

CityScene



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www.independencemo.org
City of Independence, MO

Mayor Don Reimal's State of the City



CityConnect

Mayor Don Reimal delivered his State of the City address at the Chamber of Commerce February Monthly Luncheon at Ophelia's Restaurant, 206 N. Main. Go to City7.TV to view a video of Mayor Reimal's remarks.



Street Projects Underway for 2008

The Public Works Department is already working to complete several street improvement projects throughout the City for the 2008 construction season. John Powell, acting Public Works director said that while these will cause temporary inconvenience, they will all contribute to improvements in the transportation system.

Work started the first week in February to build Jackson Drive from 37th Terrace to R.D. Mize Road. The project is scheduled to finish in March 2009. Tax Increment Financing (TIF) funds from the Centerpoint Medical Center development are financing the \$11,892,000 project.

"Jackson Drive will be a main north-south arterial street in Independence that will relieve traffic congestion on M-291," Powell said. "It will give important access to the hospital and shopping areas along 39th Street."

Jackson Drive will be a four-lane street divided by a raised median. It will have curbs and gutters, with a sidewalk along the west side and a shared pedestrian/bicycle trail along the east side. There will be a traffic signal installed at the intersection with R.D. Mize Road as part of the

project.

Powell said the project is complicated in that there will be two bridges and a large amount of fill material. One bridge will cross over the Kansas City Southern Railroad and the other bridge is over Crackerneck Creek.



Truman Road, between 291 Highway and Vista Drive, will become a four-lane street. Work started last November on the 3,600-foot project and is scheduled for completion in November. The total project cost is \$3,033,000. Federal highway funds totaling \$2,500,000 will fund the project. Matching funds are coming from Street Sales Tax and County Urban Road System funds.

"This project adds a sidewalk along the south side of Truman Road," Powell said. "In addition, a large concrete culvert will be installed under Truman, west of Vista, to improve storm drainage; and a new railroad crossing will be installed with traffic signals that activate when a train approaches."

Santa Fe Road, the gateway to Santa Fe Park, is getting a complete makeover between 23rd Street and 31st Street.

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HHW Collection Set for April 5

Now is the time to get ready for the annual free Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Mobile Collection, which will be from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, April 5. This is the 11th year the Water Pollution Control (WPC) Department has sponsored the event.

WPC Director Dick Champion said this is the largest collection event sponsored by any city in the region. In the 10 years Independence has held the mobile collection, citizens have disposed of more than 300 tons of hazardous waste. Last year WPC reported that 566 vehicles representing 688 households participated in the event and disposed of almost 83,801 pounds, or nearly 42 tons, of waste.

The site for the HHW Mobile Collection event will be the large parking lot bounded by Walnut, Osage, Kansas and Liberty streets, is one block south of the Independence Square. Entry will be from Osage.

To prepare for the mobile collection, Champion suggests residents tour their home, looking under the kitchen sink, in the bathroom, shelves in the garage, the basement, and the storage shed for products like batteries, paint, paint thinner, pesticides, gasoline, antifreeze, motor oil, drain cleaners, oven cleaners, bleach, etc. Though usually safe when used according to label directions, these products can become dangerous when people forget or are not aware of the dangers.

"All of these products are considered hazardous because the chemicals they contain pose a threat," Champion said. "If the product won't be used again for its original purpose or is no longer wanted, proper disposal is important."

If the product has words such as Danger, Warning, or Caution on the label, the product contains chemicals that are corrosive, reactive, ignitable, or toxic, and are hazardous. These commonly used

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Successful Home Remodeling Loan Program Continued

More than 75 homeowners in the region's "first suburbs," the communities that form an inner ring around the central city, are enjoying new home renovations thanks to a special loan agreement program between the First Suburbs Coalition and CommunityAmerica Credit Union. Six Independence homeowners have participated, spending a total of \$157,000 to renovate their homes.

The City of Independence, as a member of the Mid-America Regional Council's First Suburbs Coalition partners with CommunityAmerica Credit Union to provide low-interest, fixed rate home equity loans designed to fund the remodeling and modernization of homes throughout the City.

The remodeling program started in February 2007 and is primarily designed for older homes which are now functionally out of date with small closets, one-car garages, no master suite and too few bathrooms. To date, homeowners have borrowed nearly \$.5 million for a vari-

ety of projects, including window and door replacement, roof repair or replacement, plumbing and electrical upgrades, and additions such as new rooms, decks, porches and fences.

Based on the success of the program's first year it has been extended through 2008.

"With the other positive improvements currently underway in Western Independence, such as the Fairmount-Carlisle Tax Abatement Program and the transfer of the schools from the Kansas City School District to Independence, now is the perfect time to expand the City's home remodeling programs," Jay Leipzig, Neighborhood and Housing Services manager said. "This program is one source available to make the existing housing stock competitive with outlying suburbs, and attractive to new families moving into the area.

"We must remodel and modernize our existing housing stock to attract and retain residents," Leipzig added. "With the

availability of the Fairmount-Carlisle Tax Abatement and the low interest loan program, significant housing improvements can be made very affordable."

The Fairmount-Carlisle Redevelopment Corporation has already approved more than \$1.2 million of investment in the revitalization area.

Loans of up to \$30,000 provided through the program offer fixed, low interest rates, with terms of 10 years or less. The First Suburbs Coalition's Idea Book contains plans, drawings and suggestions for the best ways to make first suburb homes as attractive, comfortable and valuable as possible. It is available through the City for a nominal charge.

To apply or for more information contact CommunityAmerica at 913-905-6629 and reference the First Suburbs Coalition Loan Program. There is information available on the City of Independence web site at www.independencemo.org under the Neighborhood and Housing Services link.

April Parks and Recreation Competition Events

The Parks and Recreation Department is offering the following events during April.

Aquafina Pitch, Hit & Run

Pitch, Hit & Run is the official skills competition of Major League Baseball. This grassroots program provides youth with an opportunity to compete in a competition that recognizes individual excellence in core baseball skills. This free event is from 10 a.m. – noon at Mill Creek Park, 1717 North River Rd., Saturday April 19. Age groups are 7 to 8; 9 to 10; 11 to 12; and 13 to 14.

Touch a Truck

Have you always wanted to get up close and personal with big trucks but have never had the chance? The Touch-A-Truck event allows you to do just that. Bring the entire family to see some of what are described as the "coolest" trucks around, including an antique fire truck. This free event is from 1 - 3 p.m. Saturday, April 19 at Mill Creek Park, 1717 N. River Rd.

Spring Stack-Cup Stacking

Test your hand-eye coordination and speed with this sport by stacking cups from 10 a.m. – noon Saturday, April 26 at the Truman Memorial Building, 416

W. Maple. The fee is \$15 per person. Age groups are 5 to 6; 7 to 8; 9 to 10; and 11 to 12.

Kellogg's Frosted Flakes Basketball

Compete against yourself and the clock to score as many baskets as possible from different spots on the court in 45 seconds. Competition for this free event is from 10 a.m. – noon Saturday, April 5 at Truman Memorial Building, 416 W. Maple.

Kellogg's Frosted Flakes Basketball is a part of the Junior Olympic Skills Competition. Youth can participate and advance through three levels of competition including local, regional and the na-

tional finals, which is at the U.S. Olympic Training Center. The age groups are 8 to 9; 10 to 11; and 12 to 13.

USTA Rapid Rally Tennis

Compete against yourself and the clock by hitting a low compression tennis ball against a wall above the net line while standing behind the rally line (15 feet from wall) as many times as possible in 30 seconds. This free event is from 10 a.m. – noon Saturday, April 12 at the Tennis Complex at Santa Fe Trail Park, 2731 S. Santa Fe Rd.

CITY COUNCIL

Mayor	
Don Reimal	325-7027
City Council Office	325-7022
Councilmembers	
Marcie Gragg	District 1
Will Swoffer	District 2
Renee Paluka-White	District 3
Jim Page	District 4
Jim Schultz	At Large
Lucy Young	At Large
City Manager	
Robert Heacock	325-7170

Watch City Meetings On Streaming Video

City Council meetings and study sessions are available as live and archived streaming video on the City's Web site, www.independencemo.org

Each live City 7 TV broadcast is available online during the 6 p.m. Monday meetings. An archive of the program is available on the site the next morning for viewing 24 hours a day. Archived videos are available for a few months following their posting. If you do not have a computer but would like to purchase a copy of a Council meeting call 325-7019.

Puppet Show, Swale Walk Among NFTM Activities

The National Frontier Trails Museum (NFTM) has a full slate of April activities, ranging from puppet shows to the Friends' annual benefit.

The Puppetry Arts Institute is a partner with the NFTM, 318 W. Pacific, in the creation of an original puppet show, "Oregon or Bust."

Designed for school groups, but also open to the public, the inter-active, multi-media show with rod puppets and computer-generated backgrounds will run Tuesdays through Fridays throughout April.

On Saturday, April 12, the public is invited to shows at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. Tick-

ets are \$7 per person and reservations are strongly recommended. If there is a demand, the NFTM will add more Saturday shows. Call for additional show times.

The NFTM will conduct a gallery walk focusing on the Donner Party, the pioneer travelers trapped en route to California in early snows in the high Sierra Mountains. The walks begin at 2 p.m. Thursday April 3, 10, 17 and 24. The walk is free with regular admission, which is \$5, adults; \$4.50, seniors; \$3.50, ages 6-17; and 5 and younger, free.

The Friends of the NFTM are inviting the public to their annual benefit Satur-

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HHW Collection From Page 1

products can be harmful to your health and safety, as well as damaging to the environment.

Every year there are serious injuries, even deaths, caused by the careless use of household chemicals. Some estimates by the EPA indicate that one out of 10 children are injured at home from household chemicals. Improper disposal of these chemicals can lead to groundwater contamination in a sanitary landfill or injury to sanitation workers who handle the waste.

Champion urges citizens to take advantage of this free mobile collection for safe and responsible disposal of hazardous products.

All waste products are handled by the Kansas City Regional HHW Center where more than 95% are exchanged, recycled, or waste/energy recovered.

As in the past, residents of Independence may bring any type of household hazardous waste to the collection site and it will be disposed of properly and safely, free of charge. Residents must bring proof of residency, such as a driver's license or utility bill.

The Police Department will have an ordinance officer at the collection event to collect and dispose of old/unwanted ammunition, guns, explosives, fireworks, blasting caps, etc. If you have questions about this type of disposal, contact the Police Department at 325-7828.

Residents bringing a mercury thermometer will receive a free digital thermometer in exchange. There is a limit of one thermometer per residential house-

hold. Mercury is a highly toxic substance that poses a threat to human health and the environment.

Other types of products that will be accepted include all batteries, paint and paint products, fluorescent light bulbs, herbicides, pesticides, poisons, all automotive fluids, household cleaners (such as lye, drain, toilet, tub and oven cleaners), kerosene, unused and/or outdated medicines, etc.

If you are uncertain whether a particular type of waste will be accepted call WPC at 325-7711. No commercial waste will be accepted. No trash, appliances, yard waste, tires, asbestos, or pressurized gas cylinders will be accepted.

An express lane is planned for people with only a small amount of hazardous products or only wanting to exchange a mercury thermometer. Champion said this should help speed up the delivery and unloading process. Volunteers will be on hand to unload the vehicles.

To transport and deliver to the site, make sure all container lids are on tight. Don't mix different and/or unknown substances together. If containers are leaking, wrap in plastic and place in a box with absorbent material, such as cat litter. Use caution when packing your items – place them in boxes and surround with newspaper. Keep all materials away from children or pets.

If you would like more information about the City's HHW Disposal Program or the upcoming mobile collection, call WPC at 325-7711 or visit our website at www.independencemo.org/wpc.

FREEDOM from SMOKING

FREE CLASSES!

REGISTER TODAY! CALL 816-325-7185

INDEPENDENCE HEALTH DEPARTMENT

AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION.

City Drop-Off Depot

8 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Second Saturday Of Each Month
Starting New Season In March!

875 Vista Drive
325-7623
Truman Road
East of M-291,
One Mile North
On Vista Drive
Next to Animal Shelter

Trash: Cars, \$10;
Vehicles Larger Than Car, \$15;
Trailers 8 Feet or Longer, \$25
Brush: Limbs, Firewood, Bushes, Stumps. No Leaves or Grass: \$10 per load
Major Appliances: \$15 Each
Batteries & Lawnmowers: Free
Tires: Car, \$1; mounted Car, \$3; Truck, \$4; Mounted Truck, \$10; Farm/Tractor, \$15

Residential vehicles only, no commercial. No vehicles larger than a pick-up truck. Proof of residency required.

NFTM Events From Page 3

day, April 5. Appetizers and beverages will be served at 5:30 p.m., followed by wagon rides, which will operate until 6:20 p.m. A barbeque meal begins at 6:30 p.m. At 7:30 p.m. entertainer Colin O'Brien will present "Trails and Rails," a musical journey highlighting songs of the Old West, the railways and the characters found along the way.

Richard Edwards, NFTM Education and Events coordinator, urges families to attend. "This event will be fun for all, and a wonderful way for a family to spend an evening together and support the museum at the same time," Edwards said.

Tickets for the event are \$25 for adults and \$10 for children ages 6-17. Reservations are required.

If you've always dreamed about learning how to quilt, a Crazy Quilt workshop is scheduled from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, April 19. Quilter Sharron Gregg will teach participants of any age this frontier-era life skill. The cost is \$15 per person. Class size is limited, and reservations are required.

April also marks the spring return of the Evening Wagon Ride and Swales

Walk. The first walk will be at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, April 24 at the NFTM. Weather permitting, participants will board a covered wagon for a trip with Pioneer Trails Adventures.

The walk travels among the historic wagon swales, which are the ruts made by animals and wagons which followed the Santa Fe Trail through the grounds of the Bingham-Waggoner Estate. Adult tickets are \$12, while those for children ages 6-17 are \$9.

Reservations are required and there is a limit of 15 participants. If you can't make the April ride, the activity will also be offered throughout the spring and summer: Thursdays May 29, June 26, July 31, August 28 and September 25.

To make reservations or for information on any of these programs, call 325-7575 or go to www.frontiertrailsmuseum.org.

Don't forget - April 1 also marks the season opening of the 1859 Jail and Marshal's Home, 217 N. Main; Chicago & Alton Depot, 318 W. Pacific; Vaile Mansion, 1500 N. Liberty; and Bingham-Waggoner Estate, 313 W. Pacific.

Street Projects From Page 1

This will be a two-lane street with new curbs, a storm drainage system and a shared bicycle/pedestrian path along the east side of Santa Fe Road. The project also includes adding a lane as the street approaches 23rd Street to provide separate left and right turn lanes. Work started in early January and is scheduled for completion in December. The \$2,992,000 project is funded with street sales tax funds.

Walnut Street will be rebuilt from Lexington Street to Forest Street this year. This will be a two-lane street with new curbs, sidewalks, storm drains, drive approaches, utility lines, street surface, and streetlights. Work will start this spring and will be complete in October.

The contract amount is \$696,000 for the street improvements. The street improvements are being funded by a combination of Neighborhood Improvement District funds, a donation from the Midtown Truman Redevelopment Corporation, general City funds, and Street Sales Tax funds.

Powell said there are separate con-

tracts for the burial of the overhead utility lines.

One thing that is not planned for 2008 is an overlay contract.

"There has been an overlay contract each of the last nine years through the Street Sales Tax Program and 2008 is the final year of the current Street Sales Tax Program and I'm proud to report that we finished them all a year early," Powell said. "Overlay work schedules were moved forward to reduce the inflation risk of higher oil prices."

An overlay contract will be back in 2009 as a new Street Sales Tax Program begins.

Hot Line Directory



Barking Dogs	325-7213
Crime Stoppers Tips	474-8477
Drop-Off Trash	325-7623
Drugs	325-6272
Pit Bulls	325-7762
Potholes	325-7624
Report Power Outage	325-7550
Street Lights	325-7535
Storm Water Pollution	325-7727

Recycling Centers

The City operates two recycling centers. The recycling centers and their operation days and times are:

35th Street Recycling Center
13600 E. 35th Street
 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Fridays
 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. Saturdays

Vista Drive Recycling Center
875 Vista Drive
 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. Sundays
 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Mondays



City Council
 6 p.m. Mondays
 10 a.m. Tuesdays
 7 p.m. Wednesdays
 2 p.m. Sundays

Planning Commission
 6:30 p.m. 2nd & 4th Tuesdays
 10 a.m. Wednesdays
 2 p.m. Thursdays

For more information:
www.City7.TV



Utility Bill Payment Options

The City of Independence offers many convenient options for paying utility bills.

To pay by phone call 325-SERV
 You will need to have your Account Access Code and your utility account number in order to pay by phone.
To pay online go to www.independencemo.org

NOTE: There is a \$1 per month discount offered to residential customers age 62 or older on their sewer bill if they receive Social Security payments (or similar retirement benefits) and their sewer usage is 100 to 400 cubic feet per month. Call 325-7930 for more information.