

Gem Lake News

Gretchen Artig-Swomley, Newsletter Editor

Special Interest Articles:

- Farewell to Gem Lake Resident
- Scheueman Road Project Update
- City News Page 4
- Audit Complete for 2017

Upcoming Recycling Dates:

- July 18
- August 1
- August 15
- *Tip: put out your bin the night before for 7 a.m. pick-up.*

Farewell Carolyn Ann Nordstrom

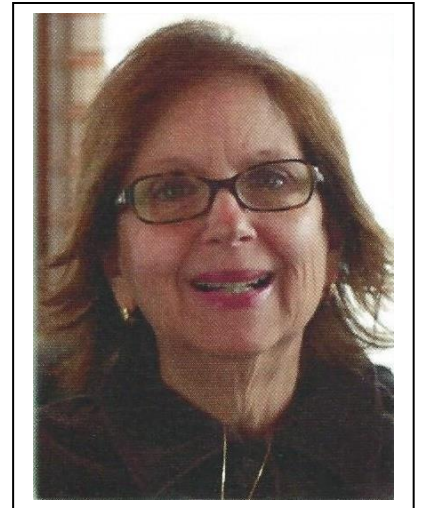
Long time Gem Lake resident Carolyn Ann Nordstrom died on June 9 of this year from complications of early on-set Alzheimer's disease. She was 67 years old.

Carolyn Ann is survived by husband Richard, to whom she was married for 42 years; as well as three daughters, three grandchildren, and many family and friends who mourn her passing.

Richard and Carolyn Ann moved to Gem Lake more than 40 years ago. She spent 27 years as a medical lab technician for various labs, most recently a long stint at Regions Hospital. She retired from the hospital in 2011, as signs of the disease began to come to the forefront.

"She was a sweet heart," said Richard recently. "Very unselfish. She left us way too young."

Continued on page 3



Gem Lake Passes 2017 Audit with Flying Colors

Gem Lake's 2017 audit is now complete and the results are fairly standard. City Council Members were given a complete presentation of the results at the June 19th City Council Meeting.

The audit was conducted by CliftonLarsonAllen LLP, who also did the previous five audits. According to CliftonLarsonAllen, the result was what is called an unmodified report, which is good. Auditors found that the financial statements of Gem Lake presented fairly in all material respects the true financial position of the city.

Management judgments and accounting estimates were considered reasonable and supported. Disclosures were deemed to be clear and complete. According to Christopher Knopik, a Manager of CliftonLarsonAllen, no difficulties were encountered in performing the audit. The audit showed that management judgements and accounting estimates were reasonable and supported, there were no uncorrected adjustments and disclosures were adequate, clear and complete. *(continued pg. 2)*



Gem Lake Passes 2017 Audit (continued from page 1)

“In fact, management was most cooperative and helpful. We found that personnel and records were available.”

In terms of financial results for 2017, Knopik had a number of observations. The Minnesota Office of the State Auditor recommends that cities have no less than six months of operating revenues in reserve at any one time, to account for the long periods of time between county property tax payments to municipalities. At present, Gem Lake has approximately 11 months, which is good. This increase in reserves is due partly to an increase in property taxes in 2017.



Tax revenues, as a portion of overall income in the city, remained consistent with the year before, license and permit revenues decreased and miscellaneous income increased in 2017. In terms of expenditures, general government, conservation and development and public works expenditures in 2017 all decreased over the year before.

In terms of the Gem Lake Sewer Fund, there was an increase in revenues, due to yearly septic inspections. Expenses also increased slightly. The unrestricted net position of the sewer fund is \$476,304. The sewer fund has a positive cash flow from its operations.

Auditors pointed out one material weakness, which exists in Gem Lake and many other small cities in the State. We lack complete segregation of duties on financial reporting duties. This is due to the small size of the staff available to perform the necessary tasks

. There was also one utility item that had to be reclassified on the books and some small material audit adjustments. Other than that, everything looked good.

Gem Lake Villas Project Update

The Villas at Gem Lake project began this Spring with major excavation work to the land, the shaping of the road and individual lots, and the start of a model home.

The development will include 30 villa homes that will be sold over the next several years.

The nearly 18 acre section of land is located on County Road E and was formerly owned by Tom Hansen, a long time resident of Gem Lake.



Rain Water Matters by Jim Lindner

I write this on a rainy Sunday morning which gives me time to reflect on what exactly happens to the rainwater once it falls from the clouds. The majority of the rain falls on open ground, our yards and parks, and filters into the ground. Once in the ground it makes its way to our lakes and rivers or filters deeper into the ground where it becomes the water we drink and use in our daily lives. But some of the rainwater falls on streets or driveways and runs along until it finds a storm sewer. Once in the storm sewer it goes directly into our rivers.



Whether the rainwater ultimately becomes ground water or enters our waterways, it often encounters various contaminants. Motor oil spilled on a driveway or leaked on a road, or herbicides and pesticides applied to yards and fields all will mix with the rainwater as it makes its journey. Soil will filter some of the chemicals from the water, but the water that flows direct to rivers and lakes often does not have anything to filter out the contaminants. Thus, the waters we fish and recreate in often have dangerous chemicals present. The fish we eat or the water we swim in contain toxic chemicals. Yuck!

Stormwater management attempts to prevent such mixing of rainwater and chemicals and in many cases, this begins with us. Let's be mindful of the rainwater when we apply fertilizer on our lawns or if we spill gasoline or oil when maintaining our lawn equipment. Keeping chemicals away from rainwater

ultimately provides us clean water to drink, healthier fish to catch, and cleaner water in which to swim.

Farewell to Carolyn Nordstrom (continued from page 1)

"This probably came from being one of 11 children. She is survived by four brothers and six sisters. She was born in South Dakota, raised in St. Paul, and grew up to be a really hard working person."

She was officially diagnosed with Alzheimers in 2015, but remained quite functional until the last year. She continued to host dinner parties and was known for her cheerful disposition. Richard and Carolyn enjoyed hosting friends and family in their Gem Lake home, which they moved into in 1976 and always called their "starter home." Richard calls the last eight months of her life "very difficult," as the disease came full circle. "It's really hard on the family and the caregivers because you love the person involved."

He credits his involvement in several support groups for his survival as he re-invents his life. She is deeply missed, not just by Richard, but also by their daughters Jaime, Jenee and Jessica. Our condolences to the Nordstrom family.

Gem Lake Volunteers Sought

Two spots on the Gem Lake City Council will be up for election this fall. They are currently filled by Gretchen Artig-Swomley (completing her third term) and Len Cacioppo, who was appointed as an interim council member filling the spot vacated by Rick Bosak. To run for these positions, you must be a Gem Lake resident, be at least 18 years old and pay a \$2 filing fee with your application form. You can obtain the form and pay the fee at Heritage Hall. You can file for election for city council member between July 31 and August 14. The forms are also available online at the Ramsey County website.

City News Page

Special Events Policy Adopted

A special events policy was adopted by the City of Gem Lake at its meeting on June 19. It is effective immediately and covers requirements for organizations that want to conduct things like fairs, festivals, parades, etc. on city property. The policy details how to go about getting city approval, the insurance requirements, clean up and signage procedures, and other pertinent details. This policy does not apply to private events such as wedding, graduation parties, family reunions, etc, unless you are planning a public parade and/or fireworks display.

Gem Lake Volunteer Needed

Ramsey County's Rush Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project includes a Community Advisory Committee made up of citizen and business volunteers from the affected communities. The proposed route runs from Forest Lake along Highway 61 through Gem Lake on its way to downtown St. Paul. As such, this advisory committee has an opening for a Gem Lake volunteer, either a resident or a business employee, to participate in the environmental analysis of the proposed BRT route. For more information, or to volunteer, please visit www.rushline.org, facebook.com/rushline, or twitter @rushlinetransit, or call 651-266-2760. Gem Lake needs your voice.

Peddlers at Your Door?

The City of Gem Lake has an ordinance that regulates Peddlers, Solicitors and Transient Merchants within our borders. Ordinance #111 requires that any such person have a license from the city. Currently there are no licenses out, although there may be in the future. Anyone who has a license has passed a background check. If someone says they have a license from Gem Lake, ask to see it.

If you don't wish to have solicitors coming to your door, a sign or placard needs to be posted. The sign or placard should be at least four inches long and four inches wide. (All the home improvement stores sell them). The print should be at least 48

point in size and should state something along the lines of "No Solicitors" or "No Peddlers" or "Solicitors Prohibited." You get the picture. Solicitors can only visit homes Monday through Saturday between the hours of 10 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.

Gem Lake Donates to Willow Lane Playground Equipment

Recently the Gem Lake city council approved a \$3000 donation from the city's charitable gambling funds to help fund new playground equipment at Willow Lane Elementary School. The equipment has now been installed and is part of the Willow Lane school yard.



Selling Your Home?

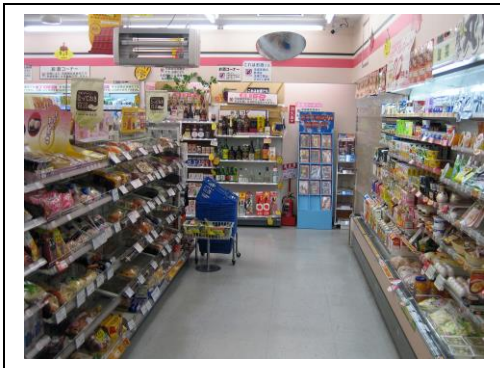
If you are selling your home, be aware that you need to have a septic inspection. This applies to everyone. Whenever a property transfer occurs in Gem Lake and that property has a septic system, city ordinance 67D, page 20, requires that there be a septic inspection. If you have any questions about this policy, call Gloria Tessier at the number listed on page 6 of this newsletter.

Hy-Vee Concept Update

An application was received from Hy-Vee to build a mini-market and gas station at the corner of County Road E and Highway 61.

The concept would involve a convenience type store that is much bigger than a standard convenience store, but smaller than a full-sized Hy-Vee. The complex would allow for multiple fueling stations, groceries, a coffee shop with a drive-through lane and a small liquor store.

The application was received in June and is now being reviewed. At the July 9 Planning Commission Meeting, language within the Gem Lake Land Use Ordinance was expanded to allow for this type of store. Definitions were added to the list of approved uses within the Gateway District, which is a zoning district covering Hoffman's Corner. The new concept store would be located where Waldoch conducted its business and where Mouldings, Doors and More is presently located.



Feedback has been generally very positive on the concept, with many viewing it as a productive use of a busy corner, and a way to bring more visibility and traffic to other businesses in the immediate area.

Arrangements are now being made for a neighborhood meeting to be held sometime before the end of July. Property owners in Gem Lake, White Bear and Vadnais Heights that are within 350 feet of the project will receive a special invitation, but anyone is welcome to attend.

The next steps would include approvals needed by the Planning Commission at their next meeting on August 7 and the full City Council at their meeting on August 8. Hy-Vee will give a formal presentation at the August 7 Planning Commission Meeting.

A list of affected agencies is being prepared and given to Hy-Vee in order to obtain the necessary approvals.

Scheuneman Road Project Update

A major road repair and water project for the Scheuneman Road business district in Gem Lake began in June. The project includes extensive road reconstruction between Highway 61 and County Road E, and extension of sanitary sewer and a water main to the area.

Depending upon the weather, the project will conclude around the end of August. Care is being taken to minimize disruption for affected businesses. Each business will also have some input on where the water main will intersect their property line. At present, the project is going well and is on target for timely completion.

The City of Gem Lake

PHONE:
(651) 747-2790

FAX:
(651) 747-2795
City Hall Address:
4200 Otter Lake Road
Gem Lake, MN 55110

GENERAL E-MAIL:
City@gemlakemn.org

Newsletter e-mail:
gretchenas@comcast.net

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

We're on the Web!

See us at:
www.gemlakemn.org

Meetings: August and September

The following Gem Lake Meetings will be held at Heritage Hall in August and September of 2018:

August 7, 2018

Planning Commission Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

August 13, 2018

City Council Workshop at 7:00 p.m. is CANCELLED

August 8, 2018

City Council Meeting at 7:00 p.m. PLEASE NOTE THIS IS A NEW DATE FOR THIS MEETING.

September 4, 2018

Planning Commission Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

September 10, 2018

City Council Workshop at 7:00 p.m.

September 18, 2018

City Council Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Your Gem Lake City Council

Bob Uzpen-Mayor

Phone: 651-492-5083

City Council Members:

Gretchen Artig-Swomley

Phone: 651-260-9742

Len Cacioppo

Phone: 651-796-3222

Faith Kuny

Phone: 612-718-4316

Jim Lindner

Phone: 651-429-7597

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

"Documents" and "News and Updates" section.

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

CITY OF GEM LAKE
4200 Otter Lake Road
Gem Lake, MN
55110

