

Winter 2013-14

THE CITY OF
LAKE ELMO

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THE SOURCE

Your source for City news and information

Lake Elmo Seeks \$4 Million in Bonding to Provide Clean Drinking Water

The City of Lake Elmo is seeking \$4 million in state bonding to extend water to the I-94 corridor to areas where PFCs are in the groundwater. The City of Lake Elmo would match this request with \$5.4 million in borrowed funds to complete a project which will create a better hydraulic system for residents and provide clean, unfiltered water throughout the City.

"We find ourselves between a rock and a hard place with the State of Minnesota. On one hand our Met Council Agreement requires the City to grow, and on the other hand our funding mechanism, which was the State's lawsuit with 3M, is stalled. Bonding funds should be used to build the state's infrastructure, so this seems like the best way for the State of Minnesota to help our residents out," said Mayor Mike Pearson.

The Mayor and City staff have been meeting with lawmakers, state agencies, and the Governor's office to request \$4 million dollars in what is expected to be a roughly \$900 million state bonding bill that will be debated by the Legislature in the spring of 2014. The City's goal is to have legislation introduced in the House and Senate, and be in the Governor's recommendations before the hearing process begins in February.

Senator Karin Housley (R) and Senator Susan Kent (D) have been very helpful in the process of talking to legislators about the importance of this bonding request – as has Representative Matt Dean (R-Dellwood), Representative Joanne Ward (D-Woodbury), Representative Andrea Kieffer (R-Woodbury), and Representative Peter Fischer (D- White Bear Lake). Lake Elmo's State Representative, Kathy Lohmer, has also been very supportive of the proposal. There is also support for the City's bonding request from state agencies.

"It is nice to see bi-partisan support for this legislation. I think everyone that we have talked with understands the merits of providing clean drinking water to our residents and is able to set party politics aside. It's refreshing," said



The Minnesota State Legislature is set to convene on February 25, 2014.

Deputy City Clerk Beckie Gumatz, a former staff member in the legislature whose knowledge of the process has been invaluable to Lake Elmo.

The City will use these funds to create a trunk watermain line that will run from the water tower on the corner of Highway 5 and Ideal to the I-94 corridor. In the process, the City will eventually serve subdivisions (Torre Pines, Parkview Estates, Cardinal Ridge and Cardinal View) that are on GAC filters due to adulteration. A water tower will be added south of 10th Street to create the right hydraulic pressure for individual plumbing systems to handle the water efficiently. A new well has been drilled (with MnDNR approval) that has adequate water supply and that won't affect groundwater drawdown.

The Mayor and City staff will continue to meet with key legislators including the Chairpersons of the Capital Investment and the Environmental Committees in preparation of the spring hearing process, but also are encouraging taxpayers to contact Senator Housley (651-296-4351) and Representative Lohmer (651-296-4244) to show their support.

The Mayor's Corner



Hello Lake Elmo!

With my first year as Mayor coming to a close, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for providing me the opportunity to serve our city. While it has certainly been a lot of work, it has also been a pleasure in many ways, and I have learned much. Getting to know many of you has been a treat.

The following items are progress made by the council and staff that I am particularly proud of:

- Kept the tax rate flat. Our presentation to Moody's maintained our Aa2 rating.
- With the hard work and commitment of our staff (particularly Mr. Dean Zuleger, our City Administrator), we continue to make improvements in our core city functions.
- The Council has committed to maintaining orderly and productive meetings. The Council's adoption of "Speak Your Peace Civility Project" has reaped positive and impressive results.
- We improved relationships with our surrounding partners. Two examples: first, partnering with Oakdale for a sewer project on Lake Olson; second, with our encouragement, the Department of Transportation made improvements to our downtown Highway 5 conditions. These changes will culminate in 2014 with the addition of a stop light.

• With sewer now extended to downtown, relief will soon be available for homeowners with troubled septic systems. When these tired system are offline, values will go up and our environment will be all the better for it.

• Created policies that insist on "100% developer pay" formats. These new policies minimize the city's financial exposure and encourage the successful completion of projects.

• New Public Safety, Finance and Human Resource volunteer committees have been established. These provide private-sector knowledge and insight to public-sector arenas.

For a more detailed account of the City's accomplishments in 2013, see the "Accountability" annual report, insert in this newsletter.

You can be confident Lake Elmo is headed in a positive direction. Finally, I'd like to thank and acknowledge the members of our park and planning commissions. Their quiet efforts are paying off in a very tangible way.

In closing, I hope the holiday season brought you wonderful gatherings of friends and relatives, pleasant memories of loved ones past, and the continued blessings that this country continues to bestow upon us all.

Mayor Mike Pearson

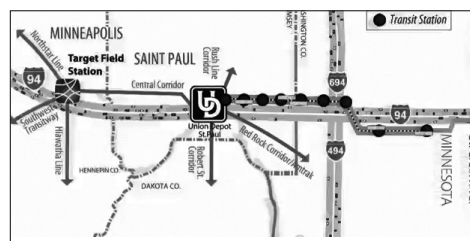
Regional News

New video introduces benefits of rapid transit project in the Gateway Corridor

Woodbury building and development contractor Greg Watson is passionate about the potential for rapid transit in the Gateway Corridor between Woodbury and St. Paul. He tells his story, and his daughter's, in a new video that can be seen at www.TheGatewayCorridor.com.

The video points out the consequences of not addressing population growth and corresponding growth in traffic congestion. Transit users, business leaders, policy experts and public officials describe how rapid transit will benefit them as it addresses the problem.

More than 300,000 people live in the corridor today. By 2030, the popula-



Rapid transit options are being considered to meet demands of expected population growth in the East Metro.

tion is expected to swell by 30 percent (90,000 people) and the area is projected to add 30,000 jobs, according to Washington County Commissioner Lisa Weik, who chairs the Gateway Corridor Commission.

"With seismic changes such as population that could double in a certain

area, we need to make sure that our infrastructure is robust," Commissioner Weik said.

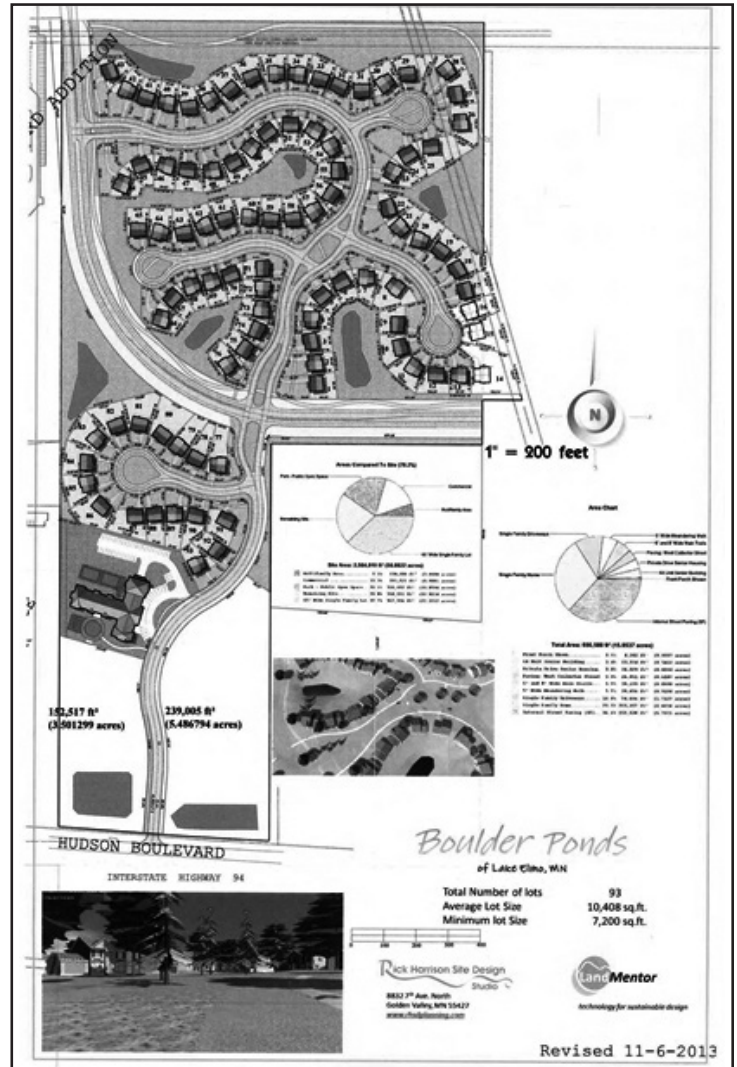
The Gateway Corridor would serve 11 stations with all-day transit service, while providing a focal point for more concentrated development as the region grows. The Gateway Corridor Commission, comprised of local elected officials, business and community leaders, is currently conducting an environmental study. During this phase, either bus rapid transit or light rail transit will be selected as the preferred choice. The project is seeking \$5 million in bonding from the state in 2014. More information is available at www.TheGatewayCorridor.com.

Boulder Ponds Development Features Abundant Open Space

The City of Lake Elmo recently received and approved an application for a General Concept Plan for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) east of the Eagle Point Business Park in the I-94 Corridor Planning Area. The planned development, to be called Boulder Ponds of Lake Elmo, includes 93 single family lots and a 64-unit multi-family dwelling. As proposed, the planned development is split into northern and southern areas by the future minor collector road, 5th Street, needed to serve the growing areas within the I-94 Corridor. The majority (76) of the single family lots are located to the north of the future minor collector road, whereas 17 single family lots and the 64-unit multi-family building are located south of the minor collector. While multiple stages of approval for the development still remain, it is the goal of the developer, Amaris Company, LLC, to begin constructing homes in 2014.

The Boulder Ponds planned development has been designed by distinguished land use planner Rick Harrison. Mr. Harrison is well known for designing sustainable communities that allow for improved traffic flow, greater amounts of open space and pedestrian amenities. Notable design features of the Boulder Ponds planned development include several landscaped medians and oversized cul-de-sac islands, meandering sidewalks that provide added aesthetic value, and a significant amount of common open space. In fact, the vast majority of the residential lots in the Boulder Ponds Concept Plan back onto common open space, which is difficult to achieve in most urban residential subdivisions. In addition, the proposed development includes a northern buffer trail that will provide additional trail linkages from west to east that will add to the overall connectivity in the I-94 Corridor. The City is encouraged by the Boulder Ponds Concept Plan, as it provides some areas of open space, while at the same time achieving the City's required levels of growth in this area.

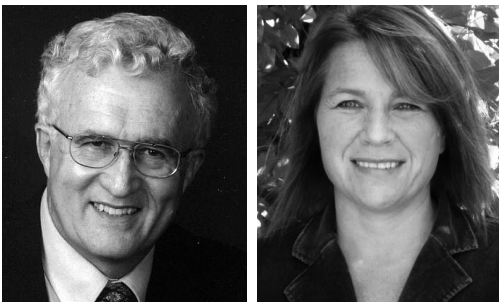
As plans for growth and development in the I-94 Corridor and Village Areas progress, the City will continue to update



An image of the Boulder Ponds Concept Plan. The development will be located north of Hudson Boulevard and immediately east of the Eagle Point Business Park.

the community on a variety of growth-related topics, such as utilities and development proposals. If anyone has specific questions, you can always contact the City staff.

Two Lake Elmo Residents to Make Met Council Park Policy



Former Mayor Dean Johnston (left) and Park Commissioner Sarah Hietpas (right) have been appointed to the Metropolitan Parks & Open Space Commission.

Former Mayor Dean Johnston and Lake Elmo Park Commissioner Sara Hietpas have been named to the Metropolitan Parks & Open Space Commission (MPOSC).

Johnston will serve as Chairman of the Commission and Hietpas will represent District F. The MPOSC is the policy-making and funds grantor for parks projects in the seven county metro region with a focus on land

acquisition, trail development and open space preservation.

"With the Park Commission looking at a new trail running from Oakdale to the Stillwater Area High School, these appointments are very important for Lake Elmo. Both former Mayor Johnston and Commissioner Hietpas will bring a wealth of knowledge to the group," said Park Commission Chairman Shane Weis.

Speak Your Peace - Building a Stronger Community

Earlier this year, city leaders in Lake Elmo came together to assess and prioritize the many challenges facing the city in 2013 and beyond. One of the core challenges they identified was the need to balance the rural, open space character of our city with the impact of managed growth. In an effort to respect diverse opinions and beliefs, the city embarked on a journey to improve the level of civic engagement. The Speak Your Peace initiative was officially launched on April 16th.

A broad coalition of civic leaders came together in the spring and summer and agreed on a mission to “enhance a culture of civility throughout the Lake Elmo community.” This group, led by Mayor Pearson, continues to provide guidance and leadership to the Speak Your Peace campaign.

Why civility and why does it matter? The Institute for Civility in Government believes that the effectiveness and efficiency of our governing process is being threatened by a lack of civic participation and civil dialogue at every level of government. They define civility as “claiming and caring for one’s identity without degrading someone else’s in the process.”

Here’s how Speak Your Peace is being integrated into the Lake Elmo community:

- Introduced to the community with a pledge signing event on May 21, 2013
- Resolutions passed by City Council, Planning Commission, and Park Commission
- A specific tenet of Speak Your Peace is highlighted at each City Council meeting



- The city has a website www.speakyourpeacelakeelmo.org dedicated to inform and update residents on Speak Your Peace initiatives
- Toolkit and other Speak Your Peace promotional material are available for groups and organizations
- Customized Speak Your Peace programming can be facilitated with your organization

• Discussions are ongoing with several local organizations about how civility can have a positive influence on their mission and goals

As an example of programming meeting needs, Speak Your Peace representatives from the city facilitated a discussion about civility and the Speak Your Peace project with the 6th grade class at Lake Elmo Elementary School on October 25th. The program served as a kick off to a Speak Your Peace curriculum that the students will be completing during the 2013-2014 school year.

“This isn’t just a feel good initiative, it’s about speaking openly and respectfully about our differences in pursuit of more effective public policy” said Mike Reeves, city council member and campaign representative. “I think our discussions at the council level have been more collaborative and less confrontational which moves us down a path to long term problem solving taking into account the needs of all citizens. I appreciate the leadership that Mayor Pearson and City Administrator Zuleger have provided to this effort.”

To learn more about Lake Elmo’s Speak Your Peace initiative or to schedule a meeting, visit www.speakyourpeacelakeelmo.org or call Alyssa MacLeod, 651-747-3908.

Snow Plowing and Winter Parking Regulations

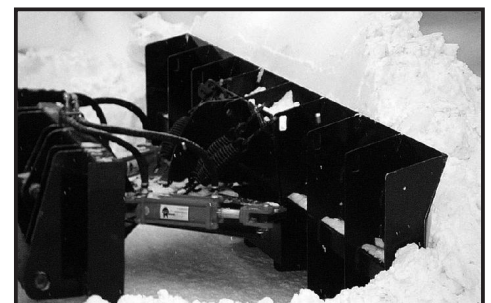
Following a 3” snowfall, no parking is allowed on City streets until after they have been plowed. Citations may be issued, or vehicles towed.

Lake Elmo residents are reminded that the City has a snow plowing policy which must be followed so plowing can be done as efficiently and safely as possible. Snow must not be cleared from driveways or sidewalks onto City streets. Please keep your snow on your property. Violators will be cited.

Trash containers must be placed in driveways, not onto City streets. Trash and recycling containers placed on streets create traffic hazards and increase plowing time.

It is the policy of the City to maintain the streets in good winter driving condition by sufficient plowing and sanding. To that end, the Public Works crews strive to open all streets within 10 hours of starting the plowing. On the following day, streets will be widened to the maximum width.

The crews strive to keep all streets passable at all times, even in severe weather conditions.



The City snow removal team strives to keep your streets safe and drivable through all conditions.

Public Safety Committee Ensures Safe Future for Lake Elmo

The City of Lake Elmo formed a Public Safety Committee to aid in the administration of public service policies including community policing, fire suppression, emergency services, animal control, liquor licensing, and other matters concerning the general health and welfare of Lake Elmo citizens.

Most statutory cities in Minnesota are organized with a committee structure that encompasses six main areas: Finance, Public Works, Public Safety, Human Resources, Parks, and Land Use (Planning Commission). A Finance Committee and Human Resources Committee have already been established early in 2013 and are in their infant stages of development.

At the Mayor's request, the Public Safety Committee was approved at the November 16th council meeting. "The creation of a Public Safety Committee will help to evaluate

staffing, equipment, and infrastructure needs in the areas of police, fire, and humane services," he said.

With three main areas of growth in Lake Elmo, the size and scope of the operations of all public safety functions need to be evaluated to serve the growth. "With the City of Lake Elmo poised to embark on a period of growth, the proper provision for public safety must be reviewed and analyzed as policing and fire services historically make up a large part of municipal budgets," said Council member Wally Nelson.

The City is seeking one more member to join Mayor Pearson, Council member Nelson, Fire Chief Greg Malmquist, and two Lake Elmo residents who currently serve on the committee. Qualified candidates must be residents of Lake Elmo and possess a background or interest in public safety. For more details, contact City Hall at 651-747-3908.

NextGen Group Looks to Engage Lake Elmo

According to 2010 census data, Lake Elmo is an aging community with more than 10% of its 8,000 residents over the age of 65. However, with the addition of some of the newer developments like Tapestry and Farms of Lake Elmo, the city is attracting many residents in their 30s and 40s who are looking for larger lots, and open space communities that cater to their active lifestyles. That number is expected to rise with future developments that are planned.

To seek representation from this growing demographic, the city started a NextGen committee, one of several groups initiated in 2013 aimed at opening up local government. The group met for the first time in July 2013, and currently meets monthly, on the third Thursday of each month.

The group started with a study of "Live First, Work Second," a book by nationally renowned NextGen Consultant Rebecca Ryan. The book discusses the desire that millennials have for maintaining a healthy work-life balance and living in communities where they can be involved and make a difference. The book discusses seven indexes of desirable communities including: vitality, earning, learning, social capital, cost of lifestyle, after



The Lake Elmo NextGen committee meets with local businesses to discuss ways to increase engagement in the community. Above, members of the group carve pumpkins at the Lake Elmo Wine Company.

hours, and proximity/access to amenities.

"I moved to Lake Elmo to live in a community with a rural feel, but that's close to common conveniences and amenities," said NextGen member and Lake Elmo resident Adam Smith. "Lake Elmo has great potential for becoming an active and attractive community while maintaining small town charm."

The general attitude of the NextGen members is that they love their community but have difficulty finding

ways to get involved beyond their immediate neighborhoods due to lack of opportunity. Some have avoided engaging with local government due to a past reputation for contentiousness, or lack of time and knowledge.

"These folks are the city's future council members and commissioners, said NextGen facilitator Alyssa MacLeod. "Most currently work, shop, and attend schools in surrounding cities, the NextGen group is a way to get our younger residents to connect to their community."

The NextGen Committee's first initiative was planning and leading the Light Up Lake Elmo event, which was held on December 14th. On the group's agenda for the upcoming year is working on a pilot project with the Alliance for Innovation, the leading best management practice organization for local government.

They are also considering several community service projects that would improve the appearance and revitalize Lake Elmo's downtown area and community parks.

For more information on the NextGen committee contact Alyssa MacLeod at 651-747-3908 or amacleod@lakeelmo.org.

Business Partners Plus: Providing Others with Capability

Business Partners Plus, Inc. knows what organizations need to succeed. Founded in 2003 by Lake Elmo resident Rita Garcia, the company stands by the motto “we resolve your unresolvable,” and offers a variety of consulting services to help small to large businesses, non profits, and government agencies with: strategy, market analysis, process and productivity, business model, facilitation and training.

Garcia started her career in K-12 physical education and athletic training. Struggling to find consistent employment in a slim educational job market, she decided to return to school and embark on a new challenge. Before settling on a new direction, she conducted research in occupational outlooks and found the field of electronics to offer a promising future. With her Associates Degree in Digital Electronics from St. Paul Community College, Rita immediately received job offers from seven different companies. After a review of companies and their mission, she chose Xerox, based on their philosophy, a company known for placing high value on diversity, and global citizenship.

She started her 20-year Xerox career as a technology representative and with a distinct goal in mind, worked her way to becoming the Vice President of Developing Markets. During her tenure she acquired a broad range of business expertise through a variety of leadership positions she held



Rita Garcia, founder of Business Partners Plus, Inc. is passionate about Community Service. Pictured above is Garcia at the Daisy Girl Scout Snow Fest in Tana Ridge.

for multiple business segments in the organization. It was at Xerox where Garcia met her business partner and husband, Ron Ibarra. Both with a Master’s Degree in Business from the University of Rochester, the couple combined their skills, experience, and passion for community service to develop a consulting business that provides a complete package of sound and practical organizational solutions.

“We provide organizations with more than just an answer to their challenges, we provide them with capability,” said Garcia. “While working through projects, we transfer to organizational



staff the skills and knowledge they need to successfully implement and sustain their plans.”

Business Partners Plus, Inc. partners with organizations including the St. Paul Foundation and the Bremer Foundation to help government and nonprofit organizations that typically lack the funds to invest in these types of professional services. Fulfilling their commitment to community, non-profit organizations make up approximately 80% of their current client-base. In addition to direct consulting, Garcia also provides key note addresses, seminars and workshops in strategy, operations, career planning, and organizational development. Garcia is also passionate about helping women achieve their professional goals by guiding them through visionary career planning exercises. She is the President of the Tana Ridge Homeowners Association; and as a lifetime member of the Girl Scouts of USA, she actively works with the Minnesota Wisconsin River Valley Girl Scout Council.

For more information on Business Partners Plus, Inc., visit www.businesspartnersplus.com or contact 651-351-7665 or info@businesspartnersplus.com.

It is Time to Obtain Your 2014 Dog License



All dogs over the age of four months are required to be licensed in the City of Lake Elmo (City Code Chapter 95.07).

Licensing protects the community by ensuring dogs are properly vaccinated, for the safety of residents and other pets. A dog license may also help police or animal control officers locate and identify your dog to return it home safely.

2013 Dog Licenses expired on December 31, 2013. Stop in to City Hall between the hours of 8 am and 4:30 pm to renew your dog license!

There is a \$20 fee for spayed/neutered dogs and a \$25 fee for unaltered dogs.

Proof of current rabies vaccination must be provided at time of license renewal.

Trail System, Park Utilization Priorities for 2014

In 2014 Lake Elmo taxpayers can look forward to improvements in their parks. The Lake Elmo Park Commission spent the last quarter of 2013 looking heavily into priorities for the following year.

The commission has currently committed to spending \$300,000 toward the overall improvement of City Parks. Three-quarters of the budget will be invested into the revitalization of current parks, adding recreational amenities that will attract more taxpayer use of public lands, and replacing outdated and damaged playground equipment to create a safe environment in all parks. The remaining budget will go toward vehicle needs.

In November the commissioners conducted an audit of neighborhood parks and the results will be used to prioritize parks in terms of need.

“During the audit we found many areas for improvement,” said park commissioner Pam Hartley. “We look forward to addressing these issues in 2014.”

Based on the results, work will most likely be done in Tablyn, Reid, and Pebble Park. The commission will consider allocating more developer funds toward Sunfish Lake Park depending upon what the newly formed Sunfish Lake Subcommittee determines as appropriate improvements needed. The commission has also been working with residents in Sanctuary to build a new park that will serve multiple neighborhoods.

Another priority of the commission in 2014 is to insure that a parks and trail system is constructed and maintained. The commission formed a trail subcommittee that has



The Park Commission has been focusing on developing a plan of work for 2014. Above, the commissioners discuss priorities at a November retreat.

been working on a plan to develop a regional trail that will provide transportation from Oakdale to Stillwater with connections at Tablyn Park, the Lake Elmo Park Reserve, and the Old Village. The desire for a trail system was indicated by 80% of residents in favor of one as on the city-wide park and recreation survey that was conducted this past summer.

The park commission also maintains a key role with development occurring in the I-94 corridor, serving as a review body to make sure that the “open space” character is preserved in new developments.

Not familiar with your city parks? Subscribe to “Fresh,” Lake Elmo’s weekly e-newsletter to receive “park of the week” features beginning in January.

Lake Elmo Public Library: A Community Gathering Place



Public libraries are community gathering places. Make the Lake Elmo Public Library a regular part of your life. Whether you come in as a library patron or as a library volunteer, you will be welcomed. Libraries have no membership restrictions. They are not clubs, religious organizations, schools, or a workplace. Everyone is welcome.

The Library is looking forward to another exciting year of programs. Area authors will be talking about their work and a book discussion series is

planned as the part of the City’s Speak Your Peace initiative. Watch the library’s website, “Fresh,” and regional news outlets for more information.

Are you looking for a fun volunteer opportunity? Adults and teens are eligible to apply. The library is in need of talent including staffing the circulation desk, shelving materials, fix-it work, providing homework help, serving on committees, and preparing library materials for use. Library staff will work to match skills and interests of volunteers to the library’s needs, and training is provided. Volunteer hours are flexible. Sign-up forms are available at the circulation desk.

The library exists in order to meet the information and literacy needs of the

community. If you have a question, library personnel will help you find the answer. If the library doesn’t have a title that you want, let a volunteer know and they will consider purchasing it and adding it to the collection. If you are looking for a certain type of program, please suggest it to the staff or the volunteers. The library strives to be responsive to your needs.

What better place to talk about citizen collaboration for the public good than at the library? If you are interested in participating, or have book titles or speakers to recommend, please stop in at the library, at 3537 Lake Elmo Avenue N., call 651-773-4926, or email Linda, Library Director, at lepdlirector@gmail.com.



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**Lake Elmo Staff Member
Recognized for Taxpayer Service**



Five Lake Elmo staff members and one Lake Elmo council member were recently recognized for going above and beyond in the realm of taxpayer service in 2013.

Pictured left to right: Rick Chase, Building Official; Adam Bell, Assistant City Administrator; Nick Johnson, City Planner; Alyssa MacLeod, Taxpayer Relations and Communications Coordinator; Wally Nelson, Council member; and Mark Duddeck, Public Works.

Light Up Lake Elmo!

After being postponed a week for extreme cold, a snow-filled sky with temperatures in the high teens made for the perfect evening to hold the first annual Light Up Lake Elmo event.

A tree lighting event featuring a visit from Santa, refreshments, kids activities, and caroling was held on Saturday, December 14th.

The trees, sponsored by local businesses and organizations, were lit up throughout New Years, adding a festive ambience to downtown Lake Elmo for the Holidays. More photos are available on the City's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/LakeElmoMN.



THE SOURCE

A publication of the City of Lake Elmo
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Mike Reeves
Anne Smith

City Administrator
Dean Zuleger



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