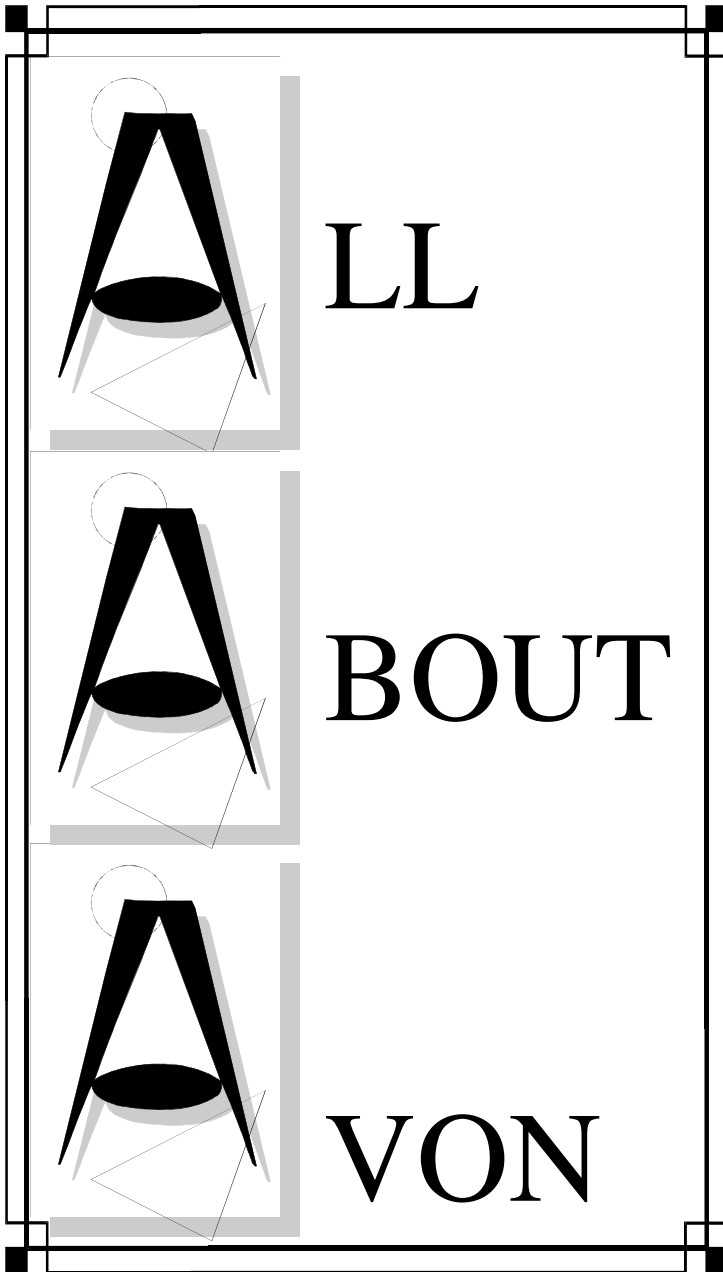


A joint City and Township
Newsletter



1. A note from the Mayor
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a note from the **MAYOR**

submitted by John Grutsch

I'm sure all of you have appreciated this pleasant November with warmer than normal temps. I hope you all had an enjoyable Thanksgiving and were able to spend time with family or friends. It truly is a time to reflect on the simple things we all take for granted every day. Health, a paying job, a bountiful harvest, or just being happy is something to be thankful for.

Our two new staff members are working out very well. We will watch the sewer and water fund over the next few months and figure out a plan of action in the spring. Hopefully we will not have to raise water and sewer rates yet.

Both of our developments are in litigation at this time, we should know a little more by the first of December. There have been some concerns as to the city's obligation on the financing of both of these. We had roughly 30% equity of some sort on them both and we have been drawing down on it to pay the taxes on them. As time goes on hopefully we will be able to start to sell some lots. The faster we can get the ownership settled, the faster we will have them available to purchase. I assure all of you that I will continue to try and resolve these issues. They truly remain the highest priority on my list.

Second on the list is senior housing of some sort. I have met with many people and the options they have. We will come up with a plan by spring. I am optimistic that we will have something in the works soon.

As we move into the winter months let me say to all of you that we have a lot of traffic on our streets. **BE VERY PATIENT.** Be mindful of your safety and everyone else's. Please do not take a needless chance, plan to leave early so as to arrive on time to your destination.

To close I will say to all of you that we are in a very troubling time in our history. Over 10% of our working class is without a job. If you see a friend, neighbor or family member that is in need, please call me or contact city hall or a church. We will do whatever we can, so that we all will come through this together. We will get through this, and we will do it with honor, compassion, and the very sense of doing what is right, because that is what we as Americans do best!

Once again we have been reminded of the tragedy of terror on our own soil and we should all once again feel the sorrow of our lost heroes at Ft. Hood. Hopefully someday we will be able to get to a point in time that Americans won't kill Americans. I would like to thank all our Veterans for their service to protect our freedom, especially my son Rob.

I wish all of you and your loved ones the very best for the holidays, and hope everyone has a great new year.





AVON FIRE AND RESCUE

BY:
Eric Linn –
fire chief

The Avon Fire Department will be in your neighborhood again soon distributing community calendars. Thank you to all the businesses that sponsored this annual calendar. Proceeds from the calendar go towards training and equipment.

During Fire Prevention Week we again visited schools to get the message of fire safety and prevention out in our community.

Please be sure to change your smoke detector batteries if you haven't yet! Install a carbon monoxide detector or replace an old unit to keep your family safe. Remember to have your gas burning appliances checked and serviced.

Help us help you this winter. Please help to keep fire hydrants shoveled out. For those of you in the township, please make sure blue address signs by the road are clear and easy to see! When every second counts, these things help us very much and are greatly appreciated.

Burning permits are available online for township residents @ www.dnr.state.mn.us/burningpermits. Burning permits are not required if we have three inches of snow cover.

Last but not least I would like to send a big THANK YOU to our members for some extra volunteer work. Our entire department recently took Firefighter I and most of the department just completed FFII classes along with Hazardous Materials Operations Class.

These classes totaled over an additional 100 volunteer hours for each member. The purpose of these classes was to get each member "State Certified". This required classroom through the vocational school as well as hands on training. The final step was the State Exam that required written and practical skills test. The members were not paid to do this and I thank them and their families for their time!

Happy Holidays to all from all of us at the Avon Fire Department.



FIRE TRUCK FOR SALE

- 1986 Ford 8000 Series Tanker with Pump
- 3208 CAT diesel.
- New tires, clutch, tranny.
- 2200 gal stainless steel tank
- Champion 350 GPM PTO Driven Pump

Call Eric Larson 320-293-7640
or Gene Kostreba 320-249-4678

Minimum bid \$5,000

Sealed bids due by Dec. 15th to:

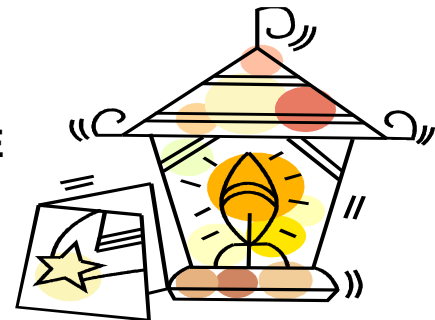
AFD FIRE TRUCK BID

PO Box 69

Avon, MN 56310

Or drop off at city hall.

**CALL BEFORE
YOU BURN!**



Eric Linn – 363-

0005 **(CITY)**

Angeline Buettner – 356-7382

Ed Maile, Jr. – 356-9160

Permits are required for any fire larger than 3' X 3'. Anything smaller, is considered a recreational fire.



AVON POLICE DEPT



By: Chief Corey
Nellis

As of November 10, the police department has responded to 1178 calls for service.

I would like to thank the Blattner Family Foundation for their continued support of our police reserves program. This year the foundation donated \$1,000 from their annual golf tournament to fund our reserve's program. For those of you that do not know, the police reserves are totally volunteer positions with the police department that help officers with a wide variety of tasks.

With winter approaching and fall almost behind us the beach has been closed for the season. I want to thank everyone that supported our beach patrol program this summer, again it was a huge success. The beach patrol program budget was 100% funded by private donations. A total of three citations were written on the beach last summer. This number is by far the lowest since the beach patrol program was established. The police department experienced only a couple of calls for service at the beach this last summer. It seemed to be a much more family friendly environment this summer.

Winter Ordinance Reminders:

In the City of Avon on street parking is prohibited when two or more inches of freshly accumulated snow has fallen. Parking on the street is prohibited until maintenance department has cleared the roadway of the accumulated snow.

It is also an ordinance violation to remove snow from private property and put it into the roadway. Every year the police department receives complaints of residents shoveling or blowing snow from their property into the roadway. Once the roadway has been cleared please do not create a traffic hazard by putting snow back onto the roadway.

Winter Warning: Extra DWI enforcement for the month of December 2009:

To combat the serious threat of impaired driving, area law enforcement officers will conduct extra patrols throughout December. Timing of this event is relevant

as December is among the deadliest months for alcohol related crashes and DWI arrests.

In the last three years on Minnesota roads, alcohol-related crashes accounted for 519 traffic deaths and 1,159 serious injuries. During this same period 116,515 motorists were arrested for DWI. In 2008 there were 163 deaths — a record low. Despite the drop in alcohol-related deaths, drinking and driving crashes still account for more than one-third of all traffic deaths annually — which is typical for each year.

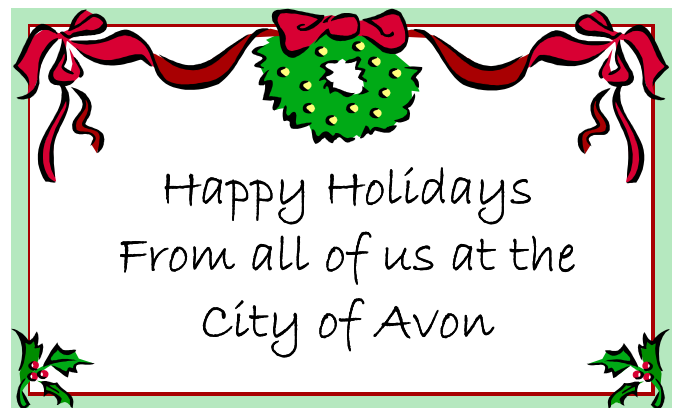
A major factor for a large percentage of alcohol-related deaths is lack of seat belt use. Each year around 75 percent of the impaired drivers killed in crashes are also not belted. The state's primary seat belt law will help officers stop impaired drivers before they do harm to others or themselves. The primary seat belt law became effective in June 2009. Drivers and passengers in any seat, even in the back, must be belted or in the correct child restraint. Law enforcement will stop and ticket motorists and passengers for belt violations. Belt fines are more than \$100.

The enforcement campaign includes participation from around 400 Minnesota law enforcement agencies, all deploying extra officers to work overtime hours targeting impaired drivers. A DWI results in loss of license for at least 90 days and cost up to \$20,000 when factoring in increased insurance costs, legal and other fees. There are more than one-half million

Minnesotans with a DWI on record — translating to one in eight Minnesota drivers with a DWI.

The DWI enforcement is funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and administered by the Department of Public Safety. The campaign is a component of the state's cornerstone traffic safety platform, Toward Zero Deaths (TZD). TZD uses a multidisciplinary approach to reduce crashes, fatalities and injuries through enhanced enforcement, improved engineering, educational outreach and efficient emergency trauma response.

As always I encouraged anyone with questions, concerns, or comments to contact the Avon Police Department at 320-356-7575.





PUBLIC WORKS

BY: NATE BRENNER

City Hall

We ask that any individual or group using the meeting room and council chambers to please put back the table and chairs. Thank you!

Maintenance Department

With snow in the horizon we have been very busy getting many things ready for winter. We've been busy getting snow removal equipment ready, parks all winterized, storm drains flushed and clear of debris to hopefully prevent freeze up with spring thaw as well as daily maintenance.

The compost site has been closed as of November 25, 2009. Please watch the spring newsletter for the opening date of it next spring. Thanks to all who used it in its proper manner. Please don't abuse this privilege or it will be closed.

Parks

The city has been adding more flowers, shrubs and trees to the streets and parks to beautify it. In order to keep these looking nice, extra help is needed in caring for them. Are you interested in providing this kind of help? If so, we are going to have an organizational meeting Wednesday, December 9th, at 7:30 P.M. at City Hall. Please help keep our City beautiful. Hope to see you there!

Snow Plowing Policy

No parking on any City street when 2 inches or more of new snow has fallen until snow removal crews have cleared the roadways.

Clearing snow away from mailboxes is the responsibility of the homeowner.

It's the owners responsibility to repair or replace any mailbox that does not swing when hit by the snow or snow plow from the snow removal process.

Posts, fences, reflectors or anything else put up by residents on city road right of way damaged by snow removal equipment is the homeowner's responsibility.

Please keep fire hydrants clear of snow if you have one in your yard.

Snow may not be pushed, shoveled or blown into city streets. Citations will be given out to those who do so.

As always please give the snow removal crew plenty of room to do their job of keeping the roadways clear of

snow. We don't want to see any accidents occur from following to close or not paying attention to what there doing.

Skating Rinks

The skating rinks will be open as soon as weather permits us to make and keep good ice. The hockey and skating rinks are both at Ochotto Park. The warming house will be open for use as well unless vandalism occurs. Please turn off lights and shut the door behind you if you're the last one to use the warming house.

Water/Wastewater Department

Everything has been going great! All the fire hydrants have been flushed and the barrels have been pumped out on the non-self draining hydrants. This is due to high water table levels around town. We have painted the 5" caps black on the hydrants so it is easy to tell if they need to be pumped out if used in the winter.

The sanitary sewer lines have also been all flushed this fall. We have been having problems with lift station pumps plugging. They are getting plugged with rags and fabric materials such as baby wipes. It would be great if we could keep these materials out of the sanitary sewer system. This takes many hours to keep the pumps free of debris and is VERY HARD ON THE PUMPS, which leads to pump failure.



Happy Holidays

from

Joel Birr and

Jon Forsell

Avon Water/Wastewater

Department

and

Ray Schmidt and

Nate Brenner

Maintenance

Department

Buecker's City Sanitation



We all know the snow is coming sooner than later! Please make sure your refuse and recycling containers are clear of snow and easily accessible by the refuse and recycling drivers. They are not allowed to dig them out of the snow bank! Remember too, per the MN Pollution Control Agency, it is illegal to put any kind of ash into your refuse container. It is also dangerous, no matter how cold the ash may seem! The MPCA suggests you dump ash on your garden or flowerbeds as fertilizer. Should you have any questions, please contact Bueckers City Sanitation at 877-352-2876.

AVON TOWNSHIP NEWS



Submitted by: LeRoy
Gondringer
Township Board Chair

This past spring, the Township Board appointed a Facilities Task Force Committee to review the space needs of the Township. The committee, comprised of residents from all corners of the Township, met about every other week for two months to discuss these needs. The recommendation of this committee was to move forward with the process toward the construction of both a Township Maintenance facility and a Township Hall. A special Township meeting was held on October 6, 2009 at the St. Anna Church to gather input by Township residents. The residents in attendance showed overwhelming support for the project by a unanimous vote to proceed with construction of the Township facilities as proposed by the Facilities Task Force.

To begin this process the Town Board has established a citizens' Building Committee to research and help with the design of the new facilities. This committee will meet several times over the coming months to formulate a building plan that will meet the needs of the Township. These meetings will be open to the public. All residents of the township are encouraged to attend these meetings to help design your township facilities. Times and dates of the meetings will be posted on the Township website - www.avontownship.org. Or you may call one of the Township Board officers for more information.

Another issue concerning Avon Township right now is CapX2020. For those who are unaware, CapX2020 is a 345-kilovolt transmission line that will run from Fargo to the St. Cloud area. The preferred route will run from West to East through Avon Township, just South of Pelican Lake. A number of concerned citizens have approached the Town Board with concerns about the routing of the power line. The Town Board has decided to seek legal counsel to help us with this issue. For more information, log onto www.capx2020.com, call 1-866-876-2869, or send an email to fargoinfo@capx2020.com.

With the arrival of winter coming all too soon, once again we remind residents to be aware of the snowplows and give the operators adequate room to do their work. Please be aware that any objects such as reflectors, sprinkler heads, or other items may create hazards for the plows. This is a good time of year to check your mailbox post and 911 sign to make sure they are in good repair for the upcoming winter months. If you have concerns regarding your 911 signpost please call Kelly Martini, 356-9134.

Avon Township has crop farms, dairy farms, hog farms, chicken farms, beef farms, and in the very near future there will also be a solar farm in our township. It will be located at the Southeast corner of the Township on property owned by St. John's University. This four-acre solar farm will be the largest in the state of Minnesota and will supply a portion of the electricity needed by the college. The University will also use the solar farm as an educational tool for their students. Avon Township is very supportive of renewable energy projects and worked closely with the team from St. John's to navigate the maze of County and Township permits and approvals a project of this size and scope requires.

Thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter, and have a great holiday season.

Township Board Supervisors are John Merdan 356-7668, Richard Bresnahan 356-7919, and LeRoy Gondringer 845-4580. Township Clerk Renee Smith 356-7224.



The Assessor's Corner

By Jeff Johnson - Assistant Stearns County Assessor

All real and personal property in Minnesota is taxable except certain property that is exempt by law. There are several types of real and personal property that are exempt from property taxation including: public property; educational facilities; religious and charitable institutions; and tribal lands. Other properties may be eligible for exemption but would require property owners to file an application for exemption such as: transitional housing; ice arenas and baseball parks owned and operated by non-profit corporations; and housing and redevelopment authority properties.

Property tax exemption forms are available by contacting the Stearns County Assessor's Office or by obtaining them on-line from the Assessor Forms Section of the Stearns County Assessor's website. The requirements for filing an exemption are found in M.S. 272.025. Property owners claiming an exemption must file an initial application with the assessor on or before February 1st of the assessment year.

The county assessor has the exclusive authority to grant or deny an applicant's request for the property tax exemption. The decision to deny an exemption can only be appealed to the Minnesota Tax Court.

Properties that qualify for a property tax exemption are still required to pay special assessments levied by local taxing authorities. In some cases, they may also be subject to a Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILT) with the county or a local municipality.

For the complete version of this article go to www.co.stearns.mn.us Check out the Assessor's Corner that can be accessed by going to the Assessor's homepage.