

April 2011

Volume 1, Issue 3

The Release from the East

CITY OFFICES CLOSED:

APRIL 22—CLOSED AT NOON
GOOD FRIDAY

MAY 30—MEMORIAL DAY

JULY 4—INDEPENDENCE DAY

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City Council Member Update by Scott Huizenga & Michelle French

The City and the entire community of East Grand Forks lost an extraordinary civic advocate and all-around fantastic person with the loss of Council President Dick Grassel. The City dedicated the “Dick Grassel Park” in the Red River State Recreational Area (RRSRA) campground. The City will unveil the park facility to the public later this year.

Gregoire Council Vice President. The Council welcomed new member Ronald Vonasek on April 12 to fill the Ward 2 vacancy.

Mr. Vonasek has been a resident of East Grand Forks for 59 years and is a Sales Manager at RDO Equipment. He resides at 518 1st Ave. NE.



Please welcome - Council Member Ronald Vonasek.

The City Council named Craig Buckalew Council President and Wayne

Mr. Vonasek feels that the biggest issue that East Grand Forks is facing is taxes.

Flood Advisory by Chief Hedlund

We are rapidly approaching flood season here in Grand Forks/East Grand Forks and while our flood control system should keep all of us safe we will still likely have bridge closures that can cause traffic delays.

commuters have to use the Mallory Bridge. That detour is time consuming and traffic delays can be expected.

Please leave early so that your commute can be completed safely and as stress free as possible. Commuters who live in the Point Area but who work in Grand Forks may want to take a Southern route to Grand Forks by way of the

new Thompson Bridge. This route may be longer in distance but will likely be quicker. Should the bridges close, please watch the media for road updates and pay attention to traffic control devices and law enforcement officers in areas where they are not normally located.

For further flood updates, please visit www.egf.mn

If the Red River floods to the degree that is expected the Point and Sorlie Bridges between Grand Forks and East Grand Forks will almost surely have to close and that limits all in town traffic to the Kennedy Bridge on Gateway Drive/Highway 2.

The Louis Murray Bridge connects the North end of East Grand Forks to the Point area of town. If that bridge closes a detour South of town is required as



Residential Spring Clean-up

May 2nd - 6th

On your regular Scheduled Pickup Day

Hazardous Waste & Electronic Drop Off

May 7th

9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

at the Public Works Department
(1001 2nd St. NE)

Police Department Building Update

By Chief Hedlund

The East Grand Forks Police Department is in the process of making some much needed and valuable updates.

A physical and technological remodeling of the Department's dispatch center was recently completed and provides the officers with a much more effective work space that should help the dispatcher's provide better service to the field officers and to the general public.

Scheduled for later in the Spring is the replacement of the Police building's heating, ventilation and air conditioning system. The new high efficiency system should correct a number of problems with the current system and will also result in lower utility bills.

VISIT US ON THE
WEB!
www.eaf.mn

Two-Ton Tulips by Officer Schrage

It is that time of year again when the snow melts and the tulips reappear. Unfortunately, the less desirable two-ton tulips come up with the flowers as well. Each spring the Police Department, with the support of the City Council, attempts to clean up the City through the use of our Junk Vehicles Ordinance.

The ordinance explains that any unlicensed or inoperable motor vehicle may not be parked on residential property. The purpose is

two-fold, to prevent the spread of disease through animals that may be housed inside and to keep our city beautiful. No one likes to live in a neighborhood that looks like a junk yard.

Another portion of the ordinance which is enforced is the Nuisance Parking and Storage. In brief, it prevents a residential property from turning into a used car lot. No more than four vehicles are allowed to be parked outside a residence, with the obvious exception of

occasional guests. The ordinance also prohibits the storage of ice-fish houses, garbage, vehicles, construction materials, etc for a period of over 24 hours in the front lawn.

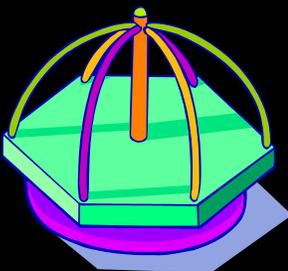
The last portion of the ordinance involves keeping your lawn trimmed. Owners are responsible for making sure their grass is kept free of noxious weeds and trimmed to 6 inches or less.

The Police Department will be sending out letters to

problem areas requesting homeowners to clean up the mess. Recipients are given two weeks to resolve the issue and extensions are granted on a case-by-case basis. Please help do your part to keep our community beautiful.



New playground equipment coming soon to the following areas: Itt's Williams Park, Red River State Recreation Area, and Greenway Park.



Street Sweeping Schedule By John Wachter

Monday	District 4 – East of Bygland Rd SE
Tuesday	District 5 – West of Bygland Rd SE
Wednesday	District 2 – South of 17 th St. NW
Thursday	District 1 – North of 17 th St. NW
Friday	Downtown, Parking Lots & District 3 East End/Central



*Schedule may change due to daily street cleaning needs.

Storm Water Protection for Municipalities by John Wachter

Municipal operations involve activities that need to be regulated through our Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). Often these activities include the use of paints, solvents, and pesticides that make their way into the East Grand Forks storm sewer system and **DO NOT GET TREATED** before reaching the local waterways. These wastes can pollute drinking water and make waters unhealthy and unsafe for people and wildlife. The following practices will help prevent specific storm water runoff activities.

- Never dispose of wash water to storm drain, pavement, or other storm water conveyances. Use the sanitary sewer to dispose of wash water. Wash water includes any liquid with cleaner or residual dirt and grime, including mop water, floor mat wash water, window cleaning water, and all rinse water.
- Clean floor mats, filters, and trash containers in a designated area with a connection to the sanitary sewer such as a mop sink or floor drain.
- Rinse patio furniture, picnic tables, and benches without using cleaning agents, so flows can drain to areas where the water can soak into the soil and leave little residue. Use a bucket and rag to clean tables with cleaners. Always use a rag to remove cleaners, do not hose down area. Avoid getting runoff into storm conveyance system or waterways that lead to rivers, streams, and lakes.
- Provide trash containers, when appropriate, to minimize littering.
- Keep brooms, dustpans, and trash cans readily accessible. Place cleaning equipment near delivery locations and trash bins. Store equipment and supplies under cover whenever possible.
- Provide designated smoking and nonsmoking areas. In the smoking area, place cigarette butt containers and clean the containers as needed to encourage their use.
- Promptly clean up any spill of liquid or solid wastes. Do not hose down an area to clean or handle a spill unless the liquid will be completely contained, cleaned up, and disposed of as appropriate for the waste type. There should be no discharge to storm drains, landscape, or pavement.
- Cabinets and containers exposed to the weather must be made for exterior use; interior-grade cabinets and containers will rust or deteriorate and contribute contaminants to storm water runoff when exposed to weather.
- Schedule regular cleaning of outside storage areas and yards, preferably before the start of the rainy season. At least once a year, review the stockpiled

equipment and supplies. Often there are unusable materials at the back of the storage area. Usable materials should be stored to indicate possible use and to minimize contact with storm water. Unused or unusable material should be removed as soon as possible. Develop a plan to regularly dispose of unneeded materials.

- Do not use drains without knowing whether they flow to the sanitary sewer, storm system, or self-contained internal sump. Confirm before using drains to ensure proper disposal.

If the above-suggested activities require some modification in order to work efficiently and effectively for you and your staff or do not cover some aspect of your operations or facility, please contact the City of East Grand Forks Public Works Department at 773-1313.

Red River State Recreation Area Campground by Dave Aker

The Red River State Recreation Area (RRSRA) Campground is set to open May 6. Full hookups will be available starting May 13.

The campground has 113 total campsites available. 85 full hook up, 24 rustic, and 4 walk-in sites.

For reservations, visit RedRiverSRA or www.STAYATMNPARKS.com or call (218)773-4950.

Amenities include two restroom buildings, one bath house with showers, along with two outdoor toilets for campground visitors.

Park Highlights:

- Picnicking
- Nearby Dining & Shopping
- Boating/Fishing/Birding
- Paved Multi-use Trails

Coming Soon! Playground Equipment



CITY CONTACTS

CITY COUNCIL

Lynn Stauss, Mayor 773-2775
Marc DeMers, Ward 1 773-2193
Ronald Vonasek, Ward 2 773-9109
Craig Buckalew, Ward 3 773-8304
Henry Tweten, Ward 4..... 773-2990
Wayne Gregoire, Ward 5..... 773-8196
Greg Leigh, At Large..... 773-9494
Mike Pokrzywinski, At Large..... 773-8839

CITY DEPARTMENTS

Administration/Finance 773-2483
Building Official 773-2208
Campbell Library 773-9121
EDHA 773-2371
Fire Department 773-2403
Parks & Rec..... 773-8000
Planning & Zoning 773-0124
Police Department..... 773-1104
Public Works 773-1313
Senior Center..... 773-0821
Water & Light 773-1163

Berm Trees Available by Dave Aker

The East Grand Forks Parks and Recreation Department will be planting berm trees during the middle of May.

There are some extra trees available, if you are interested please call (218) 773-8000.

If you don't get trees this year, you can reserve yours for 2012.

Home owners are responsible for watering and trimming trees on the berm, if the trees are diseased or dead please call us.

EGF is Still a Great Value by Scott Huizenga

One theme that recently I have repeated often is "East Grand Forks is still a great value for the money." Several years ago, the Economic Development and Housing Authority (EDHA) produced an analysis that showed that for similar types of housing and income, East Grand Forks was still an affordable place to live

relative to its neighbors despite having higher state income taxes. When one compares "pound for pound" to its neighbors in the areas of taxes, housing affordability, recreation opportunities, and education systems, East Grand Forks is competitive in every category. We plan to keep it that way.

Bonfires or Recreational Fires within the City of East Grand Forks by Randy Gust

Now that we are moving into the spring and summer months, the Fire Department will be involved with the small and not so small fires within the City limits. Here are some FAQ's regarding this issue.

Bonfires: these are fires that can be no larger than 15ft long X 15ft wide X 15ft high. You must first obtain a permit at the City Administration Office which also has to be signed off by the Fire Chief. Next, the only site the City will allow you to use is in LaFave Park, South of the boat ramp. The Fire Department will need to inspect the site before the fire is lit and should remain

on site until the fire has burned down. Remember that weather conditions must be favorable for permission of the Fire Department to ignite the fire. Only wood pallets shall be used for burning material. No cardboard or tree limbs shall be used. It is the responsibility of the sponsor to have the site cleaned once fire site has cooled down. All unburned material and metal objects including nails must be removed from site.

Recreational fires: Are fires that are contained to a portable fire pit that is free standing, no more than 3ft in diameter and has a spark arrester screen around the

opening including the top. They cannot be installed permanently in the ground and must be at least 25ft from any other structure. Only fire wood is to be burned within the fire pit. You may use a small amount of paper to ignite the wood. At no time will refuse or manufactured wood products be used as a source of fuel. You must be present while burning and have an extinguishing agent such as garden hose or fire extinguisher present. There is no need to have a permit for a recreational fire but if fire becomes a nuisance to your neighbors, you will be asked to extinguish the fire.

Please practice safe fire habits so you can enjoy the warm spring and summer months. If you have any questions please feel free to contact the Fire Department at 773-2403 or stop by at 415 4th St. NW.



Do you Tweet!

Follow us on Twitter to receive news and updates at www.twitter.com



BECOME A FAN!

Keep up to date on City news and events on Facebook at www.facebook.com

Good Bye Winter Activities/Welcome Spring & Summer Activities by Mark Dragich

The calendar tells us that the seasons are changing, so in the Parks and Recreation Department we are busy completing our winter activities and planning for our spring and summer events.

The Figure Skating season concluded on Sunday, March 20th with our 39th Annual Ice Show. The skaters and coaches worked hard all winter getting ready for the ice show. The theme of the show this year was "One Hit Wonders" and both Saturday and Sunday performances went very well. This season we had 171 skaters in the Basic Skating program and 63 skaters that were a part of our Synchronized Skating teams.

The hockey program had 251 players this past winter from Mites through Bantam and Girls 14U teams. Both the

Girls 14U and Bantam VFW teams competed in their respective State Tournaments. The Civic Center, VFW Arena and Blue Line Arena were kept busy with numerous practices, regular season games, seven tournaments and our Annual Peanut Jamboree with twenty-six teams competing this year.

Now we are on to our summer activities which include playground, baseball, softball, tennis, swimming programs and activities through the Campbell Library.

We are making a change in our softball program this summer. Fast pitch softball is one of the fastest growing sports for girls; therefore, we are offering a fast pitch program this year. There will be an afternoon league with teams of 10-12 years

and teams of 13-15 years of age patterned after the Foxes program. Another option will be a 10U and 12U league that will be ran in the evening and patterned after the Cal Ripken Baseball league.

The baseball season will begin with the Cal Ripken teams hitting the fields in late April, followed by the VFW and Babe Ruth teams in May and the Rookies and Knotholes beginning once the school year is complete. Stauss Park will host the Annual Prep Tournament in June and the American Legion Classic Tournament in July. We will also host the State 13 Year Old State Intact Tournament July 28th – July 31st.

The Big Event, which is the Spring clean-up day, will be on Saturday, April 30th. The Annual Hershey Track Meet

is scheduled for June 1st at the Senior High track and is open to all boys and girls ages nine to fourteen. The playground and tennis programs will begin on June 6th and run until late July. The swimming pool will open in early June and swimming lessons will be offered for two weeks in June and two weeks in July.

The Summer Brochure with program and registration information will be mailed out the week of April 25th. Summer registration day at City Hall will be Wednesday, May 11th from 4:00pm – 7:00pm.

Boards & Commission Meeting Schedule

GROUP NAME	DAY	TIME	LOCATION
Cemetery Commission	TBD	Quarterly	TBD
City Council Meetings	1 st & 3 rd Tuesday	5:00 pm	City Hall
City Council Work Session	2 nd , 4 th , and sometimes 5 th Tuesday	5:00 pm	City Hall
EDHA	2 nd & 4 th Tuesday	11:30 am	City Hall
Library Board	Last Tuesday	7:00 am	Blue Moose
Planning Commission	2 nd Thursday	12:00 pm	City Hall
Senior Citizens Board	2 nd Tuesday	9:00 am	Senior Center
Water, Light, Power, & Building Commission	1 st & 3 rd Thursday	5:00 pm	City Hall

*For Boards & Commission Members and terms, please visit the City website.

EGF Campbell Library Events

“Northern Exposures”
Photography Exhibit through
April 2

“Spring Fantasy” Art Exhibit:
Apr 11-May 28

Exhibit Opening and
Reception: Apr 11, 6:30-7:30

Story Time: Tues, Wed at
10:00 am; Thur at 7:00 pm

Dial-A-Story: Call 218-399-
3435 for a story

Sack Lunch Book Club: 2nd
Tues of the month

Writers Groups: Middle &
High School students meet 2
Thurs a month—call for dates

Friends Book & Treasure Sale:
May 6 & 7; 8:00-5:00

“Marvels at the Library”
Summer Activity program
begins June 15; meets Wed.
from 3:00-5:00 pm

Resurrection Cemetery by Dave Aker

The Resurrection Cemetery had a 48 niche columbarium put in last September. The columbarium has 24 niche on each side, the side facing the flagpole will be sold as a double and the side facing the road will be sold as a single.

Fresh flowers can be on the graves from April 1 through October 1. During Memorial weekend you can bring flowers at 4:00 pm on Friday and leave them until Wednesday were they should be taken off. Artificial flowers are allowed on the grave sites from October 1 through April 1.



Senior Center Update by Dave Aker

The Senior Center will be holding their annual meeting on Wednesday, April 27th, following the noon lunch. Reservations for the noon meal are required and can be made by calling 773-3017.

Karen Myszkowski from the University of Minnesota, Crookston, Nutrition Education, will present another nutrition education program on Tuesday, March 29th at 11:30 am. Karen will be discussing sugar; how much is too much.

The center continues to have many different activities for seniors including line dancing, bone builders, computer class, bingo, smear, whist, pinochle, duplicate bridge, dominoes, Tops, and more.

Need a Building Permit? by Tom Spoor

People thinking of a building project for this year need to be getting all of their information together now. Plans, specifications and site plans etc. need to be brought into the Building Inspections office for review before your project begins. Also permits are required for all

remodeling and building projects such as garages, additions, fences and new construction. Submit your documentation early for a successful project. If you have any questions as to what needs to be permitted and what projects are exempt please contact the Building

Inspections Office at 218-773-2208 or stop in to City Hall at 600 Demers Avenue in East Grand Forks.



EGFPD Calendar Parking Update by Chief Hedlund

The East Grand Forks Police Department would like to remind the citizen's and visitors to East Grand Forks that the City's Calendar Parking Ordinance was amended this Winter and is now a Street Maintenance Ordinance that is enforced year round. Under the old ordinance parking was restricted in the residential neighborhoods from November 15 through

March 15 and you could not park on the street from 7:30 AM until noon either Monday-Wednesday-Friday or Tuesday-Thursday-Saturday.

The amended ordinance is enforced year round but only restricts parking from 7:30 until noon on one day per week in any particular neighborhood. The new ordinance is designed to allow the

Street Department to more effectively clean the streets on a year round basis. The districts for restricted parking (no parking from 7:30 AM until noon all year) are listed on page 2 in the “Street Sweeping Schedule”. In addition, the City's Commercial Routes are designated as No Parking from 2:00 AM until 7:00 AM from Monday Through Friday

(see map on the city website and contact the Police Department at 218-773-1104 with any questions). Additional information may be found on the City of East Grand Forks website – www.egf.mn



EAST GRAND FORKS

Home Ownership Programs

New Construction Opportunities

- \$5,000 forgivable deferred loan for 10 years for a newly constructed home or townhome.
- No income limits.
- No limit on price of home.
- All lots within city limits are eligible.

Tax Abatement/Rebate

1. The three primary taxing authorities, City, County & School District, all participating in the incentive program.
2. The program applies to new residential construction only. New residential construction shall include modular homes and stick built homes.
3. The program applies to single-family dwellings, including townhomes and twin homes, ready for occupancy in the year built.
4. The abatement/rebate of real property taxes is for two years, in the two years where payment of taxes are based upon full value of the new dwelling.
"Does not include specials."

Down Payment Assistance Program

- Up to \$7,500 toward closing costs
- 1st Year No Payment/No Interest
- New Higher Income Purchase Price
- New Higher Income Parameters
- Up to 5 Years Repayment Plan
- Interest Rate at 5%

Landscaping Grant

- \$500 landscaping grant for new construction on eligible properties

Developments

- Waters Edge
- Peabody's 1st Addition
- Greenway Crossing
- Point of Woods Addition
- Riverview Addition

EAST GRAND FORKS

For More Info & Application Call

7 7 3 - 2 3 7 1

www.ci.east-grand-forks.mn.us

**Growing
in the
Right
Direction**

Our own Michelle French, Executive Assistant for the City of East Grand Forks (and editor in chief of this newsletter), recently completed all requirements and earned her status as a Minnesota Certified Municipal Clerk (MCMC). The Minnesota Clerks and Finance Officers Association recently recognized Michelle at its annual conference in St. Paul.



P O J K L N K V R U W R I N K P W Q X A V
D H R U T L I N M T E V N B B A L L O T Y
M I U E S D M P E U O H B Y T C U J K E D
M D F Q S E T S R S H R S A E K V H S G Q
Z B X D R O J E D N X O C G E E Q X D D Y
N M M R J K L R J I T R D E V T J T D U D
S X I M B Y S U E W W D D N Q W E D D B M
E Q N D N C H U T B X I G D G U L P O B F
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K K C A L E N D A R P A R K I N G J D W G

Agenda
Ballot
Budget
Calendar Parking
Election
Minutes
Ordinance
Packet
Resolution
Ward
Work Session

Minnesota Legislature Update by Scott Huizenga

Amidst the never-ending battles that of Minnesota's projected \$5.0 billion deficit (down from the previous projection of \$6.2 billion), Local Government Aid (LGA) continues to be a hot topic. The latest scenarios as of this publication show cuts that are quite deep. On the bright side, the City has

prepared itself in the last few years with reduced personnel, deferred capital expenditures, and modest revenue enhancements. Therefore, the City is well-positioned to weather the state budget storm barring a dramatic shift out of St. Paul. The City is also lobbying hard to secure additional

funds for the Red River State Recreational Area (RRSRA). Most are familiar with the campground within the RRSRA. But, many are not aware that the RRSRA actually contains over 1200 acres along the Red River and the Red Lake River. The City is solely responsible for the

maintenance of the Greenway and trails systems within this expanse. The latest omnibus tax bills at the Legislature contain funding to the City for the maintenance of this area, which is a designated state recreational area.

State Aid Task Force Update by Scott Huizenga

The council-appointed State Aid Task Force unveiled its latest recommendations to the City Council on March 22. The task force was appointed to develop a model that fully funds street improvements throughout the entire city. Most governmental entities, including East Grand Forks,

struggle with providing infrastructure improvements without adequate funding sources. Without a long-term solution, streets are often left to deteriorate as we have seen in many cities across the state and nation. The latest recommendation bases street fees on "average daily trips" generated. For

example, commercial and industrial facilities would pay higher fees under the model than single family homes. Apartment units and senior housing units would pay less yet because they generate fewer trips on average. The City Council will hold a public hearing on the full recommendation this

fall. A copy of the report can be found at (web site) or in the City Hall Administration office.



Waste Water Improvements by Scott Huizenga

The City Council plans to decide in May how, or if, to change the way the City treats its waste water. The City has been working on a new facility plan for its treatment lagoon since 1996. The City Council is considering four possible

options, each with pros and cons: 1) Enter into an agreement with the City of Grand Forks for waste treatment; 2) Repair and expand its current lagoon system; 3) Construct a mechanical treatment plan in the City; and 4) Do nothing.

The Council will hold a required public hearing on the matter before the final vote. Interested persons can find the draft waste water facility plan on the City's web site at <http://www.egf.mn/index.aspx?NID=243>



Do you Tweet!

Follow us on Twitter to receive news and updates at www.twitter.com

Employee Spotlight

Kevin Hanson

Date of Hire: March 2010

Position: Public Works Mechanic

Kevin was born and raised in East Grand Forks and graduated from East Grand Forks Senior High. After graduation Kevin attended the East Grand Forks Area Vocational Technical Institute. Kevin and his wife Cheryl reside in rural East Grand Forks. He is the proud father of two children Tanner (25) and Tasha (21). His hobbies include bow hunting and spending time at the lake with the family.

