Parks unveils 2010 events, programs

The Parks Department rolled out a number of significant sports-related announcements for Springfield and Greene County on Feb. 9, including the addition of the first Paralympic Sport Club for the area, the addition of a Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA) Championship and the release of a list of 36 district, state, regional, national and professional/international sports tournaments and events for 2010.

Here is a look at what Parks has in store for the community this year:

• Paralympic Sport Springfield, a program of Springfield-Greene County Park Board, will make its debut with the sport of archery. Under the International Paralympic Committee, Paralympic Sport Springfield will offer a new community-based sport development program focused on increasing availability of programming for individuals of all ages with disabilities. Kansas City and St. Charles are the only other two cities in the state to have similar programs. Visit www.paralympic.org for more information.

• USA Archery is the newest governing body to work with the Park Board for the advancement of the sport of archery for those able bodied athletes. USA Archery program sites will be announced later.

Keeping an eye on safety

It’s Jonn Strahl’s job to think about the possibilities — but not necessarily the good ones.

As the City’s longtime safety coordinator, it’s Strahl’s duty to help prevent things: accidents, injuries, or worse.

“My primary focus is employee health and safety,” says Strahl, who has worked for the City for 17 years — first as a part of Public Works, and now within Human Resources’ Risk Management Services.

Strahl works to minimize risk and maximize safety for City employees and, to a certain extent, those working for a contractor on City jobs. Some of his work has safety implications for the public, as well.

He has a hand in helping identify safety risks for nearly all City sites and situations. From aiding in basic fire and life safety inspections in City.

Director Jodie Adams unveiled the 2010 Parks lineup at the Chamber of Commerce to highlight their economic impact.

St. Patrick’s Day Parade

Springfield’s St. Patrick’s Day Parade begins at 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, March 13 downtown. The Parade begins on Commercial Street and runs through Park Central Square, ending at College Station. Admission is free. For more information, call: 831-6200 or visit springfieldstpatsparade.org.

National Ag Day

Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park is celebrating American agriculture and the farmers who help provide the food, fiber, shelter, energy and other materials we use on a daily basis during National Ag Day, from 10 a.m.-4 p.m., March 20. Admission is free for all ages.

For more information on scheduled activities, please call the Farm Park at 837-5949.

Disc Golf Clinics

Kids ages 9-16 can learn basic hands-on disc golf skills from 10 a.m. to noon on Saturday, Feb. 20 and Saturday, March 13 at Tom Watkins Park, 2100 W. High St. Registration is free and participants can register on-site, but space is limited to 20 people.

For more information, call: 833-8647 or 833-8923.

St. Patrick’s Day Parade

Springfield’s St. Patrick’s Day Parade begins at 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, March 13 downtown. The Parade begins on Commercial Street and runs through Park Central Square, ending at College Station. Admission is free. For more information, call: 831-6200 or visit springfieldstpatsparade.org.

National Ag Day

Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park is celebrating American agriculture and the farmers who help provide the food, fiber, shelter, energy and other materials we use on a daily basis during National Ag Day, from 10 a.m.-4 p.m., March 20. Admission is free for all ages.

For more information on scheduled activities, please call the Farm Park at 837-5949.
Airport bucks national trend, sees growth in 2009

It’s good news in hard times—our airport is the only major airport in the region to finish 2009 with positive passenger growth. We posted a four percent increase in total passengers, when compared to the year before. The growth came despite an 11 percent cut in the airport’s 2009 flight schedule. Similar cuts occurred at airports across the country. As a whole, the nation’s airports experienced approximately a six percent decline in passengers.

The news gets better. Our aviation analyst, Michael Boyd, is forecasting that 2010 will bring a 2.8 percent increase in passengers. He expects a 3.2 percent decline for the nation as a whole.

What gives? Why are we doing so well? There are several reasons; we can’t point to any one thing:
- Low-fares. In the fourth quarter of 2008 airlines began lowering fares in response to poor sales. The low fare trend continued through 2009.
- The airport’s new passenger terminal. The impact of the new terminal is hard to quantify, but there’s no doubt that the building’s “wow” factor, along with its ease of use have helped draw more customers to the airport.
- New terminal advertising and media attention in the first and second quarters raised public airport awareness of the airport.
- Allegiant Air growth. In 2009 the low-fare airline grew its passenger numbers 42 percent in the Springfield-Branson market.
- The new airport south of Branson. When that airport had service to Dallas, American airlines in Springfield matched Branson’s fare. Bottom line: the Branson airport created airline competition.
- The relative strength of the Southwest Missouri economy, compared to other regions of the country.

There’s more good news: the average fare from the Springfield-Branson airport was down 27.5 percent in the third quarter of 2009. That’s compared to the same quarter in 2008. Here’s the dollar translation: the average fare went from $288.18 to $208.72.

So, while our 2010 forecast is good, and fares are going down, be warned: things could go south in a hurry. The price of oil could spike. That would cause fares to go through the roof. The apparent economic recovery could sputter. A terrorist attack could cause demand to plummet.

-Mike Brothers

Blackberry, iPhone smart phones are supported

Currently, we are supporting Blackberry smart phones and Apple iPhones. The brands are limited to these two types because of lacking resources and the ever-changing technology of cellular devices.

The procedure to get connected with your City e-mail, contacts, and calendar requires you to purchase the Enterprise Service added to your cellular network account (which is $10/monthly service fee for the Blackberry and free for the iPhone) prior to contacting the Support Center (ext. 1111) who will arrange e-mail connection service.

Updates to the Administrative Memorandum #24 on Mobile Device Policy and Administrative Memorandum #37 on Computer Use Policy are currently being finalized and will be available soon.

Support Center Tips

Blackberry, iPhone smart phones are supported

Currently, we are supporting Blackberry smart phones and Apple iPhones. The brands are limited to these two types because of lacking resources and the ever-changing technology of cellular devices.

The procedure to get connected with your City e-mail, contacts, and calendar requires you to purchase the Enterprise Service added to your cellular network account (which is $10/monthly service fee for the Blackberry and free for the iPhone) prior to contacting the Support Center (ext. 1111) who will arrange e-mail connection service.

Updates to the Administrative Memorandum #24 on Mobile Device Policy and Administrative Memorandum #37 on Computer Use Policy are currently being finalized and will be available soon.
Friends, co-workers honor Newman’s career

Earl Newman was honored with a retirement reception during his final week as a full-time employee with the City.

Newman was the City’s head of traffic engineering, a position he has held most of the past three decades during two stints with the City. He started in 1974 at the age of 28. His first assignment was making sure the barricades were in place for the then-permanent closure of Park Central Square — a decision for which Newman said he happily could not take credit.

The event in the lobby of the Busch Building featured several speakers including Public Works Director Burris, whose remarks were played via video because he was on a Sister Cities trip to Iesakai, Japan, highlighted Newman’s commitment in the community at large, including leadership positions at his church and homeowners’ association, bell-ringing for the Salvation Army, and his passion for MSU sports. McClure presented Newman with a football and basketball signed by several MSU head coaches.

For his part, Newman thanked his staff for making his job easier each day.

“I have the best staff of any traffic engineer in any city, anywhere,” he said.

He credited the traffic engineering team for the fact that annual crash totals in Springfield are more than 1,000 less than in 1999. He said he felt the department was in good hands going forward.

“One of my charges was to make sure the people coming up behind me were in good shape,” he said.

-Mike Brothers, Public Information

Firefighter application requirements changed

The Springfield Fire Department has adjusted the requirements for firefighting applicants to expand the pool of candidates for the next Fire Training Academy expected to start in early summer.

Applications are being accepted through 5 p.m., Friday, Feb. 26, 2010. Applicants can apply online at www.springfieldmo.gov/jobs (click on “firefighter”) or in person at the Busch Municipal Building, 840 Boonville Ave., during normal business hours.

Starting immediately, applicants may be eligible if they meet at least one of the following minimum qualifications:

- EMT-B certification
- Firefighter I and II certification
- 36 accredited college hours

- Two years active-duty military service with honorable discharge

Previously, candidates would need to possess certification for both EMT-B and Firefighter I and II; now applicants would need one or the other. The minimum qualifications for college or military service have been added as options to having the EMT-B or firefighter certifications. The goal is to increase flexibility in recruitment and draw from a wider pool of applicants.

Other requirements that remain in place:

- Must be at least 18 years old
- Be a U.S. citizen
- No serious misdemeanor convictions for the past five years; have vision correctable to 20/30; and be in excellent physical condition

Applicants will be scheduled for written exams on March 9-10. Those who pass the written exam will be scheduled for physical-agility exams the week of March 15. Follow-up interviews will take place in March and April.

The starting salary for a Springfield firefighter is $32,011 a year.

The Fire Department expects to hire about 17 new firefighters to fill positions that have been frozen since January 2009. The training academy is re-opening because voters approved the Nov. 3 referendum for the Police-Fire Pension Fund. Because of that approval, the City’s contribution to the pension fund will stabilize and therefore allow the City to backfill frozen positions.

He does this with projects where a contractor is doing the work for the City, too, but on those projects he plays more of an observer role because companies often have their own guidelines when it comes to safety. Over the years Strahl has worked to shore up language used in City contracts in order to ensure contractors are thinking up front about safety for their workers as well as the public.

“There’s a fine line, sometimes,” he says when working with contractors. “We want them to be safe, but we don’t want to be seen as interfering with their work.”

“Sidewalk and street projects are taking place where people drive, walk, bike and more. It’s not always practical to fully close off the site to the public so full consideration for their safety has to be given, too.

Strahl, who has a background in industrial hygiene, says the City’s safety record is good and has gotten better over the years. The City is much more proactive about safety procedures than when he first arrived, “and as a result our incident rate has been significantly reduced — probably cut in half,” he says.

“It’s been challenging because of the diversity of the work we do here,” he says.

“But it’s very gratifying. … I’m out there trying to help people protect themselves and work safely.”

-Mike Brothers, Public Information
MILESTONES

Service Anniversaries

30 years
Dennis Hahn
Building Maintenance Craftworker
Public Works – 03/31/80
Artie Monier
Wastewater Sludge Truck Operator
Public Works – 03/31/80

25 years
Michael Suter
Craftworker
Public Works – 03/11/85
Arolin Thomas
Public Works Team Leader
Public Works – 03/11/85

20 years
Jerry Bullinger
Project Specialist Planning and Development – 03/12/90

15 years
Stewart Acosta
Aircraft Services Coordinator
Airport – 03/13/95

10 years
Gary Cartwright
Police Services Shift Leader
Police – 03/06/00
Brad Musick
Public Health Investigator II Health – 03/20/00

5 years
Brian Dodson
Gardener
Parks – 03/07/05
Lisa Lee
Public Health Investigator II Health – 03/21/05
Mark Montgomery
Graphic Production Assistant
Public Information – 03/20/05
Albert Tiller
Building Maintenance Worker
Public Works – 03/14/05
Jerry Weatherman
Maintenance Worker
Public Works – 03/21/05

Welcome
Clay Dodson
Air Quality Specialist – Health
Christina Hale
Accounting Clerk I – Health
Melinda Musselman
Nutritionist – Health
Chad Ray
Accounting Clerk I – Airport

Randell Riley
Airport Network Coordinator
Airport – 03/27/00

Kelly Sisco
911 Telecommunicator – Emergency Communications
Andrew Whitener
Community Recreation Supervisor – Parks

Promotions
Chad McIntyre
Police Corporal – Police
Joshua Strong
Equipment Operator II – Public Works

Retirements
Jeff Barton
Parks Caretaker
Parks – 13 years
Marcia Chism
Executive Secretary Planning and Development – 20 years
James Gandy
Utility Worker
Airport – 8 years
Marilyn Grier
Senior Executive Secretary
Police – 45 years
Nicholas Heatherly
Director of Building Development Services
Building Development Services – 24 years
Lynn Rowe
Police Chief
Police – 16 years

The City MARKETPLACE

FOR SALE OR RENT
All items like new – used very little. All for $625: Pride Scooter GO-GO; wheel chair; full size bath bench; folding walker; Toilet Pottie chair; crutches; height adj. cane. Call 869-2176.

Kenmore Refrigerator: White, 20.5 cu. ft.; auto defrost freezer with ice maker; Energy Star rated; excellent condition. $275. Call 827-4584.

Wooden Captain’s bed (four drawers and storage space) with twin mattress, $150. Body Solid home gym: lat/triceps pull down, seated bench press, leg extension, attachments for working abs, legs, rows, etc., $200. Power Rider exercise machine, $30. Contact Mona at 469-7688.

SERVICES
Quilting Services. Long arm quilting, very reasonable rates. Would you like to have a baby quilt made? How about a t-shirt quilt for a special grad? Call Carolyn at 880-6501, or e-mail ltrsortr@netscape.net for quotes.

Need work done around the house? Small projects to major remodels, no job too big or small. 10 years experience, references available. Contact Patrick at 268-5693.

Online Computers can handle viruses, data backup, consultation and installation of new hardware and software; and Wi-Fi for your personal computer. Call Jason Hicks at 569-3484.

Grizzley Mountain Saw Works – handcrafted wood art, custom stump carving. Send e-mail to: favorite44@hotmail.com, or call 742-1888.


Professional Handyman. All types of home repair or remodel, inside or out. No job too large or small. Craftsman extraordinaire. Can build anything you have a picture of. Licensed and insured. Call Caleb at 540-0070.
MARCH BIRTHDAYS

1 Delacy Beeman PRK
   Dennis Budd MC
   Libby Harris POL
   Richard Mansel POL
   David Pennington FR
   Matthew Shackelford POL
   Lyle Smith PW
   Eric Werbitzky PW
   Toby Sherrill PW
   Richard Tracy AIR
   Brendan Griesemer PDV
   Jacqulynn Adams WD
   Stephen Miller POL
   Karen Stewart PW
   Clifford Stutz HL
   Allison Carson HR
   Daniel Jones PRK
   Alana Owen PDV
   Travis Scudder AIR
   Andrew Whitener PRK
   Jason Copley POL
   Allison Miller HL
   Megan Robert PW
   Diana Young PRK
   Shawn Burks PRK
   William Davis PRK
   Scott Hootman PRK
   Frank Long PW
   Helen Wilson POL
   David Carr PW
   Barbara Lucks AIR
   Jose Martinez PRK
   Brittany Donnellan PRK
   Jeffery Eagleburger PW
   Austin McGee PRK
   Brian Powers PW
   Kevin Swareengin PW
   Chris Thompson FR
   Thomas Cowens POL
   Teressa Jackson AIR
   Cathie Lehman POL
   Joshua Steele PW
   Karen Chandler PW
   Randy Dunlap PW
   Mavis Jackson FN
   Michael Karnes POL
   Lisa Payton POL
   Sharon Pitts IS
   Bill Dowling WD
   Janet Hicks HL
   Carol Halfford PW
   Glenn Hilton PW
   John Swanson POL
   Philip Yarnell POL
  10 Katelyn Haynes PRK
   Don Smith PW
   Ellis Campbell PRK
   Gary Reese PW
   Rachel Amend PRK
   Howard Curtis FR
   Christina Hale HL
   Steven King PRK
   Olan Morelan FR
   11 Heith Aldridge FR
   James Andela POL
   Angelia Merritt PRK
   John Norton PRK
   Stuart Rutledge PW
   Charles Young PW
   Allen Criger POL
   Darin Miller FR
   Thomas Deckard AIR
   Donald Hampton POL
   Roger McCormack PRK
   Patricia Cooper MC
   16 Michael Keller PRK
   Elizabeth Langley POL
   Richard Miller PW
   Lauren Avers PRK
   Sue Schofield POL
   Bryan DiSylvestor POL
   Steven McMurray FR
   Kyle Williams HL
   Ralph Rognstad PDV
   Charles Smith PW
   Dorrell Duquette BDS
   Robert Radomski PRK
   George Gartin PW
   Brian Lamkin PRK
   Danielle McKeirnan PRK
   Joseph Medina POL
   Coy Spurlock PRK
   Lee Walker POL
   Paul Hanson PRK
   Hilary Johnson PRK
   Hannah Larino PRK
   Duke McDonald LAW
   David Nokes AIR
   James Price MC
   Collin Quigley CM
   Jonn Strahl HR
   Tanya Theisen PRK
   Lee Grover FR
   Celia King WD
   Kelly Ross PRK
   Jason Shuck POL
   Mark Smith PW
   21 Sandra Fanning HL
   Dennis Hahn PW
   Emily Kent POL
   Julie Randolph HL
   Bruce Scheiderer FR
   Patricia Sullivan LAW
   Ian Carleton PRK
   David Hall FR
   John Marion FR
   Belinda Gonzalez PW
   24 Robert Johnson PRK
   Benjamin Norman PRK
   Dennis Bright PW
   Kevin Cantrell POL
   Shawn Schroeder AIR
   Aaron Allen PRK
   Kristian Burke PRK
   Vicki Dekker POL
   David Raine PRK
   David Shanholzer POL
   Jerry Allen PRK
   Titus Elliott PRK
   Tri Nguyen 911
   Jordan Tate AIR
   Suzanne Cassens PRK
   28 Clinton Coyan POL

March 14 – Daylight Saving Time begins
March 16 – Police/Fire retirees meeting; 6:30 p.m., Heritage Cafeteria, 1364 E. Battlefield Road
March 17 – St. Patrick’s Day
March 20 – First day of spring

Abbreviations
911 Emergency Comm.
AIR Airport
ART Art Museum
BDS Building Dev.
CC City Clerk
CM City Manager
EM Emergency Mgt.
FN Finance
FR Fire
HL Health
HR Human Resources
IS Info. Systems
LAW Law
MC Municipal Court
OG Ozark Greenways
PRK Parks
PDV Planning & Dev.
DPI Public Information
POL Police
PW Public Works
WD Workforce Dev.
Did you know that LAGERS (Local Government Employees Retirement System), the Springfield Police and Fire Pension and ICMA (Deferred Compensation Plan) all have information available via the Internet? Each Web site offers information about plan rules and regulations as well as interactive tools that can help you plan for retirement. LAGERS has a retirement benefit calculator that can be used to estimate your pension benefit. At the ICMA site, you may view and manage your retirement account online. The Police and Fire Pension information on the CityShare offers access to pension system rules, pension forms and other valuable information.

It’s never too early to learn more about retirement planning especially in today’s economic situation. So, power up and click your way to a more secure future by visiting these websites:

- LAGERS at www.molagers.org
- ICMA at www.icmarc.org

---

City makes paper recycling easy for all of us

I try to "do the right thing" in my life. I was taught to hold doors for the elderly, to be polite, don’t litter, think about the less fortunate, look both ways before crossing the street — well, you get the picture. I try to do my best, even when it’s a challenge. (It took me two years of carrying around reusable shopping bags in my car before I actually remembered to start using them.)

My latest thing is to acknowledge the positives around me. It’s way easier to get stuck on the negative stuff, so I decided that every time I witness someone doing a nice thing, going above and beyond, or deserving a pat on the back for some reason — then I’m going to say thank you. That brings me to the point of this.

Working in the typical office environment like I do, it’s a given that I use, and waste, a lot of paper. That’s why they call us paper-pushers, right? Well, for the past several years (yes, years) I’ve taken it for granted that I can just toss my waste paper into the blue bin next to my desk. This bin sits right next to my trash bin. Even though I reuse the back sides of a lot of my waste paper for phone messages these days, I still manage to accumulate a good amount for the blue bin.

But all I have to do is toss my waste paper 45 degrees further to the left of the trash can. Then, it gets even easier. A nice man stops into my office a couple times a week to pick up the contents of the blue bin for me! (Now I just have to figure out how to get that service at home.... Luckily, there’s a gigantic paper bin in the City Hall parking lot where employees are encouraged to dump their recyclable paper from home.)

So here goes: I want to thank the City of Springfield and, specifically, Barbara Lucks, Kimberly White and the staff in the Solid Waste Management Division of Public Works, and Nancy Lucas’ staff (also Public Works) for making it amazingly easy to recycle paper in City offices!

Paper is such a large component of our daily work. I’m actually surprised when I see people still tossing waste paper into the garbage — especially since the City of Springfield has some of the most caring, conscientious employees a municipality could hope for. Really, I’m not just trying to butter you up so you’ll think about where you toss your waste paper from now on. (Okay, I wouldn’t object if I did have that effect.) I just want to show my gratitude for the resourcefulness and conscientious purpose of our fellow co-workers. I know they’re trying to do their best, even when it’s a challenge.

-Lori Tack, Ozarks Greenways Program Coordinator

---

PARKS from page 1.

- Significant Collegiate and Professional Tournaments new to Springfield in 2010 include the NCAA Division II Women’s Super Region 1 Golf Championship on May 2-4 and the USTA Missouri Valley Section U.S. Open National Playoffs on May 15-19. The winner of the U.S. Open Playoffs event will receive a wildcard into the U.S. Open Qualifying Tournament.
- Missouri State High School Activities Association announced the addition of the Softball State Championships to Springfield, to be held Oct. 18 and 19. Springfield is currently home to the MSHSAA Girls and Boys Tennis, Girls and Boys Golf, and Baseball Championships.
- Sports Development and Improvements happening this year include the addition of synthetic turf to the Cooper Soccer Stadium Field, thanks to a generous donation by the Cooper and Rick McQuereaty Families. Also, Rotary Club of Springfield North continues its capital campaign to raise funds for a “Miracle Field,” which will be built in Dan Kinney Park, offering an accessible ball field to players who have a variety of disabilities.
- Upcoming Tournaments and Events for 2010 included a list of 36, ranging from district to professional-level play.
- 2010 Winter Olympic local celebration activities include Mediacom Ice Park as Springfield’s Olympic headquarters. A number of free activities, including hockey and figure skating clinics on Feb. 26 and 27, and opening ceremony and event coverage on rink televisions highlight the two-week games.
- The Park Board will work with district, state, regional and national level organizations and governing bodies to host the events, including the Springfield Convention & Visitors Bureau and the Greater Springfield Sports Commission.

“The activities coming into Springfield and Greene County have tremendous economic and quality-of-life impacts to the community,” said Director of Parks Jodie Adams. “Springfield-Greene County is a Sports Illustrated ‘Sports Town USA’ city and the facilities showcased during these 2010 competitions will speak for themselves.”

Adams also thanked the many volunteers who support the Parks Department throughout the year.

“Large or small, the Park Board relies on filling funding gaps with private donations, sponsorships and volunteer staff,” she said. “These individuals and organizations play a big role in the success of our bottom line and without their support we wouldn’t be able to bite off such an aggressive season of events year after year.”

---
Chili benefits Haiti

Thanks to everyone who participated in the Feb. 8 Chili lunch! The City staff raised $511 for Haitian relief efforts. The money will be split between the American Red Cross and Convoy of Hope. Thanks to everyone who supported the effort, and especially to Amy Werland in Planning and Merlee Knpton in BDS for taking the lead in organizing the effort.

Have a reservation?

Public Information is asking everyone to remember to use the Outlook system when reserving a conference room. There have been problems recently with conference rooms not being reserved through this system. When people came in to attend meetings, the receptionists were unable to direct them because the meetings were not listed.

Also, notices have been posted in the public meeting rooms in the Government Plaza informing attendees that their attendance at a public meeting implies consent to be recorded, photographed, and/or videotaped. There has been no change in policy on recorded meetings, but the signs are a reminder to those attending public meetings.

Springfield Source

The City is a partner in a new local Web site effort intended to be a hub of sorts for civic news and information about the community. It’s called Springfield Source, and it contains links to the most pertinent news and information from a dozen local institutions, including: the City of Springfield; City Utilities; Greene County; the Library District; Springfield Public Schools, four colleges and universities; and more.

While Springfield Source exists as a Web site, you may also sign up to receive a newsletter via e-mail once every other week. The newsletter will contain the top news stories from our partner organizations, while the Web site will be updated more frequently. The site also contains links to all the partners’ social media feeds, job openings, calendars and more.

Visit the site at: www.SpringfieldSource.org. To sign up for the newsletter, click the “Sign Up” icon in the right-hand column.

Public input on CIP sales tax begins

June 8 is the target date for the renewal election for the ½-cent Sales Tax for Capital Improvements. The program was first instituted in 1989, and helps fund road and maintenance projects of various sizes throughout the city.

A public comment period is open now. Should you, as a City employee, be asked about the program, please let City residents know they can go online to find a detailed project list and give their input on possible upcoming projects.

The CIP program has three broad components: a planning/design portion; a construction portion; and maintenance. The design portion sets aside money to plan for projects that would be built in the next phase of the CIP renewal.

There are currently 14 possible projects on which the public can comment. City Council and the Public Works Department will use public input to choose the projects, so help spread the word if you can! Links to the online survey and further information about the upcoming CIP can be found on a CityConnect blog post dated Feb. 9. (www.springfieldmo.gov/cityconnect)

Sales tax up slightly

The City’s February 2010 sales tax check represented an increase of 1.35 percent over February 2009. The increase, though small, represented the first positive movement in year-over-year sales tax revenue since August 2009. Because the checks from the state Department of Revenue generally reflect sales from 60 days prior, the numbers point to an increase in local sales during the 2009 holiday season compared to holiday 2008. For the current fiscal year-to-date, revenues are still 7.82 percent below the previous year.

Do You Know…?

David Pennington
Assistant Fire Chief
David has worked for the City for 15 years and was recently promoted to fill current Fire Chief David Hall’s former position.

What did you want to “be” when you grew up?
When I was little I wanted to be a fireman. I grew up visiting old Fire Station No. 6 (on Campbell Avenue near Fassnight Park), unknowingly meeting a fireman who would later become my first Battalion Chief.

What do you like most about your job?
The men and women whom I have the pleasure of working with, and the opportunity to have a direct impact in the community.

What are you most proud of?
My family. I have a wonderful wife of 16 years and two healthy sons, ages 10 and 4.

What was the happiest day of your life?
The days my sons were born.

Mavis Jackson
Licensing Representative, Finance
Mavis has worked for the City for two and a half years.

What was your parents’ best advice?
I’d say it was to get out and do what has to be done. My parents instilled a strong work ethic in me.

What was your first job?
I grew up on a farm and we all had chores to do. In the summer my dad would pay my sister and me to hoe weeds and pick up rocks in the soybean fields. My first job away from the farm was as a bookkeeper for the Pamida (Gibson) store in a nearby town.

What is your favorite book?
When I was a little girl I read the “Little House on the Prairie” series by Laura Ingalls Wilder several times. I liked to read about life in frontier times. Now I read a lot of mysteries.

How would you change your name?
I like my name now, but there was a period of time in my life when I wished I had a more usual name, like Connie.
Fire Captain John “Rosie” Grier has been nominated for an Everyday Hero award. Fire Chief David Hall, who nominated him, cited Grier’s involvement in the community and willingness to give of his time as a reason why he deserves consideration. Moreover, Hall said Grier has been credited with saving more lives than any other Springfield Fire Department employee, including two in 2009.

Grier is a graduate of Parkview High School and regularly serves as a mentor to students there via the A+ School Program, with a focus on at-risk students. He works to promote diversity within the Department, and does a great job with young children during community and educational events. Grier is highly regarded by his co-workers as “a hard worker, aggressive firefighter, and a man of integrity,” Hall said in his nomination form.

To: Kimberly White, Recycling Education Assistant, Public Works

Thank you for coordinating our field trips. The fifth grade class loved where we went. All thanks to you. At the Commercial Metals we watched them impound a car. Then they said they will make a new one. At the Household Chemical Collection Center we learned that if you mix a base and an acid a deadly gas could occur. Finally, we arrived at the landfill. We learned that it’s illegal to have whole tires in a land fill – it must be chopped up. THANK YOU.

Sincerely,
Mrs. McBride’s class, Field Elementary School

To: Interim Police Chief Ron Hartman

Ms. Rhonda Alfriser called and left a voicemail message on Jan. 25, stating that Officer Kevin Benedict responded to her early morning call for assistance. She further stated that Officer Benedict was the “nicest, most pleasant and efficient” officer she has had contact with. Officer Benedict was helpful and clambed her down while she was “emotional.” She wanted to let him know that he was “a great asset to the City.”

Kathy Marlar, Police

To: Interim Police Chief Ron Hartman

I received a telephone call from Ms. Marty Montgomery, who wanted to commend Officer Phil Yarnell.

She said that because of her job she needed to contact a Parkview High School student who is hearing impaired and obtained an interpreter to assist her. She said she had encountered a communication problem with the student’s mother previously and was afraid that might happen again today.

Ms. Montgomery said she called 911 and asked for an officer to assist her and Officer Yarnell arrived. She said Officer Yarnell assessed the situation and went inside, leaving her on the front porch, and he visited with the student and his mother, along with the interpreter. She said he was able to convince the student, who had been kicked out of the State School for the Deaf previously, to return to the school at Parkview. She said with Officer Yarnell’s intervention there was a change in the student's attitude and demeanor and even the mother made amends with Ms. Montgomery.

She wanted you to know what a fantastic job Officer Yarnell did in handling this situation and she really appreciated his assistance.

Marilyn Grier, Police administration

To: Todd Wagner, Stacy Bergmann, and Rick Garner, Public Works

I am writing to say thank you for helping me with my job shadow day at Cherokee Middle School. I wrote an essay describing my time with you and the interesting things that you guys do.

I am very much interested in being an engineer when I am out of high school. Thank you for your advice and cooperation in helping me learn more about engineering.

Dylan Crowder
Cherokee Middle School, 8th Grade