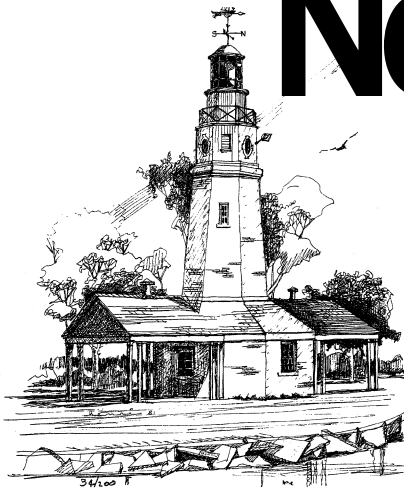


Neenah Notes

The City of Neenah Newsletter

VOL. 5 NO. 2

Spring 2004



Message from Mayor George Scherck

Neenah's equalized tax rate has dropped over 12% during the past two years. Property taxes on the average home increased less than \$5 for municipal services for 2004. Despite the economic downturn, the private sector is showing tremendous confidence in Neenah as we see the opening of new restaurants, retail stores, the building of new subdivisions, planned condominium developments, and new office space.



My goal has been to reduce the City's operating costs (but maintain vital public services) while at the same time investing in new infrastructure that increases the tax base. Planned, orderly growth not only increases the tax base to keep your taxes down, but also provides jobs, shopping opportunities, and increases housing choices. Planned, orderly growth also brings new citizens with new ideas to our community, and additional taxpayers to share the cost of providing city services.

The City Council recently approved the Riverwalk Zone Project Plan Amendment, which authorizes \$11.3 million in public expenditures in redevelopment assistance, parking improvements, and riverwalk construction. This public investment will be financed by Tax Incremental Financing, which means that new developments in the district will pay the costs, not existing taxpayers. The result of this investment is projected to create \$58.6 million of tax base through the maximum life of the district.

I know that some people believe that tough economic times require local government to retrench and do only what is absolutely necessary to provide basic services. But the only way to keep the costs of government under control is to find creative ways to provide and finance public services and to increase the size of the tax base that contributes to paying for those services.

The challenges we face require faith and confidence in the future of this community. The challenges we face place a demand on all of us to get more involved in our community. Obstacles become opportunities to work together to leave Neenah a better place for our children and grandchildren.

My personal thanks to each of you who took the time to fill out the citizen survey. People sometimes say "You can't fight city hall," but you don't have to because we work for you. Our #1 priority is taxpayer service, so when you make your concerns known, you help us help you.

Please do not hesitate to call me at 886-6105, stop in my office, or e-mail me at gscherck@ci.neenah.wi.us. Together we will make government more responsive, hold the line on taxes, and enhance the quality of life that makes Neenah such a special place to live.

Best wishes,

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Citizen Survey Results Inside

Free information:
www.neenahlibrary.org

Visit the City's web site!
www.ci.neenah.wi.us

Contact us!

Mayor	
George Scherck	886-6104
City Assessor	
Jack Ophoven	886-6115
City Attorney	
Jim Godlewski	886-6106
City Clerk	
Patty Peterson	886-6100
Community Development Director	
Bob Buckingham	886-6125
Finance Director	
Mike Easker	886-6140
Fire Chief	
Len Vander Wyst	886-6200
Health Department Director	
Judy Crouch-Smolarek	886-6155
Information Systems Director	
Joe Wenninger	886-6170
Library Director	
Steve Procs	886-6300
Parks & Recreation Director	
Eileen McCoy	886-6060
Police Chief	
Ray Appel	886-6010
Public Works Director	
Tim Hamblin	886-6240
Water Works Director	
Larry Wattering	886-6180



Credits

The 'Lighthouse' artwork courtesy of Henri Miles. Photographs courtesy of Gretchen Raab and Best Friends.

Hours and locations

City Hall is located at 211 Walnut St. It is open Mon.-Thurs. 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Fri. 7:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Call 886-6100 for general information.

The **Mayor** holds **Office Hours** at City Hall on the first Wednesday of every month 6:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.

The **Police Department** is located at 2111 Marathon Av. The Records/Office area is open Mon.-Fri. 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. The lobby is open 24 hours. Call 886-6000 for a non-emergency. Call **911** for an emergency.

The **Main Fire Station** is located at 125 E. Columbian Av. The Office area is open Mon.-Fri. 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. The lobby is open 24 hours. Call 886-6200 for a non-emergency. Call **911** for an emergency.

Neenah City Parks are open everyday from 4:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Call 886-6060 for general information.

The **Old City Garage** is located at 333 W. Cecil St. Wood chips there are free for Neenah citizens.

The **Neenah Public Library** is located at 240 E. Wisconsin Av. Winter hours are Mon.-Thurs. 9:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m., Fri. 9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m., Sat. 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m, Sun. 1:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. Call 886-6315.

Shattuck Riverwalk pays early dividends

Neenah's philosophy of reducing spending and increasing investments is clearly being demonstrated by the Riverwalk project at Shattuck Park.

The community's volunteer spirit is once again evident as the citizen fundraising group has already raised over \$500,000. The Fox Cities Visitors and Convention Bureau approved a \$250,000 grant for the project, demonstrating the regional importance of Neenah's waterfront.

The recent announcement of a \$12 million condominium development north of Shattuck Park facing the river confirms the City's belief that the \$1.6 million public investment at Shattuck Park will bring private investment and increase the tax base.

"The condominium project," said Mayor George Scherck, "will be a stunning addition to our community and the new taxes it generates will pay for the public costs of the Shattuck Park Riverwalk."

Mayor announces 2004 wish list

As budgets tighten to control taxes, many nice-to-have items get left out. Government can not and should not do everything. The generosity of Neenah citizens has always joined with public efforts to make a difference in our community. Any citizen or business interested in helping with any of the following should contact Mayor George Scherck at 886-6104.

- ? Contributions to Neenah Riverwalk project.
- ? Small tree spade to transplant trees - \$1,000.
- ? Scrolling LED sign for public information - \$500.
- ? Plant a tree in your terrace - \$200.
- ? Boom truck for a day to repair clock tower clock.
- ? Interested citizens to serve on boards and commissions.
- ? New sound system in Council Chambers - \$13,000.
- ? Machine shop to help repair gears of clock tower.
- ? Adopt-a-trail—help pick up litter along a stretch of City trail.

Meet your alderperson

Name: Bruce Rhoades

Address: 1372 Alpine Lane

Telephone: 727-0243

District: 3

Years on the Council: 18

Community involvement: Boys and Girls Brigade, Christmas Giving Committee, past Best Friends volunteer.

Occupation: Winnebago County Deputy Sheriff.

Family: Wife—Bobbi; two adult stepsons.

Interests/hobbies: Avid baseball fan, sports in general, web surfer.

Reason for government involvement: An appreciation of the City and a desire to give back and help make Neenah a desirable place to live.

Goals for the coming year: Monitor major street construction projects, continue to find cost effective ways to manage the budget, and research alternative to Cecil St. pedestrian overpass.



Immunization requirements

Proof of Varicella disease (Chicken Pox) or immunization will be required for all students enrolled in preschool-8th grade in the 2004-2005 school year.

This new Varicella requirement will apply to all enrolled students preschool-12th grade in the 2005-2006 school year.

Free immunization clinics will be offered at the City of Neenah Health Department (at City Hall) on the following Thursdays from 3:00-4:15 p.m.

- April 15
- May 20
- August 19
- September 16
- October 21
- November 18
- December 16

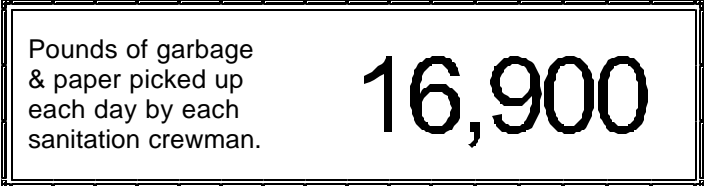
Please call 886-6155 for more information or to make an appointment.

Mayor's office hours

Mayor George Scherck will continue to hold office hours on the first Wednesday of the month at 6:00 pm, and has added the first Thursday of the month from 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. If that is inconvenient, call 886-6104 for an appointment or just stop in his office at your convenience.

PILOT helps lower your tax bill

The Neenah Water Utility is completely self sufficient, receiving no tax dollars. Water revenues are received from all water users, and unlike property taxes, no one is exempt from paying for their fair share. In fact, the Utility makes a payment to the City each year in lieu of taxes called PILOT. This payment is based on the tax rate and the value of the treatment plant and water distribution system. With the building of a new water plant the PILOT payment will double to \$900,000 by 2007. This payment is a direct value to property owners, helping to maintain lower property tax rates.



Council permits fire pits

For an annual \$15 permit fee, portable fire pits that are kept at least 10 feet from a structure or fence have now been approved by the City Council. Fires are allowed only between 6:00 pm and midnight and cannot exceed 2 feet in diameter. Appropriate caution and concern for your neighbors should allow you to enjoy a campfire without negatively impacting your neighbors.

UNCLE SAM WANTS YOU!

COMMUNITYFEST is Neenah's special way to celebrate Independence Day. Planning for this major event goes on all year. The activities in Riverside Park are supported by donations and the work of volunteers.

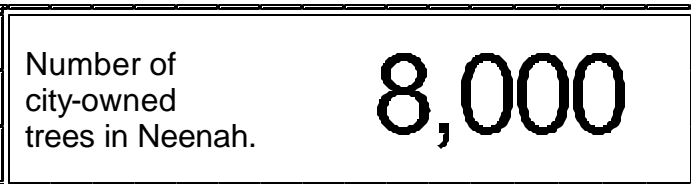


You can be a vital part of COMMUNITYFEST

Join our volunteer team on July 4

We have a BLAST!

Call Parks & Recreation at 886-6060.



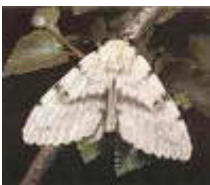
Gypsy Moths

Not a native species, Gypsy Moths have adapted quite well. They were introduced to North America in 1869, near Boston, as a scientist was hoping to breed them with silkworms to make a hardier species. Gypsy Moths are established in 16 states and defoliate up to 3 million acres of woodland per year. The caterpillars strip trees of their leaves and the number of caterpillars can become burdensome for homeowners and park users—they can completely cover a landscape. The trees will grow leaves again, but each year they are subjected to defoliation they become weaker and more susceptible to other insects and diseases.



Male

Gypsy Moths arrived in Wisconsin in 1971, and by 1988 became widespread along the Lake Michigan shoreline, then making their way westward. They are constantly being reintroduced by traveling vehicles, in wood products, in imported vegetation, and from other sources.



Female

We are continuing to manage Gypsy Moths in Neenah. Riverside Park and the surrounding area are currently experiencing heavy infestations. The Parks and Recreation Department will be oil spraying egg masses and applying sticky bands and burlap to catch the caterpillars in order to destroy them. Additionally,

this area has received approval for the Department of Natural Resources Aerial Suppression Program for 2004. In mid May to early June, a low-flying plane will spray the area with *Bacillus thuringiensis kurstaki*, commonly called Btk, an inactive soil bacterium. When ingested by the caterpillar, this bacterium activates in the caterpillar's alkaline stomach, stopping the caterpillar from feeding. Btk does not affect animals, birds, or people. This spraying may begin as early as 5:15 a.m. to help ensure favorable weather conditions.

To aid our department in the management of these invaders, we are asking visitors to our parks and residents of this area to thoroughly inspect their vehicles and belongings in order to prevent the spread of Gypsy Moths.

If you think you may have Gypsy Moths on trees in your property or have additional related questions, please contact the Superintendent of Parks/City Forester at 886-6070 so we can continue to track and manage these pests. The City Forester will also advise you as to what you can do to help control these pests. You may also call the Parks and Recreation Department at 886-6060 to request an informational handout with recommended controls.



Caterpillar

Old Council Tree lives on

Signed and numbered prints of the limited edition Old Council Tree, by local artist Dave Wollangk, are available at the Hang Up Gallery of Fine Arts in downtown Neenah. Proceeds from the sales go to planting more trees in the City through the Marigen Carpenter Forestry Trust.



Donations for this project include: Dave Wollangk (artwork), Munroe Studios (photography), Oshkosh Engraving Co. (separations), and Neenah Printing (printing). The painting is in honor of Marigen Carpenter's long tenure as Neenah mayor.

Home maintenance workshop

Are you a new homeowner? Do you have questions about how your home 'works'? At one time or another, all homeowners have concerns about their furnace, foundation, or roof or would like to know how to make their home more energy efficient. The Neenah Housing Authority would like to help answer those questions. On Thur., April 29 an informational workshop will be held from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at City Hall. Please call the Department of Community Development at 886-6125 for further information or to let us know that you will be attending. Find out how "this old house" can become your castle!

Tired of traffic delays at Cecil St.?

The Mayor has recommended to the City Council that the City replace the proposed pedestrian overpass at Cecil St. with a more cost-efficient plan for a full overpass (a two lane street with sidewalks and bicycle lanes on both sides). This will provide a safe walking route and an east-west bicycle path above the tracks. It also will end the decades long frustration all of us feel while waiting for one of the 75 daily gate actuations at the Cecil St. crossing. The City of Neenah is committed to making investments that will increase our tax base, but we also need to take care of solving today's problems.

Number of households in Neenah.

9,834

Volunteer Spotlight

This issue focuses the community spotlight not on one person but on a group of volunteers who serve our community's children.



Best Friends of Neenah-Menasha is a non-profit, prevention based volunteer program that provides positive adult role models for boys and girls who could benefit from individualized friendships. This is done primarily through a one-to-one match between a young friend between the ages of 5-14 and an adult mentor.

Mayor George Scherck, a volunteer in the school based mentoring program, pointed out that, "I get a lot more out of the experience than I give. Seeing the world through the eyes of a child can enrich your life—while providing a positive experience for a young boy or girl."

Mentoring has proven to be related to many positive outcomes in children. If you would like to be part of this positive community service, please contact Best Friends at 729-5600.

Riverside Players Theatre in the Park auditions



Sat., April 17 — 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.
&

Sun., April 18 — 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Horace Mann Middle School
1021 Oak St., Neenah
(Use south parking lot & door to band rooms)

Scripts available for checkout at the Appleton & Neenah public libraries and at the Neenah Parks & Recreation Dept. on the second floor of City Hall. Three-day checkout. Scripts must be returned to the checkout site by Thu., April 15. Call 886-6060 for more information.

Shows:

It Runs in the Family

A British farce by George Cooney.
Directed by Debbie Barkholtz.
June 23-27

Cabaret

A musical. Book by Joe Masteroff.
Music by John Kandler. Lyrics by Fred Ebb.
Directed by Michael Schuh.
July 22-25 and July 28-August 1

Did you know that...



- North Commercial St. will be closed until fall, but the businesses are open. Please patronize North Commercial St. businesses during this construction period!
- The cost for road salt for one winter is \$1.60 per resident. The cost of one fender bender ranges from \$1,000 to \$5,000.
- If you don't cut weeds, the City will do it upon complaint and charge the cost to you.
- Garbage cans have to be removed within 12 hours of the pickup.
- Neenah has a yard waste drop off site at the City Garage (1495 Tullar Road)—yard waste and brush only—no grass clippings.
- The City does not collect major appliances. Tags are available from Krueger's True Value Hardware.
- If you leave junk on the curb after the scheduled pick up, the City makes a special pick up but charges the cost to you. **Let's keep our neighborhoods clean and neat.**
- The odd-even side parking system goes into effect on Apr. 1 and ends Oct. 1.
- The City **no longer requires** a Rummage Sale Permit to get rid of those things you no longer need. One person's junk is another person's treasure!
- The Water Utility treated 1,636,614,000 gallons of water in 2003.

Radon update

In 2003 the Neenah Department of Public Health distributed 250 radon test kits to City residents. As of Feb. 1, results from 173 participants indicate that 47% had results within normal limits, 46% had results in the moderately elevated range, and 7% had results in the more elevated range.

The Health Dept. has applied for and been awarded another grant from the State Division of Health and Family Services for 2004. Plans are being made for distribution of radon test kits to City residents free of charge this spring.

Radon is an odorless, invisible, radioactive gas that comes from trace amounts of uranium occurring naturally in the ground. This gas can seep into a house through the foundation. Breathing air with high levels of radon can lead to lung cancer.

For further information, please contact the Health Dept. at 886-6156.

City of Neenah municipal services survey results

A total of 524 citizens responded to the survey in the last newsletter. While some responded 'Not Applicable or No Opinion,' the vast majority with an opinion were positive about the city, its services, and staff. In almost every area of city services, less than 10% saw a need for improvement or rated the service as poor.

While 78% of those expressing an opinion agreed that the Mayor and Council have the city headed in the right direction, 89% supported continued discussion and planning for consolidating services. Despite the positive results, we constantly seek to improve on this performance in every department.

A complete summary of the results (with pie-charts) can be picked up in the City Clerk's office or at the public library.

Question: How are we doing? Please rate City of Neenah facilities and services.

	GOOD	SATIS- FACTORY	NEEDS IMPROVE- MENT	POOR	NO OPINION	SATISFACTORY OR GOOD IF HAD OPINION
Administration						
City Attorney, City Clerk, Human Resources	24%	40%	3%	3%	30%	91%
Assessor						
	15	41	11	3	30	80
Community Development / Inspections						
	17	29	8	3	43	81
Finance/Treasurer						
	22	39	5	2	32	90
Fire/Rescue						
Overall responsiveness	47	20	1	1	31	97
Education	37	25	4	1	33	93
Inspections	27	27	4	2	40	90
Professionalism	42	29	2	1	26	96
Health Department						
	26	31	5	1	37	90
Library						
Adult reference services	50	29	3	1	17	95
Collection quality	40	31	5	2	22	91
Your checkout experience	45	30	6	1	18	91
Youth services	35	20	2	1	42	95
Mayor						
	40	32	7	3	18	88
Parks & Recreation						
Park Facilities	57	33	3	1	6	96
Park maintenance	51	34	7	2	6	90
Playgrounds	43	34	6	1	16	92
Athletic facilities	37	35	3	1	24	95
Swimming pool	44	25	2	1	28	96
Youth recreation programs	31	27	3	1	38	94
Adult recreation programs	25	30	6	2	37	87
July 4th / Communityfest	45	31	7	2	15	89

Question: How are we doing? Please rate City of Neenah facilities and services.

	GOOD	SATIS-FACTORY	NEEDS IMPROVE-MENT	POOR	NO OPINION	SATISFACTORY OR GOOD IF HAD OPINION
Police						
Overall responsiveness	46%	29%	6%	3%	16%	89%
Responsiveness to youth issues	27	27	5	3	38	87
Crime prevention program quality	29	33	6	3	29	87
Our community's safety level	46	38	6	2	8	91
Professionalism	48	32	5	3	12	91
Traffic enforcement	33	35	14	10	8	74
Public Works						
Refuse pickup	59	29	7	2	3	91
Recycling	60	30	6	1	3	93
Snowplowing	39	39	15	5	2	80
Ice control	34	40	18	5	3	76
Sewer services	39	44	4	1	12	94
Street maintenance	32	42	18	5	3	76
Brush pickup	44	37	13	3	3	84
Leaf pickup	43	36	12	5	4	82
Water Utility						
Water quality	47	38	9	4	2	87
Office services	29	33	5	2	31	90
Water distribution services	32	35	3	1	29	94
Average Response for all City Services	38%	33%	7%	2%	2%	89%

Specific questions						STRONGLY AGREE OR AGREE IF HAD OPINION
	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO OPINION	
I prefer to have services cut in order to keep property taxes from going up.	15%	22%	35%	23%	5%	39%
I prefer to have fees increased in order to maintain the same level of services.	8	33	29	24	6	44
I am willing to pay higher taxes to maintain reasonable service levels.	7	33	26	26	8	43
I believe that the Mayor is responsive to citizens.	33	37	8	6	16	83
I believe that our Alderpersons represent our district effectively.	11	40	16	9	24	67
The Mayor and the City Council have the city headed in the right direction.	20	50	13	7	10	78
I support continued discussion and planning for consolidating services.	49	36	5	5	5	89

Spring yard waste collection

The Spring yard waste collection will take place from **April 15 to May 15** as outlined in the *2004 Recycling and Refuse Guide*. Yard waste will be picked up weekly, usually the day after garbage collection. Yard waste includes brush, hedge and tree trimmings, leaves, lawn rakings, and garden debris. Small amounts of yard waste should be in garbage cans or 30 gallon biodegradable paper bags. Large amounts of brush should be placed on the curb with the butt ends facing one direction for chipping.

City residents may also take their brush and yard waste to the City Garage on the south end of Tullar Road. The drop-off site is open from 7:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Mon.-Fri. (except holidays).

Grass clippings may be taken to the Winnebago County Landfill on County Road Y. The landfill is open Mon.-Fri., 7:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. and Sat., 7:00 a.m.-Noon. Do not drop off green grass clippings at the Tullar Garage site.

Starting in June the weekly yard waste collection moves to a monthly collection. The dates for this monthly collection are listed in the *Guide*. If you have questions regarding the yard waste collection, please contact the Public Works Dept. at 886-6240 or the City Garage at 886-6260.

Volleyball leagues

Get your friends, family, co-workers, or neighbors together for fun in the sun! **Adult Summer Co-ed Sand Volleyball leagues** are now forming for 16+ year olds. Leagues play on the Neenah Pool courts on Thursday evenings. Registration packets are available at the City Hall Parks and Recreation office or at www.neenahgov.org. Leagues begin play June 10. Deadline for accepting teams is May 14.

Boat launch permits

All boats launching at Shattuck, Rec, and Doty parks need a permit. Permits cost \$15 (\$10 for age 65 or over) and may be purchased at City Hall (Finance Dept.) or the Police Station.



Daily launch permits are also available at all three launch sites for \$5.

Please note that the Doty Park launch site will be closed for construction approximately mid May to mid June. Shattuck Park will be open for launching only until the construction is finished at Doty Park. The Shattuck launch will then close permanently.

Oak Hill Cemetery annual spring clean-up set for April 5

The annual spring clean-up for Oak Hill Cemetery is scheduled for the first Monday of April. All non-permanent decorations, such as artificial bouquets, wreaths, and containers must be removed prior to this date or cemetery personnel will remove and dispose of them. Please call the cemetery office at 886-6144 with any questions.

Summer Activity Guide

The Parks and Recreation Department's *2004 Summer Activity Guide* will be mailed Friday, April 2. If you do not receive a copy by April 5, you can pick up a guide at the City Hall office or at the Neenah Library. Registration begins for City of Neenah residents on Wednesday, April 7 at the city hall Parks and Recreation Office. Season pool passes can be purchased at a discounted price until May 14.

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Neenah, WI 54956

