

Golden Valley

November
December 2001

CITYNEWS

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Meadowbrook Community Center Opens Soon

Golden Valley's Park and Recreation Department will soon be able to offer enhanced programming and more recreational opportunities to residents, thanks to this winter's debut of the new Meadowbrook Community Center at the west end of Meadowbrook Elementary School (Glenwood Ave and Turner's Crossroad).

The result of a collaboration between the Golden Valley City Council, its Housing and Redevelopment Authority, and the Hopkins School District, the Community Center will be used for Golden Valley Park and Recreation programs on nights and weekends and by Meadowbrook students during the weekdays. Residents will no longer have to leave the city or struggle with inadequate facilities to pursue certain activities (eg, Golden Valley youth basketball played at the Crystal Community Center).

The 24,000-square-foot addition features a 10,000-square-foot gymnasium (the equivalent of two full-size basketball courts), several preschool rooms, a sibling care room, a room for early childhood development, three adult/parent education rooms, and a resource center/office space. About 51 additional parking spaces are also available.

"We are so excited about the Center," says Golden Valley Recreation Supervisor Sue Cook. "We expect to start offering some programs in January 2002." Eventually, City
(Meadowbrook Community Center *continued on page 3*)

City Council Will Have Three New Faces

Golden Valley will have a new mayor and two new council members when City Council convenes January 8, 2002. Results of the November 6 City election showed Linda Loomis defeating council member Gloria Johnson for the mayoral seat and Scott Grayson and Blair Tremere topping a field of eight candidates bidding for two council seats. Johnson will remain on the council for the final two years of a four-year term.

(City Council *continued on page 6*)



See story on page 7.

Property Taxes 2002: Bottom Line Decrease; City Levy Increase

When citizens get their Truth In Taxation notices in December, they will see a decrease of about 15% to the "bottom-line," or the total tax, for all jurisdictions on the average home (\$176,600). This decrease is the net result of numerous changes the State Legislature made to the property tax system this summer (including the Market Value Homestead Credit outlined in the box at right).

Market Value Homestead Credit

The 2001 tax law includes a new program that will benefit most residential taxpayers. The market value homestead credit, which is applied to the "bottom line" of the total tax bill, is equal to .4% of market value up to \$76,000, or \$304. The credit is phased out at the rate of \$9 for each \$10,000 of value in excess of \$76,000. For the average home (\$176,600), this would amount to a credit of \$214.

One principle of the State's new property tax and government financing reform law is that State mandated services (such as K-12 education) should be funded mainly by State revenue sources and city and county services should be funded by local property taxes. So in 2002, responsibility for State mandated education funding will shift from local property taxes to the State. At the same time, the State is eliminating its Homestead & Agricultural Aid (HACA) to cities. The State will use the net savings to partially finance its takeover of education funding, and it expects that cities will adjust their property taxes to replace HACA. As a result, Golden Valley citizens can expect to see an increase in the 2002 City tax levy.

According to Golden Valley's State Legislators, including Representative Peggy Leppik, Senator Ann Rest, Senator Martha Robertson, and Representative Mark Thompson, the 2001 Legislature understood that cities would levy back (raise taxes) to replace lost HACA. To maintain City services at current levels, Golden Valley will levy back the \$1,759,645 it lost in HACA.

Explanation of City Levy Increase

The City's property tax levy will increase 33.9% (see box below). The HACA replacement levy requires a 22% increase. Of the remaining 11.9% increase, 10% is earmarked for the City's operating levy and 1.9% for the City's debt levy.

The 1.9% increase in the debt levy is primarily related to long-term financing of the City's pavement management program. About half (5.9%) of the 10% operating levy increase can be attributed to the fact that a smaller amount of the City's reserve fund (see story at right) was used to balance the 2002 budget as compared to the 2001 budget.

Over the last few years, significant increases in the City's building permit and investment interest revenue resulted in increased reserve levels. Each year a portion of the reserve was then used to

(City Tax Increase *continued on page 3*)

City Benefits From Healthy Reserve

Sound long-term financial planning requires that cities maintain a reserve level in the range of 60 - 70% of budgeted expenditures (Golden Valley's reserve is projected to be \$7,324,455 at the end of 2002). This ensures positive cash flow and provides the benefits of higher interest earnings and bond ratings and lower interest rates and insurance costs.

For example, the City doesn't receive the first dollar of the current year's tax levy until the County sends the first half-year settlement in July. Since the City has to meet expenditures beginning January 1, the reserve fund provides interim financing until the tax levy is received. To avoid any short-term borrowing, the City needs a *minimum* of \$4.5 million in reserves.

Maintaining the reserve at this level is one of the reasons for Golden Valley's Aa1 bond rating from Moody's Investors Services (only 10 cities and counties in Minnesota have a higher rating). This means Golden Valley is considered a good risk by lenders and investors, resulting in lower

interest rates on bonded debt. A significant reserve also allows the City to go without umbrella liability insurance (saving \$45,000 a year) and provides additional interest earnings (\$490,000 in 2000). 

Recommended 2002 City Levy Increase

	Amount of Increase Over 2001	% Increase to Net Levy
Operating Levy	\$ 813,280	10.0%
Debt Levy	\$ 150,000	1.9%
HACA Replacement Levy	<u>\$1,759,645</u>	<u>22.0%</u>
Total	\$2,722,925	33.9%



Meadowbrook Community Center

(continued from page 1)

recreation programs offered at Meadowbrook may include volleyball, basketball, parent/child activities, exercise classes, and open gym. City recreation programs are open to all Golden Valley residents (watch for details in the upcoming Park and Recreation activities brochure).

"This has been a wonderful partnership between the school and the City, and it is a great opportunity both for the students and the entire community," says Meadowbrook Elementary School Principal Diane Schimelpfenig. Besides serving the instrumental music program and before/after school childcare programs, the addition "will increase our ability to offer more early childhood education and build partnerships earlier with families," adds Schimelpfenig.

Though Schimelpfenig is thinking about the larger purposes of the Center, she says the kids are very excited about the gymnasium, which is much larger than the one it replaced.

Watch here and the City web site (www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us) for more information on upcoming programs to be held in the Center. If you have questions about future programming, call Golden Valley Park and Recreation at 763-512-2345. 

City Tax Increase

(continued from page 2)

balance the following year's budget. In 2001, \$761,135 of the reserve was used to balance the budget. With the current economic downturn, such revenue items have decreased to the point where the City could use only \$284,895 of the reserve to balance the 2002 budget and still keep the reserve level above 60% of expenditures. Reserves at this level maintain positive cash flow and provide the benefits of higher interest earnings, lower interest costs, higher bond ratings, and lower insurance costs (see related story on page 2).

The rest (4.1%) of the operating levy increase will be used to finance the net increases in the operating expenditures, including salaries and wages, new police software, Microsoft licenses, the City's share of first-year Meadowbrook Community Center operations, building operations budgets (natural gas, custodial contract, and repair and maintenance projects), and streetscape maintenance.

To offset expenditure increases, the City indefinitely delayed two major remodeling projects and decreased its annual transfer to the Building Capital Improvement Fund by \$200,000. The City also increased the transfer from the Motor Vehicle Fund by \$125,000.

281 District News

District Offers Another Way For Parents to Be Informed—Robbinsdale Area School District Superintendent Stan F. Mack II announces ParentCONNECT, a new service for parents of Armstrong and Cooper High School students.

ParentCONNECT allows parents to use the Internet to check on their high school student's grades, homework, assignments, attendance, and other records. For more information about how to sign up, call Gretchen Cleveland at 763-504-8060.

GV Students Recognized By National Merit Program—Two Golden Valley teens are among 10 Robbinsdale Area School District high school students recognized by the National Merit program. Abigail Benson and Blake Michener both attend Armstrong High School and were named 2001 National Merit Commended Students.

Levy Limits

According to State law, a levy limit is the maximum amount a City may levy (does not apply to debt levies).

Golden Valley's levy limit is \$9,239,288. The City's recommended non-debt levy for 2002 is \$8,012,120, which is \$1,227,168 less than the amount allowed by State law.

To understand the ramifications of the maximum levy set in September and whether it should be changed, the City Council conducted two workshops on the 2002 Recommended Budget in November. The Council will hold a public hearing in December to hear citizen input (see below). If you have questions or comments on the 2002 Recommended Budget, call Finance Director Don Taylor at 763-593-8012. 

Public Hearing on 2002 Recommended Budget

Tuesday, December 11, 7 pm
City Hall Council Chambers

Reduce Holiday Waste



During the holiday season, Americans generate an extra one million tons of trash each week. In fact, 38,000 miles of ribbon alone is thrown out annually—enough to tie a bow around the Earth. Though Minnesota has some of the highest recycling statistics in the United States, the holidays bring in bows, boxes, and wrapping paper galore, and the morning after there is a lot of excess waste. Here are some tips to help you reduce holiday waste, and the effect on our environment.

Gift Wrapping—One of the best ways to reduce waste is not to make it in the first place. Try using scarves, handkerchiefs, bandanas, old posters or maps, pages the kids have colored, old sheet music, newspaper, last year's wrapping paper (if it's wrinkled just press with a warm iron), wallpaper scraps, cloth bags, or fabric scraps for wrapping alternatives. Be creative. Put jewelry in a wooden box or kitchen gifts into dishcloths. For a special touch, reuse old bows and ribbons. Items such as hair bows, ornaments, shoe laces, and toys are reusable and make great additions to gifts. Spices, such as cinnamon sticks or cloves in a mesh bag are not only attractive, but also add a delightful smell.

Packing—Popcorn is one of the best packing materials to keep gifts from sliding around in a box. Include a note reminding the recipient that popcorn is a special treat for many birds and can be composted. If you use packing peanuts, try the biodegradable ones made from starch.

Cards—All the holiday cards bought in one year would fill a football field 10 stories high. If everyone sent out one fewer card, it would reduce that amount by a full story, saving more than 50,000 cubic yards of paper. Save time, money, and resources by updating and paring down your list and sending postcards or electronic cards.

Food—More than 100 pounds of food are wasted per person each year. Take smaller portions, and go back for seconds. Plan meals wisely and buy based on the number of guests. Buy fresh foods carefully. Research shows that cheaper foods are wasted at a higher rate than more expensive items. Finally, give extra food to guests or donate leftovers to local food banks.

Decorations—Fifty million Christmas trees are purchased each year in the United States. Consider a potted tree that can be planted later, or invest in an artificial tree. Buy outdoor light strands that are wired in parallel. If one bulb burns out, the rest stay lit. Re-box lights after the season or use old newspaper as a spool. Either way, lights won't get tangled and you won't end up buying more. Make wreaths out of natural materials such as branches, dried flowers, herbs, red and green chilies, etc. They make great gifts, too.

Home for the Holidays—Turn down the heat before guests arrive. Their extra body heat will warm the room. Turn your fireplace into a furnace by using a heat exchanger. Glass doors will further improve efficiency, as will a flue open just enough to provide air without creating indoor smoke.

For more information about recycling in Golden Valley, check out the City web site at www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us/environment/RecyclingPrograms.htm.

Tina Perpich, Communications Assistant

Holiday Notice

Recycling pick-up the weeks of the Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day will be one day later than usual. Have your recyclables at the curb by 7 am Saturday, November 24, Saturday, December 29, and Saturday, January 5.



The Golden Valley Recycling Program is partially funded by the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners.

24-Hour Recycling Info-Line

Recorded answers to your recycling questions 24 hours a day. Just call 763-593-8119 to reach the Golden Valley Recycling Information Line (directions for rotary phone users are on the message). For information on:

- curbside recycling, press 1
- apartment recycling, press 2
- yard waste disposal, press 3
- household hazardous waste disposal, press 4

**763-
593-8119**

Missed Pick-Ups

If your recycling is missed on Friday, call Waste Management at 952-890-1100 before noon on the following Monday.

If you have specific recycling questions, call 763-593-8030.

Ice Control

City crews use a sand-salt mixture on icy areas. This doesn't guarantee totally ice-free streets, so drive carefully even where sanding is evident. Priority areas are sanded first, and all other areas are done when time permits. Priority areas include:

- ❑ intersections of City streets and County and State roads, school and pedestrian crossings, bridge decks, and all arterial street stop sign intersections
- ❑ street intersections having higher than average traffic volumes, and streets with hills and curves
- ❑ all other stop signs, and areas deemed hazardous by City crews or Public Safety officials

Plow Damage

- ❑ The City doesn't assume liability for damages to obstacles in the road right-of-way (irrigation heads, landscaping, etc). If possible, remove these obstacles from the right-of-way or mark them clearly to aid plow drivers.
- ❑ Mailboxes are repaired or replaced only if the plow makes direct contact (sometimes snow from the plow can dislodge the box from the post or bend a weak post). Make sure your mailbox post is solid and securely fastened to the box.
- ❑ Often, plow drivers literally "feel" their way along streets because of conditions, and regrettably lawns are cut up. If this happens to you, please report it to Public Works at 763-593-8030. Damages are repaired each spring with black dirt and seed or sod.

Review These Winter Plowing and Parking Policies

To reduce safety hazards and to minimize costs of snow removal for taxpayers, the City of Golden Valley established the following policies on plowing and sanding, snow removal from private property, and parking along City roadways during snowfalls.

Plowing—Plowing begins after snow accumulates to two inches or more and stops falling. When snowfall continues for long periods, crews plow main arterial routes and "through" streets that connect neighborhoods to State and County roads to keep these roads passable until all City streets can be plowed. Golden Valley also plows sidewalks. Depending on weather conditions, this usually starts about two hours after the streets. Follow-up passes are made as needed. If strong winds and drifting cause unsafe conditions for snowplow drivers, plowing stops until conditions improve. However, efforts are made to continue plowing during rush hour to help people get home safely.



Snow Removal From Private Property—Removal of snow and ice from private property to a roadway, across a roadway, or onto a sidewalk or adjacent property is prohibited by City ordinance. Infractions are misdemeanors and are subject to fines and prosecution. When snow is being removed from your driveway or parking lot (whether you do it or hire someone to do it), make sure it stays off of roadways, sidewalks, and adjacent property. Improper snow removal can result in many complications, some of which can be very dangerous. If you or your plowing contractor have questions regarding this issue, contact Tom Klatt, Public Works Maintenance Manager, at 763-593-3981.



Parking On Public Streets—Parking is not allowed on any public street after a snowfall of at least two inches until the snow has been plowed to the curb line. Keep in mind that the Minneapolis snow emergency announcements on TV and radio do not apply to Golden Valley. All Golden Valley streets are plowed on schedule after a snowfall.

After a snowfall of at least two inches, supervisors from the Public Works and Police Departments confer and determine when enforcement will commence. Vehicles in violation are cited by patrolling police, and those still in violation after 24 hours may be towed. After two inches of snowfall, vehicles parked in locations that create an extreme hazard may be towed immediately by the police or at the request of State, County, or City street maintenance personnel. This winter, stay informed of the weather forecasts and move your vehicle from the streets when necessary.

*Tom Klatt, Public Works Maintenance Manager
Captain Roger Johnson, Police Dept*

Pedestrians Are Priority In Valley Square Area

For several years the City of Golden Valley has been planning and implementing redevelopment of its downtown area, which centers around the new shops, restaurants, and housing at the intersection of Golden Valley Rd and Winnetka Ave N. Since a main consideration in any downtown area is safe and convenient pedestrian movement, the City developed detailed plans for a coordinated street and pedestrian circulation system.

Work on the two-phase pedestrian improvement project began this year and will be completed next summer (see box at left). It includes construction of sidewalks and trails throughout the Valley Square Area to provide a continuous looped system for recreational walking. Medians are being installed at safe and convenient locations to help manage traffic and provide pedestrian crossings with better protection.

Medians on Winnetka Ave, Rhode Island Ave, and Golden Valley Rd east of Winnetka were completed this summer. All have a standard six-inch rise except for the one in front of Fire Station #1, which has a surmountable curb that fire trucks can drive over. Next spring, five six-inch rise medians will be constructed on Golden Valley Rd between Wisconsin Ave and Winnetka Ave.

All of the medians will be filled with concrete except for the large median on Winnetka Ave, which will feature brick pavers (to match the existing brick sidewalk around Valley Square) and five planter rings. Three of the rings will contain "Chuckles" shrub roses and "Little Grapette" daylilies and the other two will feature "Gro-Low" sumac. The medians to be constructed on Golden Valley Rd next year will have the same "Gro-Low" sumac and a single "Northern Treasure" ash tree, which grows from 40 to 50 feet tall and produces excellent fall color.

All of the sidewalk/trail portions of the project were completed this summer, including a six-foot-wide, 1.5-mile loop that runs along portions of Bassett Creek and links to the other pedestrian improvements. Five- to six-foot-wide sidewalks were completed on Wisconsin Ave between Boone Ave and Golden Valley Rd, on 10th Ave between Winnetka and Boone Ave, and on areas of Golden Valley Rd between Winnetka and Wisconsin Ave.

A major goal of the Valley Square redevelopment plan was to encourage pedestrian movement and make it safe. In 1997, the City's Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) secured a Livable Communities Grant from the Metropolitan Council. This grant was provided primarily to subsidize a shared parking deck, contribute to a pond retaining wall, and provide a pedestrian connection to downtown. In accordance with these guidelines, intended to enhance urban life-styles, most of the recent work has been to encourage pedestrian movement.

If you have questions about the Valley Square Pedestrian Improvements, contact Golden Valley Public Works at 763-593-8030. 

Construction Schedule

Phase I (2001)

Medians

Golden Valley Rd (east of Winnetka)

Winnetka Ave N

Rhode Island Ave N

Trail/Sidewalk

Boone Ave N

Golden Valley Dr and Wisconsin Ave

10th Ave

Golden Valley Rd (near Boone Ave N)

Phase II (2002)

Medians

Golden Valley Rd (west of Winnetka)

City Council

(continued from page 1)

Loomis, a part-time playground paraprofessional in the Hopkins School District, has lived in Golden Valley most of her life. She has served on the City's Open Space and Recreation Commission since 1994 (chairperson since 1995), the Laurel/Winnetka Avenues Traffic Advisory Committee, and the Golden Valley Sidewalk Committee. She will serve a two-year term.

Grayson, a director of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers - United States of America, has lived in Golden Valley six years. Tremere is an administrator for the Minnesota House of Representatives Committee on Local Government and Metro Affairs and is a community planning and government affairs consultant. He has lived in Golden Valley 24 years and served as mayor from 1994 - 1996. Grayson and Tremere will serve four-year terms.

Loomis will succeed incumbent Mayor Mary Anderson, who is retiring. Grayson and Tremere will replace incumbent council members Larry Bakken and Marti Micks, who did not seek re-election. 

Who to Call

For more information on the Highway 100 reconstruction project, contact one of these MnDOT employees:

Dave Raley.....763-797-3069
(Segment I Construction)

Joe Forpahl.....763-797-3070
(Segment II Construction)

For construction updates, check the City web site at www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us/streets/streetconst.htm, which includes links to MnDOT's web site.

City Continues With Visioning Process

Envision Golden Valley, a community-wide effort to gather ideas from citizens, businesses, and organizations about the future of the city, is entering stage two of a three-stage process. Callers are taking to the phones to obtain a statistically valid, random sample survey of community views on a number of issues. The survey will be conducted by Decision Resources, LTD through the end of November and early December.

Survey questions will test and quantify the issues raised in six focus groups conducted by Decision Resources during the first stage of the visioning process. When the survey is completed, Decision Resources will provide a full analysis of each two-hour focus group and the random sample survey.

City officials and staff will use the issues raised in these first stages to embark upon stage three, a full-scale town meeting open to all members of the public. Planned for sometime in the spring, the town meeting will provide an opportunity for participants to respond to ideas raised in the focus groups and surveys and discuss strategies for implementing the community vision. For more information on Envision Golden Valley, contact Jeanne Andre (763-593-8014) or Cheryl Weiler (763-593-8004). 

Work On Hwy 100 Progresses

As November's unseasonably mild weather gives way to winter, work on Hwy 100 in the Golden Valley area continues. The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) project is upgrading Hwy 100 through Golden Valley, Crystal, Robbinsdale, and Brooklyn Center in five phases over the next several years.

According to MnDOT's November 5 *Hotspots* Update, the old ramp loops from eastbound Hwy 55 to northbound Hwy 100 and from northbound Hwy 100 to westbound Hwy 55 are permanently closed. However, temporary bypasses are in place between Hwys 55 and 100 until the new overpass is constructed. The interchange at Hwy 55 will be reconstructed with one signal on Hwy 55. Access to Hwy 100 will remain open at Glenwood Ave, Hwy 55, and Duluth St. Between Glenwood Ave and Duluth St, all other access points to Hwy 100 are closed.

North of Golden Valley, 36th Ave and all ramps to 36th Ave are open, and northbound traffic has been shifted to the new roadway near Bassett Creek. All other access points to Hwy 100 (Unity Ave and existing connections to frontage roads), 39th Ave, and the pedestrian bridge will close. MnDOT anticipates that work in this area will be essentially completed in November.

During construction, motorists can expect traffic delays, intermittent lane closures, and temporary lane shifts. Remember, fines double in work zones. If you have questions about the Hwy 100 project, contact the appropriate person (see box to left). 

New Golden Valley Road Bridge Now Open

The Golden Valley Road Bridge over the BNSF railroad, which has been under construction since July, reopened to traffic November 15. The bridge was established as a priority for replacement after Hennepin County Transportation Department officials found it to be structurally deficient during a routine inspection last year.

The new three-span bridge, constructed in essentially the same location as the old one, will carry two lanes of traffic and has eight-foot-wide shoulders. There is an eight-foot-wide sidewalk on the north side and a 12-foot-wide combined sidewalk/bikeway on the south side.

The Hennepin County Transportation Department thanks the community for its understanding and patience during construction. 

Who to Call

For more information on the Golden Valley Road Bridge project, contact one of these Hennepin County employees:

Bernie Jahn.....763-745-7680
Bridge Engineer

Paul Backer.....763-745-7569
Construction Project Engineer

Bruce Polaczyk.....763-745-7650
Design Engineer

Tis' the Season for Skating

With winter just around the corner, the Golden Valley Park Maintenance Department is revving up for another season on the ice.

However, even in frosty Minnesota, conditions are not always right for building and maintaining ice rinks. Temperatures need to remain around 0° to -10° F for a week or so to produce enough ice for skating. Ideally, crews need three or four inches of frozen ground to start making ice and to establish a six-inch ice base, which helps rinks survive most warm snaps without closing. With the base set, crews can start to build "finish ice." The goal is to have ice conditions ready by mid-December so skating can begin before winter school breaks. Since the weather does not always cooperate with our plan, we ask for your patience.



Design a T-Shirt

The Golden Valley Human Services Foundation is looking for a colorful, eye-catching, and unique graphic design for its 2002 *Run The Valley* 5K/10K race and 5K walk T-shirt. Golden Valley residents of all ages are eligible to enter. For contest details, click to the City web site at www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us/community/runvalleytshirtcontest.htm, or call 763-593-8010.

Skating Information

Golden Valley's Park and Recreation Department (763-512-2345) maintains skating areas at the following parks:

Gearty	3101 Regent Ave N	H	GS	W
Hampshire	1601 Louisiana	H	GS	W
Lakeview	9300 Olympia		GS	W
Lions	7200 Harold Ave	H	GS	W
Medley	2355 Ensign Ave	H	GS	W
Scheid	1965 Toledo	H	GS	W
Wesley	8305 Wesley	H	GS	W
North Tyrol	4300 Sunset Ridge			S
South Tyrol	Tyrol & Ortle Pass			S
Yosemite	Woodstock & Yosemite			S

H=Hockey rink W=Supervised warming shelter
GS=General skating rink S=Secondary skating area

Rink Schedule (weather permitting)

Rinks open December 15 and close February 18

Monday-Friday 4 - 9 pm (10 am - 9 pm on school holidays)

Saturday 10 am - 9 pm

Sunday 1 - 9 pm

Christmas Eve 10 am - 4 pm

CLOSED CHRISTMAS DAY

New Year's Eve 10 am - 7 pm (all rinks)

10 am - 10 pm (Scheid Park)

New Year's Eve Skating Special: Scheid Park will remain open until 10 pm for families to enjoy winter fun activities on New Year's Eve. Hot chocolate will be provided.

Weather Cancellation Line: Call 763-512-2350 to hear if the warming houses are open or closed.

Skating rinks are cleaned and resurfaced Monday through Friday and cleaned on Saturday mornings, depending on weather conditions. Double bladed shovels are available at shelter buildings and may be checked out with the building attendant. During extreme cold or warm weather, rinks and shelter buildings may be closed. Please check to see if the rink is closed before dropping children off. Call 763-512-2350 to hear a recording about skating rink and park shelter closings. "Closed" signs are also posted on park shelter doors.

If you have concerns or questions about ice conditions or rink maintenance, call Park Maintenance at 763-593-8045.

*Ron Hammer,
Park Maintenance
Supervisor*

GVHSF Wraps Up Another Year

Local charities will again benefit from another successful fundraising year by the Golden Valley Human Services Foundation (GVHSF). In 2001, the Foundation's annual *Run the Valley* 5K/10K race and 5K walk drew 554 runners and walkers and raised \$5,257, a 12% increase over 2000. The Foundation's annual fall *Golf Classic* took in \$10,513, a 19% increase over last year.



The GVHSF distributes 100% of funds raised directly to causes and programs serving the Golden Valley Community. Nonprofit organizations funded for 2001 include the Senior Community Services HOME and Outreach programs, the Home Free shelter, PRISM, the YMCA Detached Work program, and Suburban Northwest Dinner At Your Door.

The GVHSF is already planning for next year and invites community participation. Each year it holds a contest for the design that will grace the commemorative T-shirts provided to *Run The Valley* participants. Residents of all ages are encouraged to start thinking up colorful, creative designs for the 2002 T-shirt design contest. Watch *CityNews* and the City web site (www.ci.golden-valley-mn.us) for more information.

For more information on the GVHSF, call Sue Virnig at 763-593-8010. 

Toys For Tots

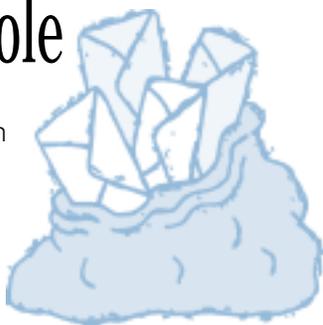
Join the Golden Valley Police Department (GVPD) in a unique approach to the Toys for Tots donation effort. For the seventh consecutive year, the GVPD will lead regional law enforcement agencies in a toy drive that culminates in a loud, colorful parade. On the last collection day, police from as many as 20 departments load their police cruisers with toys and meet at the GVPD. Then, lights blazing, they all caravan over to the KARE 11 Toys for Tots drop-off site. In past years the effort has garnered thousands of toys.

Once again the GVPD invites the Golden Valley community to join the effort. Between December 10 and 21 (at 3 pm), bring new, unwrapped toys to the GVPD at 7800 Golden Valley Road (open 24 hours a day). Don't forget gifts for older kids and teens. For more information, contact Sergeant Steve Johnson at 763-593-8079.

Mailbox to the North Pole

From December 1 to 17, children can drop off letters to Santa Claus in the special direct-to-the-North Pole mailbox in the Park and

Recreation office at Brookview Community Center, 200 Brookview Parkway. Santa requests that letters include the full name and address of each sender so he and his helpers can reply. 



Sign-Up For Brookview Shelters Starts January 14

If you are planning a neighborhood, family, or company picnic and want to use the Brookview Recreation Complex (southwest corner of Hwy 55 and Winnetka), it's not too early to make reservations. On January 14, Brookview will begin taking picnic shelter reservations from Golden Valley residents, businesses, churches, or organizations. Residents may not reserve shelters for non-resident groups or individuals. Brookview begins taking reservations from non-residents February 14.

Reservations will be taken for dates through the first week of October. Two time slots are available: 11 am to 4 pm and 5 pm to dusk. Reservations made in person at Brookview Community Center (200 Brookview Parkway) or through the mail will have priority over phone reservations. Phone reservations will be accepted only if payment is made with VISA or Mastercard.

Brookview Park's total capacity is 300. The large shelter holds up to 100 people and the small shelter holds up to 50 people. If a party wishes to serve beer or wine, a \$5 fee is due, payable at the time the reservation is made.

If you have questions about the Brookview Park facilities or reservation system, call the Park and Recreation office at 763-512-2345. 

Park & Rec News

Winter Recreation Brochure—This guide to Golden Valley's winter recreation activities is scheduled to arrive in your mailbox the first week of December. If you do not receive one, call 763-512-2345. Watch for it also on the City web site at www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us.

Boys and Girls Basketball—features programs for second through sixth graders and a skills program for kindergarten and first graders. See the Winter Recreation Brochure for more information.

Adult Ski Trips—For details, call the Park and Recreation office at 763-512-2345.

Athletic Association Registration—Information and registration dates for Golden Valley Athletic Associations (Little League, Babe Ruth Baseball, Phoenix Soccer, Girls Slowpitch Softball, and Girls Fastpitch Softball) are included in the Winter Recreation Brochure.

Target Center Events—Get group-priced tickets to four Target Center events: Harlem Globetrotters, Saturday, December 29, 7 pm (\$19 each); *Sesame Street Live: Everyone Makes Music*, Friday, January 18, 7 pm, (\$15 each); *Target Stars on Ice*, Tuesday, January 29, time to be announced (\$44 each); and *Disney on Ice Presents Toy Story 2*, Friday, March 8, 7 pm (\$19 each). Participants must provide their own transportation.

For more information and to register, contact:
Golden Valley Park and Recreation
Brookview Community Center
200 Brookview Parkway
Golden Valley, MN 55426
763-512-2345
8 am - 5 pm, Monday - Friday

Have A Fire-Safe Winter

More fires occur in residences than anywhere else. In 1999, there were 3,500 residential fires in Minnesota. Use these tips to help ensure a safe heating season.

HOLIDAY FIRE SAFETY—The majority of kitchen fires occur when food is left unattended. Plan to be home while cooking. Send someone else for any last minute errands.

Put candles in non-tip holders and keep them away from decorations or other combustible materials. Don't use candles as part of displays or decorations. Do not burn them unattended or within the reach of small children.

Use holiday lights labeled by an independent testing laboratory. Replace light sets with cracked or frayed cords or loose connections. Do not overload outlets or run extension cords under carpets, and never put lights on a metal tree. Unplug everything before you leave home or go to bed. Outside decorations should be labeled for outdoor use and plugged into outdoor receptacles.

Choose a fresh tree that's not shedding its needles, trim the trunk at an angle, put it in a non-tip stand, and place the tree away from exits, heat sources, and fireplaces. Water it constantly. Make sure artificial trees have flame retardant labels.

GENERAL SAFETY TIPS—Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless tasteless, normal by-product of combustion. Every fuel-burning appliance is a potential CO source. Therefore, at least one CO detector should be placed near the bedrooms. The detector should display the Underwriters Laboratories (UL 2034) label.

A ground-fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) electronically monitors the electricity flowing in the circuit. If an imbalance occurs, the GFCI will almost instantly shut off the current to the circuit. A GFCI is essential in circuits to bathrooms, laundry facilities, kitchens, and outdoor receptacles. Test the GFCI monthly by pressing the test button and then the reset button.

Defective appliances and overloaded circuits are major causes of home fires. Keep all power cords in proper working order and replace damaged ones immediately. Avoid overloading electrical outlets and extension cords, which can become overheated. If a plugged-in cord is hot to the touch, disconnect the appliance.

HEATING AND FIREPLACES—Before the heating season, have your furnace and chimney inspected by professionals.

In fireplaces, use a fire screen and burn only materials designed for a fireplace, never trash or paper. Burn paper only to start a fire and only in small amounts. Never use chemicals or fuels to start a fire. Store all flammable fluids outside. Since toxic fumes can be released from gift wrap, don't burn it. Use dry, seasoned wood, and avoid evergreen branches, which can flare and throw sparks. Avoid huge fires, and never leave a fire unattended. Keep small children away from all heating sources. Put ashes in a metal container and never store them in your home or garage.

Avoid portable space heaters, but if you use one, be sure it is listed for indoor residential use and keep it at least three feet away from flammable items.

Fire Safe Gift Ideas

Children's Books (All Price Ranges)
Examples: *No Dragons for Tea: Fire Safety for Kids (and Dragons)*, *I Am Fire* (Hello Reader! Science Series), *Arthur's Fire Drill* (Arthur Adventure Series).

Escape Ladders (\$40 - \$45) to enable escape in case fire and smoke make other escape routes impossible.

Fire Extinguishers (\$25 - \$40) that can be recharged easily—a 5-lb, 2A10BC professional model is recommended.

Rechargeable Flashlights (\$10 - \$30) are recommended in each bedroom. Some are designed to remain plugged into an outlet and turn on if the power goes out.

Smoke Detectors (\$10 - \$20) are recommended on every level of your home and near sleeping areas.

Carbon Monoxide Detectors (\$10 - \$20) are recommended near the bedroom area in every home.

GVFD Receives National Award

As a result of its excellent fire prevention and public education activities, and in recognition of its outstanding fire statistics, the Golden Valley Fire Department (GVFD) was recently recognized with the 2000 Life Safety Achievement Award by the Residential Fire Safety Institute (RFSI). The award recognizes local activities that reduce the number of lives lost to fire.

The RFSI is a partnership between the US Fire Safety Administration, the National Association of State Fire Marshals, and the private sector. Its goal is to reduce residential fire deaths, injuries, and property loss through public education. In 2000, it presented the distinguished Life Safety Achievement Award to 1,124 fire departments in the US, Canada, and Iceland. 

Finally, keep the fire hydrant nearest your home clear of snow (see story on page 11). If you have fire prevention or fire protection device questions, contact Fire Education Specialist Sarah Larson at 763-593-3997 or slarson@ci.golden-valley.mn.us

Sarah Larson, Fire Education Specialist



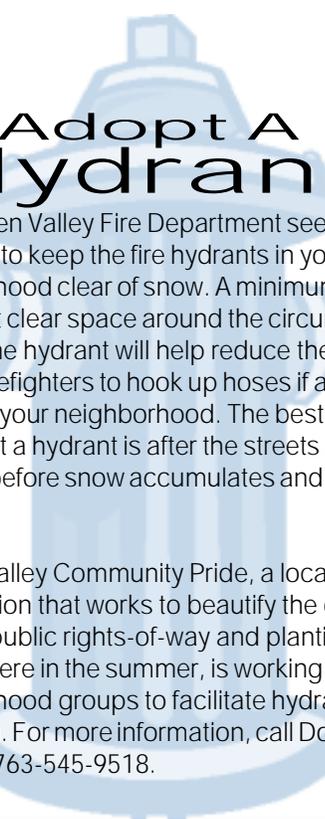
GV Rotary and Local Retailers Hold Donation Drive

The Golden Valley Rotary Club and local retailers are encouraging residents to look for the *Warm Hands, Warm Heads, Warm Hearts* donation flyers at local retail stores. To help keep local youth warm this winter, customers can donate either a pair of new mittens and hats or their change for purchasing new mittens and hats.



Carol Skjegstad, President of Golden Valley Rotary says, "Rotarians genuinely want all Golden Valley youth to be happy and healthy as they enjoy the Minnesota winter. Unfortunately, there are many young people that walk to school or play outside without adequate protection."

All donations will be distributed through PRISM and other local nonprofits. For more information, call 763-504-9491 or 763-316-4500. 



Adopt A Hydrant

The Golden Valley Fire Department seeks your help to keep the fire hydrants in your neighborhood clear of snow. A minimum three-foot clear space around the circumference of the hydrant will help reduce the time it takes firefighters to hook up hoses if a fire occurs in your neighborhood. The best time to shovel out a hydrant is after the streets are plowed, before snow accumulates and freezes.

Golden Valley Community Pride, a local organization that works to beautify the city by mowing public rights-of-way and planting flowers there in the summer, is working with neighborhood groups to facilitate hydrant shoveling. For more information, call Don Brown at 763-545-9518.

City Council Seeks Volunteers

The City Council is seeking citizens interested in becoming more active in their city government by volunteering to serve on one of Golden Valley's Advisory Boards and Commissions. Advisory Boards and Commissions recommend policy to the City Council and advise the Council on a variety of diverse issues (see list below). You must be a resident of Golden Valley to apply. More information and applications are available on the City web site (www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us) or by calling Judy Nally at 763-593-3991.

Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA)
Hears requests for variances from the city code (zoning). Meets monthly, fourth Tuesday, 7 pm. *Members: five. Alternates: two.*

Building Board of Review (BBR)
Advises, recommends, and assists Council and administrative officers of the City on building codes and the issuance of building permits. Meets monthly, first and third Mondays, 8 pm. *Members: up to five.*

Civil Service Commission (CSC)
Has absolute control and supervision over the employment, promotion, discharge, and suspension of police officers of the Public Safety Department. Meets annually and on call. *Members: three.*

Environmental Commission (EC)
Advises and makes recommendations to the City Council in matters relating to and affecting the environment in Golden Valley. *Members: seven*

Golden Valley Human Services Foundation (GVHSF)
Plans and holds fundraisers and events to meet identified human service needs in the community. Advises City Council on allocation of funds. Meets monthly, second Monday, 7 pm, and requires additional time commitment for planning and working at fundraisers. *Members: 13 (six citizens-at-large, five community or business members, one City Council member, and one Human Rights Commission member).*

Human Rights Commission (HRC)
Advises, recommends, and assists Council in matters of equal opportunity and elimination of discriminatory practices. Meets monthly, second Thursday, 7 pm. *Members: 12.*

Northwest Hennepin Human Services Council Advisory Commission (NHHSCAC)
Serves as the planning and coordinating body for 15 northwest cities on human service delivery. Through monthly presentations and surveys of issues, the Commission sets goals and priorities for area human service needs. Meets monthly, third Thursday, 7 pm. *Members: 24 (two representing Golden Valley).*

Open Space and Recreation Commission (OS&RC)
Advises, recommends, and assists Council in policies and plans relating to open space needs, parks and recreation programs, trail systems, and Brookview Golf Course. Meets monthly, fourth Monday, 7 pm. *Members: nine.*

Planning Commission (PC)
Advises, recommends, and assists Council in matters relating to planning and growth of the City, including matters relating to the social, economic, and physical environment. Meets monthly, second and fourth Mondays, 7 pm. *Members: seven.*

Local Crime Fund Supports Community And Police

In Golden Valley, "Community Policing" is not just another new program. It is, and has been for many years, the way we do business.

One way we establish community partnerships is through the Golden Valley Crime Prevention Fund. Run by volunteers, this private, nonprofit organization is dedicated to creating and maintaining a vehicle for strong community involvement through financial support. The Crime Fund is made up of several local organizations, including VFW Post #7051 and the TwinWest Chamber of Commerce; the Golden Valley Rotary, Lions, Optimist, Women's Club, Women of Today, and Historical Society groups; and the Golden Valley Neighborhood Watch and Seniors programs.

Crime Fund

Please send contributions to:

Golden Valley
Crime Prevention Fund
7800 Golden Valley Road
Golden Valley, MN 55427

Safety Camp, Junior Safety Camp, CounterACT, National Night Out, Neighborhood Watch, and Kids & Cops. It also provides rewards for information in serious criminal cases.

Contributions are the Crime Fund's only source of revenue, and this year it is again asking for community support. Please take the time to consider a tax-deductible contribution. For more information, contact the Crime Fund at 763-593-8054 or cpfund@ci.golden-valley.mn.us.

Thank you to the hundreds of people that contribute every year, and welcome to all of you who are considering your first donation.

Bob Shellum, Public Safety Director/Police Chief



City To Offer New On-Line Services

In an effort to better serve its residents, the City of Golden Valley is working to establish two new Internet services available through the City web site.

Starting the spring of 2002, residents will be able to register for many Golden Valley Park and Recreation programs on-line.

Around the same time, the City will begin an email program which, like a traditional mailing list, will allow people to sign up to receive email notification of changes on the City web site, agendas, publications, Golden Valley sports league standings, and other City information. The email notification system will allow people to stay informed on topics and timely information that interest them. It will also reduce paper and postage costs associated with snail mail lists. Citizens can subscribe or unsubscribe at any time on-line.

Watch *CityNews* and the City web site (www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us) for more information on these upcoming services. If you have questions, contact Communications Coordinator Cheryl Weiler at 763-593-8004.



Golden Valley
CITYNEWS

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Notice: To retain cost-effective rates, new postal regulations require us to mail to complete carrier routes, even if they are beyond city borders. We apologize to non-Golden Valley residents who get this newsletter unsolicited.

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