

Mayor's Column for the July 28, 2010 Review

Discover Wisconsin Update

Discover Wisconsin has selected the winner of the Evansville Passport to Adventure Prize Package. It is Mrs. Diane Czaplewski of West Bend, Wisconsin. We have been in e-mail contact and she is very excited to be the winner and looks forward to exploring our community.

Last week several of the prize items and lots of information about Evansville were mailed to her. The remainder of the package winnings will be waiting for her arrival. The Czaplewskis are planning to visit in the next couple of months.

I continue to learn of additional visitors or tourist inquiries. Examples are: a gentleman visiting from Minnesota interested in bringing a bus tour here; an inquiry from a vintage car club planning to stop here; tourists stopping at City Hall, the Chamber office, the Visitors Center, Library, and various businesses for community information; people enjoying the prairie architecture of our library; various groups of bicyclists making stops at the coffee shop and convenience stores.

The Discover Wisconsin Rock County program aired for the second time last weekend. Milton, Edgerton, Janesville, and Beloit were featured and there was a short promotion of Historic Evansville. Our new city brochure is available at the Milton House, Milton's NorthLeaf Winery, Armory in Janesville, Luther Valley Historical Society in Footville, and in the Beloit area.

Leonard Leota Park

The Park Board has asked me to discuss two ongoing serious issues at Leonard Leota Park.

***Vehicles speeding through the Park are a critical safety concern.** Walkers and bicyclists enjoy Lake Leota. Our youngsters are found at the playgrounds, picnic areas, ballgames, swimming pool, park store, and skatepark. In the future there will be fishing. Pedestrian safety is paramount!

Our Park is for the enjoyment of all. Please observe speed limits; they will be strictly enforced.

***Vandalism at Lake Leota impacts every resident of Evansville.** The damage in the last few years has totaled thousands of dollars. There has been damage to park bathrooms, drinking fountains, picnic tables, shelter houses, creek walls, the swimming pool, and the Antes Cabin.

The City is no longer replacing park drinking fountains. Costly repairs were followed by additional vandalism. Replacement of outdoor fountains cost over \$2,000 each.

This summer alone, clean-up and repairs to vandalized park bathrooms have cost over \$1,000.

Three years ago, restoration of the creek walls through the Park began with a badly deteriorated area identified as a safety issue. The creek walls through the Park have been categorized in terms of repair priority, section by section. The labor-intensive work is costly. The initial restoration work has been vandalized a number of times by thoughtless individuals.

Tagging, destroying light bulbs, kicking in doors, picnic tables thrown into the creek—this is disrespectful to all of us.

Our Park is a community gem! You voted to invest in the restoration of our Lake Leota. Leonard Leota Park is a place of beauty, celebration, and fun that is owned by all of us.

The cost of this vandalism is being paid by you, the taxpayer. Please have conversations in your families, neighborhoods, community organizations, and other appropriate circumstances, such as scout meetings, about respect for property. Please report episodes of vandalism. Let's work together to protect our special Park and our pocketbooks.

25 x 25 Energy Independence Plan

The Common Council and the Water & Light Committee were provided with a summary of the 25 x 25 Plan for energy independence at their most recent meetings. The goal for the Plan is that by 2025, 25% of electricity and transportation fuel will be provided by renewable energy sources. Below are some of the report details.

- Benchmarking municipal energy use yielded surprising information. For example, in 2008 city government spend \$333,427 on energy and vehicle fuel, 12.3% of 2008 general fund expenditures. Gasoline and diesel fuel costs were \$114,543. City street light energy costs for the year were \$49,911. This information had not been aggregated before; expenses were available by department.
- Five priority projects were selected for the Plan, including:
 1. Wastewater treatment plant upgrade and 100kW wind turbine at site. Sites for two additional 100 kW wind turbines are available at the plant.
 2. Upgrade well and lift station pumps to high efficiency variable frequency drive models.
 3. Public works building efficiency retrofits, including lighting and heating.
 4. New vehicle purchases that incorporate energy efficiency improvements. Hybrid technology, biofuels, etc. considered for all municipal vehicles.
 5. Street light upgrades to LED lights.
- Short-term action steps identified to begin implementation of the Plan are:

1. Complete the wastewater treatment plant upgrade and first wind turbine installation in 2010.
2. Complete the public works facility lighting and heating retrofits in 2010.
3. With adequate funding, complete the LED street light upgrade of 320 lights in 2010.
4. Conduct detailed energy audits of all municipal facilities in 2010, to capture the efficiencies of improving building envelopes, proper use and maintenance of equipment, appropriate use of lighting, etc.
5. Monitor fuel usage, search for opportunities to use biofuels, and investigate vehicle purchases in terms of energy efficiency and alternative fuel capability.
6. Track energy use and energy efficiency savings using the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Energy Star Portfolio Manager software.
7. Showcase community commitment to energy independence and energy education, such as the Discover Wisconsin program.
8. The mayor will undertake a second community initiative to increase business and residential participation in renewable energy purchase programs.

The City received \$133,496 in Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (stimulus funds) for the public works lighting upgrade and a major portion of the street light upgrade. Work will begin shortly.

Building audits are underway. Energy saving measures that are identified will be prioritized for implementation.

Completion of the public works facility lighting upgrade and biomass burner installation, along with the planned upgrade of the street lights, is expected to reduce energy costs by \$15,000 annually.

In April 2010, WPPI Energy introduced a Leading by Example initiative for its 50 members. Evansville is one of nine communities that have completed the components of the initiative.

The Evansville Energy Independence Team developed the Plan. The Team will continue to meet quarterly to monitor implementation and identify new energy projects and funding sources. One of the goals of the Team is to enhance Evansville's reputation as a state energy leader.

Community Announcements

August 7 promises to be busy in Evansville. It is the annual city-wide garage sale event, the Chamber is hosting the Inside Out Sidewalk Sale, the Library used book sale is scheduled, and there will be an Evansville Farmers Market. These are just some of the

planned activities. Mark your calendars now; enjoy a day with plenty of opportunities to “Buy Local.”

The Evansville Jays are hosting Youth Baseball Night on Thursday, July 29. The game against Utica will be held at Leonard Leota Park at 7:30 p.m.

The featured exhibit at the Local History Museum will change in mid-August. Lake Leota will be the focus of the new exhibit. The Museum is open most weekday mornings and Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. through mid-September.

Community Congratulations/Thanks

Our community congratulates Mary Libby for being selected as Creekside Place Volunteer of the Year. Her dedicated efforts and hard work are greatly appreciated.

Ruth Ann Montgomery and John Ehle are congratulated on the publication of “Evansville—Then and Now.” The book is available at several retail locations throughout our community. Ruth Ann and John are donating proceeds from the book to the Local History Museum. Evansville thanks them for their generosity.

Evansville thanks Kendall Wethal for donating his labor in repairing the vandal-damaged section of the creek walls in Leonard-Leota Park.

Our community greatly enjoyed the performances of Oklahoma. Kudos to cast and crew!

Evansville congratulates Melissa Destree of Destree Design Architects on the tenth anniversary of her firm. Melissa has worked on several significant Main Street restoration projects in Evansville, including the Eager Economy Building, the Mosher Insurance office, and the Century 21 office.