades. He took many AP (Advanced Placement) and Honors science and math classes during his high school years.

He was also active in high school football, weights and basketball for three years. He received an All Conference Honorable Mention for High School Football in 2015.

Nate helped coach a youth football team and did a mission trip to Guatemala as part of his community service.

According to one of his teachers at the White Bear Lake South Campus High School "Nate is entirely deserving of this award, as he has demonstrated academic abilities and character qualities. Nate challenges himself academically, as is shown by his success in AP and Honors level courses in math and science. Nate is also well rounded, showing curiosity and aptitude."

Nate Tessier plans to attend the University of Minnesota and to pursue a Bachelor's Degree in the field of science, possibly biology.

In 2010, the first scholarship recipient was Jamie Lynn Nadeau. The following year, the scholarship was awarded to four students, including Sima Bazooband, Sam Bosak, Adam Holman and Jeffrey Strommer. In 2012, the scholarship went to Rachel Andert. There were two recipients in 2013. They were Holly Lorenz and Adam Lindner. There were no applicants in 2014 and 2015, due to a declining number of senior and a lost application.

Congratulations to Nate Tessier!

Water Project Begins

Ground was broken recently for the commencement of Gem Lake's municipal water project.

For the first time in its fifty-six years as a city, Gem Lake will have city water available in the business district. Much has already been published on the city's water project and its scope, but following a public hearing on November 19, the council voted unanimously approving resolutions 2015-26 and 2015-27, thereby authorizing the project to begin.

Available city water also permits buildings to have automatic sprinkler fire suppression systems, which reduces insurance costs. City water has become a minimum standard for both development and public health. Gem Lake will contract with the City of White Bear for its water and will begin its own water billing program.

Water bills will help cover the costs of operating and maintaining the piping network, and future city budgets will reflect the new enterprise revenue fund. The water project is funded 100% by assessment to affected property owners. Construction will take place over the next few months.



Raingarden Seminars Open to Gem Lake Residents

There will be two upcoming opportunities to attend the popular Raingarden Workshop, which is sponsored by the Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization, also known as VLAWMO.

The seminars will be held May 3 or May 11 from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. at the Vadnais Heights Fire Station, 3995 Arcade Street North, Vadnais Heights, MN 55127.

Raingardens are becoming more and more popular in today's landscaping. They beautify your yard, provide habitat for native bees and butterflies, and help the environment by stopping polluted rainwater from running into our lakes, streams and wetlands.

Participants will leave this workshop with the tools and information you need to get your hands dirty and install a raingarden in your yard. This class will get into detail about how to properly design a raingarden and step-by-step installation instructions. Basic maintenance will also be covered, so you can keep your new garden looking beautiful for years to come. You'll leave with lots of take home information and a list of raingarden experts if you need more help once you get home.

Another reason to sign up...

Money is available to help you. VLAWMO has a Landscaping Grant Program, that gives property owners in the watershed district up to \$2,000 to put in an approved project. Funding is also available for the purchase of rainbarrels. Go to <http://www.vlawmo.org/grants> to learn more about these grant programs. Funding is available for residents of the watershed only. There is a map of the watershed boundaries on the website.

The raingarden classes will be taught by Kristine Jensen, VLAWMO program manager and award-winning landscape designer.



A beautiful local raingarden.

“We encourage folks from all backgrounds to come to these training seminars, from those who have no experience and are looking to get into gardening and improve local water quality, to those who have already taken one of our classes and would like a refresher,” said Kristine.

The cost to register is \$10 and the course is open to residents and non-residents. You can register online at <http://www.vlawmo.org/events>. Or contact Kristine Jensen at 651-204-6074. Kristine can also be contacted at Kristine.jensen@vlawmo.org.

City News Page

Recycling Results are Impressive

Gem Lake residents recycled a total of 4.98 tons of materials in the first two months of 2016. Also impressive was the participation rate in the city-wide, single-sort recycling program. During these months, 91.66 % of residents participated by setting out their recycling bins on time and with the right kind of materials.

Of the material collected, the most common items were newspapers, the least common were scrap metal. Here is a breakdown of the 4.98 tons.

Newspaper: 3.11 tons
Mixed Glass: .59 tons
Color Sorted Glass: .09 tons
Cans (Aluminum and Steel) .21 tons
Mixed Paper and Cardboard: .75 tons
Plastic: .19 tons
Scrap Steel: .04 tons

New Billing Software

The City of Gem Lake updated its software program that is used for billing for sanitary sewer, fire inspections and septic inspections. The new program allows for emailing of invoices and automatic bank drafting.

If you would like to have your invoice emailed to you, please send an email to Gloria.tessier@Gemlakemn.org. Please include your account number or address of your billing location. If you would like to have an automatic bank draft, please call Gloria Tessier at 651-747-2792 to set it up. Please note that payments now go to the City of Gem Lake at 4200 Otter Lake Road.

New Rental Property Requirements

Effective January 1, 2016, the City of Gem Lake will begin licensing all rental property in the City. Persons with rental property will be required to obtain a rental license for their rental units. Licenses will be for a two-year period. The licensing fee is \$100.00 for a single family unit and for a two family unit \$50.00 per unit. All units will be subject to an annual inspection. Contact Gloria Tessier at 651-747-2792.

August Meeting Date Changed

The Gem Lake City Council meeting for August of 2016 has been changed to August 23, which is the fourth Tuesday of the month. Normally, council meetings are held on the third Tuesday. The change was made due to a scheduling conflict.

More Options for Paint Recycling

Looking to get rid of some cans of paint or stains? There are more options to recycle them. Go to Paintcare.org to find a free drop-off location near you. Looking for paint or stains to use? Check out the Ramsey County Reuse Center at 5 Empire Drive in Saint Paul. It's free! For hours and directions go to RamseyRecycles.com and click on Household Hazardous Waste.

Blake Huffman, County Commissioner, Attends Council Meeting

Blake Huffman, Ramsey County Commissioner, District 1, attended the Gem Lake City Council Meeting on March 15 at Heritage Hall.

Huffman attends council meetings periodically around the county in order to bring citizens up to date on county programs, trends, initiatives, etc.

At the meeting he discussed the numerous road construction projects that will be happening on county roads during the spring and summer. As the Goose Lake bridge and underpass project begins to ramp down later this year, the Highway 96 project will be ramping up, promising a fun commute for all.

It will be a busy summer for construction projects in general, including the new library in Shoreview, which will be open this Fall. The Moundsview School system will be taking over the old library building and using it for their administrative headquarters.

The Rice Creek Commons Development project is very much underway at the site of the old Twin Cities Army Ammunition Plant near the intersection of Interstate 35W and Highway 10 in Arden Hills. The area has been completely cleaned and the land put out for bid to interested developers. To date, several have expressed interest in the area. The eastern section of the development will include over 1,000 units of housing, with the western section set to include approximately 2 million square feet of business space. The goal is to produce between 3 and 4,000 new jobs. If all goes as planned, development will begin in a year or two.

Rice Creek Commons promises to be a vibrant and interesting project for the area, according to Huffman. Intensive planning between the City of Arden Hills and an experienced design firm has resulted in an initial plan that will emphasize walkable neighborhoods, green space, economic and social opportunities and land that can be brought successfully back to the tax rolls.

The parcel includes a total of 427 cleaned and revitalized acres, of which 323 can be developed. The goal will be to create a 50/50 mix of commercial and residential neighborhoods, surrounding a town center. Ultimately, it is hoped that Rice Creek Commons will serve as both home and workplace for hundreds of families. (For more information on the project, Google Rice Creek Commons.)



Recycling was also on Huffman's mind. He reported that about 51% of county garbage is recycled at present. The goal is to improve business recycling. In order to increase efficiency, costs and total recycling numbers, the county purchased the Newport Recycling Center recently.

The City of Gem Lake

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This newsletter is also posted
on the city's web-site under the
"Documents" section.

We're on the Web!

See us at:
www.gemlakemn.org

Meetings: May and June 2016

The following Gem Lake
Meetings will be held at
Heritage Hall for the next
few months.

May 3, 2016

Planning Commission
Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

CANCELLED

May 9, 2016

City Council Workshop at
7:00 p.m.

May 17, 2016

City Council Meeting at
7:00 p.m.

June 7, 2016

Planning Commission
Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

June 13, 2016

City Council Workshop at
7:00 p.m.

June 21, 2016

City Council Meeting at
7:00 p.m.

Your Gem Lake City Council

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For more information on
meetings, city ordinances,
recent events, permit
procedures, etc. please
consult the Gem Lake
web-site. The address is
www.gemlakemn.org

Each Gem Lake
Newsletter is also posted
on the web-site under the

news section.

Please email your ideas,
comments and
suggestions. See box at
left for detailed contact
information.

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