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Gem Lake News

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Special Interest Articles:

- *Final Budget Passed*
- Election Results
- City News Page 4
- Fond Farewell to Gem Lake resident

Upcoming Recycling Dates:

- *November 23*
- *December 7*
- *December 21*
- *Tip: put out your bin the night before for 7 a.m. pick-up.*

Final Budget Passed for 2017

The final 2017 budget for the City of Gem Lake was voted upon by the Gem Lake City Council at the November 15 City Council meeting.

A total general fund budget of \$419,976 was agreed upon for next year, which includes a General Tax Levy of \$363,294 and a Debt Tax Levy of \$75,987, based upon best estimates of costs for running the City of Gem Lake in 2017.

This general fund budget is down somewhat from preliminary estimates, which had the budget at **(continued on page 2)**



Results in for 2016 Election

It was a busy day at the polls on election day.

In addition to the results at the county, state and national level, there is also news of local winners.

Bob Uzpen was re-elected to the office of Mayor of Gem Lake, and will begin his third term in January of 2017.

In addition, city council members Faith Kuny and Jim Lindner were re-elected to their second and third terms respectively.

A total of 340 voters were eligible to vote in Gem Lake as of election day. This included 308 who were registered as of November 8 and 32 who registered that day. Of this number, 283 people actually voted, making Gem Lake's participation percentage around 83%.

Of these, 214 people voted for Bob Uzpen for mayor, 186 people voted for Faith Kuny and 183 people voted for Jim Lindner for city council. All three candidates ran for the three open spots unopposed.

City Council and mayoral terms run for four years. Thank you to everyone for voting.



Final Budget Approved for 2017 (continued from page 1)

a total of \$474,950 for the general fund. The preliminary budget also projected a property tax levy of \$494,281. These figures were based on worst case scenarios for line items that were not yet final, such as fire and police protection, and were used in developing the preliminary tax notices sent out to all Gem Lake property owners.

This happens each year because Ramsey County requires that a preliminary budget be presented and voted upon by the end of September. By state law, the total budget number cannot go up from the preliminary figure, but can go down. This means, cities have to budget high while waiting for final budget numbers to come in.

Since the preliminary budget was presented, various refinements were made, which have reduced the final budget and the property tax levy. These refinements included reduced costs on some contracts and line items, such as recycling, legal services, newsletter production, and fire protection.

The total budget for the city for 2017 will be \$565,886, which includes the general fund budget of \$419,976, that covers the general operations of the city; as well as \$77,055 for the debt service fund, which goes to pay for the bond on Heritage Hall; and \$68,855 for the enterprise fund, which goes to pay for the municipal water project for Hoffman's Corner, and is paid for by assessments.

The general fund budget increased \$21,938 over 2016 due to four main factors. There were increases in the public safety budgets of 5.8% for law enforcement and 9.2% for fire protection. In both cases, the increases were primarily due to equipment needs. There were also increases in the general fund budget to cover \$13,500 for the MS4 Storm Water Reporting requirements for next year; and \$63,000 to start the update on the Comprehensive City Plan that is due every 10 years by the Metropolitan Council. The last two items are unfunded mandates that must be done by state law.



The largest source of revenue for the city is property taxes, which will be funded by the tax levy of \$363,294.

Ramsey County determines the market value of homes in Gem Lake and the state of Minnesota then establishes property class rates. Class rates applied to market values establishes each city's tax capacity. Once a city has established its tax levy, the amount is divided by tax capacity to determine the tax rate. The tax rate is multiplied by individual tax capacity to determine the amount of property tax paid. Got that?

The good news is that residential property values increased an average of 7.1% in Ramsey County. The median value of a home increased from \$227,800 last year to \$243,950. The bad news is that commercial values increased, but not as much as residential values. This creates a shift of the tax burden from commercial to residential.

About 43 cents of every tax dollar you pay for property taxes goes to the county, 19 cents goes to the school district, 30 cents goes to Gem Lake and 8 cents goes to other agencies. The bottom line is that your Gem Lake property taxes will probably go down a little from the preliminary estimate you received in the mail.

Impressive Recycling Numbers for Gem Lake

In the first 9 months of the year, Gem Lake residents have already recycled 24.6 tons of materials. Also impressive is the participation rate in the city's recycling program. So far this year, an average of 92.01% of city households participate every month by putting out their recycling bins.

This 24.6 tons of material breaks down as follows for the year to date:

- 15.4 tons of newspaper
- 2.9 tons of mixed glass
- 0.4 tons of color sorted glass
- 1.0 tons of cans, both aluminum and steel
- 3.7 tons of cardboard and mixed paper
- 0.9 tons of plastic
- 0.2 tons of scrap steel

In addition to the 24.6 tons of usable material collected, there was also a total of 1.6 tons of residue material, meaning items that could not be recycled.

For a very complete list of items that can be fully recycled, you can go to Gem Lake's website and click on city services, then follow the links to Waste Management.

Get Involved in the CERT Program-Learn Valuable Emergency Skills

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program partners community members and emergency services personnel together for coordinated responses following a catastrophic disaster. During such disasters, communities may not have immediate access to emergency services because of the size of the area affected, lost communications, or unusable roads. CERT trained citizens can help their neighbors and neighborhoods. Volunteers for the program are being sought for training that will begin next year.

(Continued on page 4, right column)

Oh What a Relief it is!

After a wait that seemed to take forever, the underpass beneath 35E at Goose Lake Road is finally open.

The underpass rebuild was part of an area wide freeway reconstruction project that lasted 18 months. During this time, the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MN-DOT) rebuilt bridges over Goose Lake Road and at Highway 96, did widening and reconstruction of the freeway and repaired the entrances and exits onto the freeway at both Highway 96 and County Road E.

The closing of the underpass at Goose Lake Road was much needed, due to crumbling infrastructure on the freeway above, but it caused major traffic hassles for those living in Gem Lake.

Commuting times were impacted for those who needed to head north and west each day, due to the fact that alternative routes were also under construction. The new underpass is greatly improved and much appreciated by residents of Gem Lake. It reopened on November 18.



City News Page

City Makes Donation to Food Shelf

The Gem Lake City Council voted to provide a donation of \$1000 to the White Bear Lake Area Emergency Food Shelf at its October City Council Meeting on October 18.

The donation resulted from charitable gambling proceeds that came into the city from pull-tab sales within city limits. The donation was greatly appreciated by the food shelf, which is now gearing up for holiday food needs.

Food Shelf Collection Box Now at Heritage Hall

Beginning on December 1, there will be a box at Heritage Hall for your non-perishable donations to the White Bear Lake Area Emergency Food Shelf.

Please feel free to drop off a donation any time you are in the area or attending a city event, such as a city council meeting. Volunteers on the city council will see that the donation box gets to the food shelf whenever needed.

Items that are especially needed include things like cooking oils, spices, disposable diapers, basic toiletries and pet food.

Winter Parking Rules in Effect in Gem Lake

It is never too early to start planning for the snowfall. On-street parking is not allowed in Gem Lake after a snowfall of two inches or more, until after streets have been plowed, according to City Ordinance Number 86. (Section 6.4.2)

If cars are parked on city streets after a snowfall, the plows could have to make an extra trip back in the hopes that the cars would be gone.

"We want to be responsible with your money, so please get your car moved off the streets when we get a snowfall," says Mayor Bob Uzpen.

Get Involved in the CERT Program—Learn Valuable Emergency Skills (continued from page 3)

The Sheriff's Office and emergency personnel train members of neighborhoods, community organizations and businesses in disaster preparedness and basic disaster response skills.

The nine-week training course outline includes:

- *Disaster preparedness
- *CERT organization
- *Fire Safety
- *Light Search and Rescue
- *Disaster psychology
- *Disaster medical operations-part one
- *Disaster medical operations-part two
- *Terrorism
- *Final Exercise and Graduation

Upon graduation, CERT members use the training learned in the classroom to assist their neighborhoods and workplaces following an event when emergency responders are not immediately available.

The next available training session will be offered beginning in mid-March of 2017. Training sessions will be conducted on Wednesday evenings from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. for nine weeks. Classes are limited to 25 people and are free. To apply you must be a resident of the State of Minnesota, you must be 18 or older and you must pass a background check. For the application form or for more information, call the Sheriff's Office at 651-266-9333.

Small Business Saturday is November 26

Don't forget to support your local Gem Lake area small businesses on Small Business Saturday, this coming November 26. The national event is a day to celebrate and support small businesses and all they do for our communities.

Gem Lake Says Good-bye to Millie LaBathe

Gem Lake says good bye to a beloved former resident who passed away last month. Mildred Rose LaBathe was born in 1923 in Gem Lake, the daughter of Charley and Anna Scheuneman, who were owners of the original Scheuneman's Market, and after whom the road was named.

Millie passed away on October 11 in Woodbury, Minnesota, preceded in death by Bill, her husband of 65 years. She left behind two daughters and one son, as well as 4 grandchildren. She also left behind her life-long best friend, Lorraine Birkeland, who knew her from childhood. Lorraine's family still owns and operates White Bear Floral.

Due to her generosity, Millie also left behind many memories of early Gem Lake, which were published in this newsletter over the years. She helped this editor write a variety of history stories on such subjects as Scheueman's Market, the original schoolhouse that once sat in what is now the parking lot of the car dealership in Gem Lake, and history of Hoffman's Corner and its many original businesses and notable people.

Although buying locally grown produce is trendy now, the idea reached its heyday in the 1930's and '40's, when Scheuneman's Market was a Hoffman's Corner hot spot.

Located on the site of what is now the Gun Shop on County Road E, the market once supplied fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables to thousands of people in the Gem Lake and White Bear area.

The market was owned and managed by Charley and his brother Augie Scheuneman, and opened sometime around 1928. Charley grew much of the produce on a nearby farm, which was located behind and around what is now the area of Barnett Kia. The 40-acre farm produced potatoes, carrots and all varieties of other vegetables. Augie and his wife Rose worked in the shop, as did Millie, starting at about age 12.

Mildred spent many summers working at the market, until she got married during World War II to Bill LaBathe, who was in the Navy at the time. She remembered the shop sold ice cream and fresh bread, as well as many other items. The market continued on for decades until it was sold to Clarence Wild following Charley's illness and eventual death. By that time, the supermarket had emerged, and major changes in the route of Highway 61 had already spelled the end of the heyday of the market. Our fond good-bye to Mildred LaBathe.



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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: December 2016

The following Gem Lake
Meetings will be held at
Heritage Hall in
December.

December 6, 2016

Planning Commission
meeting at 7:00 p.m.

December 12, 2016

City Council Workshop at
7:00 p.m.

December 20, 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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