

CityScene



May 2009
Volume 16 Number 5

www.independencemo.org
City of Independence, MO

Work Underway on Street Projects

R.D. Mize Road between Selsa and Ringo roads is getting a major facelift and will be closed for three weeks while contractors replace a box culvert at Crackerneck Creek with a triple 9' x 9' precast concrete box culvert.

The road will be closed until mid-to-late May. Public Works Director John Powell said a signed detour route will be provided during this construction period.

This \$2.9 million R.D. Mize Road construction project now underway widens the road to four lanes from Hidden Valley Road to the Little Blue Parkway and Jackson Drive, both of which are also under construction to the east.

The R.D. Mize Road project also includes a new signaled intersection with Jackson Drive and the lowering of a hill near the R.D. Mize Road intersection with Gateway to improve visibility.

The new \$11.9 million Jackson Drive project, between 37th Terrace and R.D. Mize Road, will be a four-lane street with a raised median, curbs, a sidewalk, and a shared use path. Work is progressing on building a new bridge over the Kansas City Southern Railroad. The contractor is also scheduling the remaining grading, concrete, and asphalt work on the project.

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2009 Street Overlay Program

More smooth streets are on the way for Independence. A contract has been awarded to Superior Bowen Asphalt Company to resurface 25 miles of streets this year.

Public Works Director John Powell said the improvements are possible because of a ½ cent sales tax approved by Independence voters in August 2007. It is the third street sales tax ballot initiative passed. It collects ½ of one cent sales tax during an 11-year period that started January 1, 2009.

The sales tax revenues are being used to improve intersections, make street safety improvements, replace bridges in poor condition, and make some sidewalk improvements. Powell said the largest part of the program will be street pave-

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150th Anniversary of 1859 Jail

The sesquicentennial of the historic 1859 Jackson County Jail Marshal's Home and Museum, 217 N. Main, will be celebrated this year with a series of special events planned Saturday, June 6 and Sunday, June 7.

The Jail will be open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday for tours. At 5 p.m. the jail will re-open for re-enactments of five historic events that took place in 1866. Reservations are required and are limited to 80 visitors. For admission cost and reservations, call the Jackson County Historical Society at 461-1897.

An open house at the Jail Sunday after-

noon will offer free admission from 1 to 4 p.m. Paul Kirkman will present a lecture on frontier justice at 2 p.m.

For more information about the Jail, its famous "guests," such as Frank James, and its significance in the Kansas-Missouri Border Wars and the Civil War, go to www.jchs.org.

Saturday is also a special day for three popular annual events. Feast on a hearty breakfast at the annual Trails Breakfast, held from 7 to 9:30 a.m. on the grounds of the Bingham-Waggoner Estate, 313 W. Pacific. Reserved tickets are \$7 per person.

See 1859 Jail, Page 2

EcoFest June 6 At Waterfall Park



EcoFest will offer a chance again this year to earn a festival T-shirt by answering quiz questions at every booth. These girls earned shirts at last year's event.

The second annual Independence EcoFest – "It's All About Water!" – will be from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Saturday, June 6, at the City's new 80-acre Waterfall Park south of the Bass Pro Shops. Last year nearly 1,000 visitors attended the EcoFest Festival.

"Protecting our water resources is crucial to the environment," Water Pollution Control Director Dick Champion said. "Our goal with this festival is to educate the public about the importance of nurturing the environment."

The water quality festival is made possible by Independence Parks and Recreation, Water Pollution Control, Power & Light, Water and Health departments; in partnership with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, the Missouri Department of Conservation, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Little Blue Watershed Coalition and other local groups.

EcoFest is an opportunity for children and adults to see displays with an environmental theme. Exhibitors will provide information about the importance of water quality, local watersheds, stormwater management, and conservation.

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Storm Drain Placard Warning: 'No Dumping'

Water Pollution Control continues its program placing "No Dumping" placards on storm drains to remind citizens that water entering storm drains flows directly to streams, rivers and lakes. To date, 187 placards have been attached to storm inlets in selected areas of the City.

While storm drains are designed to divert water from streets, they can become water polluters when harmful substances from lawns and streets flow through them. Some common storm water contaminants include lawn chemicals, pet waste, household chemicals such as paint, and soaps used for washing cars.

"Products advertised as "biodegradable" are not typically safe for our waterways either – even small amounts of chemicals entering storm drains can affect water quality," Water Pollution Control Director Dick Champion said.

The City's "illicit discharge" ordinance prohibits dumping or discharging substances other than storm water into storm drains.

To help prevent storm water pollution,

follow these simple tips:

- Never discard trash or yard waste down storm drains or in the street.

- When mowing, discharge toward the yard, not the street.

- Sweep driveways and sidewalks clean – but not into the street.

- Pick up after your pets.

- Never place used oil in the trash or pour down storm drains. Visit www.recyclespot.org to find the nearest oil recycling center or call 474-



TEAM.

- Wash your car at a commercial car wash or in a grassy area; not a driveway or street.

- Dispose of toxic household and lawn chemicals at a household hazardous waste collection center or mobile collection.

- To report spills, illicit discharges, and storm water quality problems, call the storm water pollution hot line, 325-7727.

For more information call WPC, 325-7711 or visit www.independencemo.org/wpc.

EcoFest

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Interactive booths will be located along the park trail so participants can learn about various water and conservation topics. There will be brochures, souvenirs and other giveaways at various booths.

Festival goers will collect stamps for their "Eco-Passports" by answering quiz questions at each exhibit.

A t-shirt design contest is being conducted at a local elementary school. The winning design will be used on this year's shirt, which is awarded to those who complete the Eco-Passport questions.

In addition to displays on ecology and water quality, the festival will also include entertainment throughout the festival area by Eco Elvis, EcoTroubadour Stan Slaughter, Puppeteer Paula Smolen, the Kite Club, and EcoStreet Characters.

There is no admission fee.

"Make plans to come support what will be a very important and fun event for our community," Champion said.

For more EcoFest information, visit www.independencemo.org/wpc or call WPC at 325-7711.

Historic Preservation Month Events

Joining events throughout the nation, more than a dozen Preservation Month events are occurring in Independence throughout May.

Expounding on this year's theme "This Place Matters," May 2009 events include history and architecture lectures, walking tours, Civil War battlefield tours, and cemetery tours.

For a calendar and detailed event information, go to: <http://www.independencemo.org/comdev/Story.aspx?id=1557>.

1859 Jail

From Page 1



John Cianciolo, a long-time volunteer at the 1859 Jackson County Jail Marshal's Home and Museum, gives a short history with tours.

Live music is planned. House tours are \$5 per person. Call 461-3491 or go to www.bwestate for more details.

You can also get in the spirit of the trails era by hopping on a covered wagon tour with Pioneer Trails Adventures. The cost is \$4 for adults and \$3 for children 12 and younger.

At 8 a.m. the "Dragons on the Square" car show provides a chance to get a close-up view of vintage and collector cars. The show lasts until 4 p.m. and there is no admission fee. If you want to display a car, contact Jim Tormena at 808-1154. The fee to exhibit is \$10 in advance or \$15 on the day of the event.

The Strawberry Festival opens for the day at 9 a.m. at the Vaile Mansion, 1500 N. Liberty. Until 4 p.m. browse antique, plant and craft vendor stalls, indulge in a strawberry treat and watch live entertainment. Admission to the grounds is free. House tours cost \$5, as do carriage rides. For more information, call 325-7430 or visit www.vailemansion.org.

CITY COUNCIL

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Don Reimal	325-7027
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Myron Paris	District 3
Jim Page	District 4
Jim Schultz	At Large
Lucy Young	At Large
City Manager	
Robert Heacock	325-7170

New Programs Focus on Nature Education

Ever hear of “Nature Deficit Disorder?” Your child may be afflicted. The symptoms include too much time indoors, too many video games, and a disconnection with the great outdoors.

Richard Louv, author of “Last Child in the Woods” links disturbing childhood trends, including obesity and depression, to our urban world.

Parks and Recreation agencies across the country are taking action to try and reverse this trend. The National Parks and Recreation Association’s ‘No Child Left Inside’ movement has swelled during the past few years.

The Independence Parks and Recreation Department has embraced the movement by developing parks and programs that reconnect residents to the natural world around them.

Matt Garrett, the park naturalist at George Owens Nature Park, 1601 S. Speck Rd., serves as the environmental educator for the Independence Parks and Recreation Department.

Parks and Recreation Director Eric Urfer said Garrett is a skilled interpreter who makes connections to the natural world easier.

“Telling a child the name of a tree isn’t helpful, but allowing a child to climb the tree, touch the leaves and watch the animals that use the tree, is,” Garrett said. “When a child makes a connection to the environment, they become a lifelong champion of the natural world.”

An example of this philosophy in action was displayed on April 18 and 25 as community members took part in two separate ‘Weed Warrior Work Days’ at George Owens Nature Park.

Citizens learned invasive plant identifi-

cation and assisted park staff with removing exotic plants that have encroached on the park. This step is crucial, Garrett says.

“When folks go from caring about the environment to actually getting their hands dirty, great things happen,” Garrett said. “The decisions we make today have an impact on the natural world our children will inherit. As society becomes more disconnected from nature, the need for environmental education increases greatly. Environmental education is now and will continue to be an ongoing priority of the department.”

With that in mind, the Independence Parks and Recreation Department will offer an overnight “Leave No Trace” trainer course to the public beginning at 5:30 p.m. Friday, June 19 through Saturday, June 20.

“Leave No Trace” is a national education program dedicated to promoting and inspiring responsible recreational practices through education, research and partnerships. Trainer courses are designed for educators, scout leaders, agency employees, or any citizen interested in



These volunteers helped clean invasive plants from the woods at George Owens Nature Park during ‘Weed Warrior Work Days’ in April.

protecting natural resources. Participants learn the concepts and underlying ethics of “Leave No Trace” and are given the tools to teach this curriculum in a variety of settings.

For more information on environmental education programs offered by the Parks and Recreation Department, call 325-7115.

IShare

UTILITY ASSISTANCE

254-4100

Recycling Centers

The City operates two recycling centers. Items accepted at the centers include paper, cardboard, paperboard, steel and aluminum cans, plastic, toner cartridges and dry cell batteries. 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 Avenue Recycling Center

875 Vista Avenue
8 a.m. - 4 p.m. Sundays
10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Mondays

City Drop-Off Depot

8 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Second Saturday Of Each Month
March thru November!

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

Drop-Off Depot

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.

FREEDOM from SMOKING

REGISTER TODAY! CALL 816-325-7185

INDEPENDENCE HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Discover Independence...Where is it?

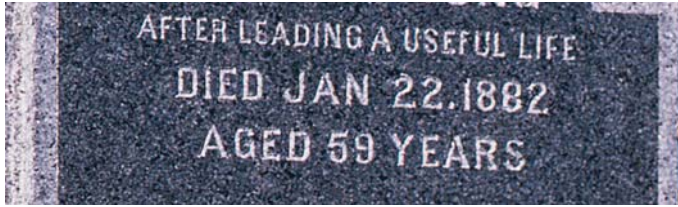


Photo Courtesy of Herbert Webb

'Where is it?'

The City of Independence is home to numerous historic and infamous sites and buildings. These great places to visit in your home town will be featured in photographs several times in the coming months in 'Where Is It?' We challenge you to find and explore a piece of what makes Independence special. The answer to this month's location will appear in the next CityScene.

This Month's Clue: This grave marker is more a who is it than where is it. Located in Woodlawn Cemetery this person died in 1882 at the age of 59. A school was named after him and a park is dedicated to him. He impacted countless lives and provided the wheels for the western migration and trade routes.



CityScene is published monthly by the City Manager's Office, 111 East Maple Street, Independence, Missouri 64050. Editor: Irene Baltrusaitis, Communications Director, 325-7019. The City's webpage address is www.independencemo.org

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 City Council 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.

Street Projects From Page 1

The Jackson Drive project is expected to be completed by late May and the R.D. Mize Road project by fall.

The Little Blue Parkway will be a four-lane, divided street with sidewalks along one side and a bicycle/pedestrian path along the other side. Completion of the stretch from 39th Street to R.D. Mize Road is expected in the fall. The entire stretch to 24 Highway should be completed by late 2010 and will have intersections at Necessary, Truman and Bundschu roads. The total estimated cost of the seven-mile Little Blue Parkway is \$50 million.

Funds recently awarded from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 are being used on the next phases of the Little Blue Parkway and Jackson Drive projects.

The Little Blue Parkway extension from R.D. Mize Road to Necessary Road will receive \$3.3 million in federal funds. In addition, the Jackson Drive construction between Holke Road and 78 Highway (23rd Street) will receive \$1.44 million in federal funding.

All three of these projects are expected to ease traffic by improving traffic flow.

For more information call Shar Dilmaghani, Public Works construction manager at 325-7611 or Doug Stewart, Public Works construction inspector at 935-1915.



Jackson Drive

Overlay Program From Page 1

ment resurfacing.

The 25 miles of streets to be resurfaced this year are located throughout the City. In most cases, the contractor will grind two inches of asphalt from the street, patch any areas needed, and install two inches of new asphalt.

Some sidewalk ramps at street intersections will be replaced to meet the current legal requirements. The street locations have been selected based on an inspection and rating system which identifies the streets most in need of the resurfacing.

Powell said a street overlay contract will be done each year of the 11-year sales tax program.

Information is available on the street locations to be overlaid this summer through the Public Works Department. The list of locations will be provided on request by calling 325-7600. This list is also available at the City's Web site at www.independencemo.org.

Hot Line Directory



Barking Dogs	325-7213
Crime Stoppers Tips	474-8477
Drop-Off Trash	325-7623
Drugs	325-6272
Graffiti	325-7824
Neighborhood Watch	325-7643
Potholes	325-7624
Report Power Outage	325-7550
Street Lights	325-7535
Storm Water Pollution	325-7727



Watch City 7 TV
City of Independence
Government Access Television

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
7 p.m. Thursdays

For more information:
www.City7.TV

*Denotes live meeting, all others are rebroadcasts.