

## RICE CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT HONORED AT STATE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT CONVENTION

The Rice Creek Watershed District (RCWD) was recently honored as outstanding conservationist at the annual meeting of the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, December 4-6, 2011 in Bloomington, Minn. RCWD employee Kyle Axtell and Vice President Barb Haake attended on behalf of RCWD to accept the award.

Each year, the state's SWCDs recognize individuals and organizations for outstanding accomplishments in implementing conservation practices and improving Minnesota's natural resources. The award program is conducted with support from *The Farmer* magazine, and the award ceremony receives sponsorship from the Minnesota Corn Growers Association.

According to the Anoka Conservation District (ACD), RCWD was recognized for a variety of reasons. They have worked hard to strike a balance between the sometimes competing goals of maintaining legal drainage systems and improving water quality, wetland function and wildlife habitat. From small-scale projects such as the 34 neighborhood rain gardens installed to reduce volume and improve quality of stormwater runoff to larger projects such as restoring the function and capacity of regional stormwater pond, the district has strived to promote conservation across a diverse 121 thousand acre watershed. The RCWD has shown that conservation can be successfully implemented in both rural and urban settings by working closely with the Anoka, Ramsey and Washington Soil and Water Conservation Districts with whom they share jurisdiction.

"We're really proud of the RCWD and what the watershed has done for conservation in Anoka County," said Vici Nass, ACD Supervisor. For more information on the program, contact Chris Lord at the Anoka Conservation District 763-434-2030.



ACD District Manager Chris Lord, RCWD employee Kyle Axtell and Vice President Barb Haake along with sponsor Paula Mohr, Editor of Farmer Magazine

### CANDIDATE ISSUES NEWS RELEASE

## MANDY BENZ TO RUN FOR STATE HOUSE

Coon Rapids resident, Mandy Benz, is announcing her intent to run for the Republican endorsement for the Minnesota State House in the upcoming 2012 election.

Benz, who resides in House seat 49B with her husband and 10-year-old son, is actively involved in community service and local political issues. Currently, Benz serves on the Safety Commission for the City of Coon Rapids and works as a Legislative Assistant for the State Senate at the Minnesota State Capitol.

Through community service and my work at the Capitol, I have seen what needs to happen to move our state forward economically and I am taking the next step to become a part of it," Benz says about her decision to run for office. "Now is the time to start rebuilding and repairing some of the setbacks Minnesotans have suffered."

Benz believes her time spent working at the Minnesota Capitol and her studies in Office Management Legal Criminal Justice and Government from Rasmussen College has given her a



Mandy Benz

**BENZ** continued on next page, A-2

### ANOKA COUNTY NEWS

## 2011 WAS A YEAR OF FIRSTS FOR ANOKA COUNTY

The Anoka County Board cut spending in 2011 and applied other cost-saving measures to achieve a 7.43 percent reduction in the property tax levy for 2012. Lowering the levy for the first time in at least 30 years tops the list of 2011 county board accomplishments for Board Chair Rhonda Sivarajah.

"We started the year with the clear understanding that taxpayers were tapped out; we simply could not ask them to pay more in property taxes," she said. "So we took a comprehensive look at how we could do more with less, and use innovation and creativity to maintain our ability to serve citizens."

As part of the budget process, a tool was developed to identify which services are mandated, which are essential, and which are nice to have. "This will allow us to establish the budget more strategically in the future, based on priorities, rather than across the board increases or decreases," Sivarajah said.

The introduction of a new, one-time Voluntary Separation Program (VSP) will result in an annual savings of \$1.5 million in salary and benefit costs. Employees with at least 10 years of service who met additional requirements were offered incentives to voluntarily leave county employment. The initial outlay was recouped by holding positions open. Future salary and benefit savings will be realized because some positions remain unfilled, some were restructured, and some replacements were hired at a lower pay rate. Learn more about VSP at <http://tinyurl.com/85hxmnt>.

Uncovering ways to boost efficiency and productivity was a common theme in 2011. Lean Kaizen, a workplace process that stresses continuous improvement, was introduced under a pilot program in the County Attorney's Office and Office of Child Support. Staff members from those departments are sharing what they've learned about Lean Kaizen with other county managers and supervisors to implement the process county-wide.

At the Highway Department, an innovative project delivery system called design-build is being used on a major construction project. Anoka County is the first county in the state and among the first in the nation to use the design-build process, which streamlines construction by giving the design-build team the authority to manage all phases of a project: design, engineering, and construction. Under design-build, projects are far more likely to be completed on time and on budget.

The county Highway Department was busy with other projects in 2011. In fact, it was a record year, with the department undertaking the largest construction and pavement rehabilitation schedule in its history. Anoka County had great success bringing in outside revenue for projects, leveraging \$1 of county funds with \$3 in federal and state highway construction dollars for each project.

Early in 2011, county employees were asked to submit their best ideas on how to do their jobs more efficiently and otherwise stretch county resources. Employees demonstrated their commitment to making their jobs and workplace better by submitting more than 400 ideas. Among them: cut utility bills by reducing the number of bulbs in light fixtures,

**COUNTY FIRSTS** continued on next page, A-2

**BENZ** *continued from A-1*

healthy understanding of how the political system of the state functions. "I am aware of the issues; I know how the State House and Senate work in collaboration with one another and with the local government entities. I am also aware of the safety and security needs of our community thanks to my service on the Safety Commission. I want to take all my experience and knowledge and build on it. I will listen to the people and understand what they want, and I will step up to serve my community at a state level."

Currently, Minnesota has not finalized a redistricting plan for its State House districts which mean the territory of the House seat Benz resides in may change.

"I will be watching the plans closely and am looking forward to the decisions that will be made about the seats in my community," Benz says about redistricting in Minnesota.

Endorsing conventions for local Republican Senate Districts are being held in March 2012.

**COUNTY FIRSTS** *continued from A-1*

installing motion detector light switches, and controlling heating and cooling set points; eliminate most county-funded meals and limiting out-of-state travel; and use an election management system to coordinate election logistics and administration.

Anoka County made greater use of technology in 2011 to save staff time and stretch resources. A document imaging project in the Economic Assistance Department allows staff to electronically access data that previously had to be retrieved manually from rows of file cabinets. County board members now receive agendas and board meeting packets electronically, a move that is saving more than 10 reams of paper a month, in addition to staff time and copying costs. All Anoka County marriage records, dating as far back as 1858, have been entered into an electronic database, making for quick and easy access when marriage certificates are requested by the public. New asset management tracking software is being used to stretch the life of county facilities. "This will help ensure that preventive maintenance is completed to avoid costly repairs down the road," Sivrajah said.

County residents can now do more online with enhancements to the county's website. For the first time, county board meetings are broadcast live on the county website, giving residents easy access to the business of county government. An online calendar lists all agendas and schedules for public meetings and county-sponsored events, making it convenient for citizens to find information about meetings and programs they may wish to attend. Website improvements have made it easier to apply for a marriage license, look up information on foreclosed properties, or search for people in custody — all of which saves staff time and resources. The new Commute Solution website provides information for employers and commuters on alternatives to using a private automobile to get to work. For the first time ever, in the interest of transparency, a special section of the county website was created dedicated solely to the budget. It contains detailed information about where taxpayer's dollars are spent, along with a video explaining the budget and the types of services the county provides. See more at [www.anokacounty.us/2012budget](http://www.anokacounty.us/2012budget).

In a first for Anoka County, board meetings went on the road in 2011. Board meetings convened in Andover, Coon Rapids, Ramsey, Lino Lakes, Blaine, and Fridley in a bid to bring county government closer to the people it serves. "This was a great opportunity to visit our communities and engage residents more

directly in the issues that impact their lives," Sivrajah said.

The official start of several important projects was noted in 2011. In September, Anoka County broke ground on the "Connect Anoka County" high-speed fiber broadband project. The project will link 145 anchor institutions with three core rings, creating a fiber optic backbone that will connect public safety, public works, libraries, law enforcement, city and county buildings, and other community buildings. The backbone will provide a direct advantage to local businesses, passing directly through the county's key business districts and economic development zones. In November, construction began on the Northstar Commuter Rail Station in Ramsey with completion scheduled for late 2012.

With the goal of stretching resources, Anoka County in 2011 introduced the Cooperation and Collaboration Project to explore ways in which the county, municipalities, and school districts can share services, equipment, and other resources. Though still early, project participants have narrowed their focus to Information Technology, Human Resources, and large equipment purchases.

In September, Standard & Poor's, one of the nation's top credit rating agencies, reaffirmed Anoka County's AAA bond rating, the highest rating possible. The AAA rating means the county can negotiate lower interest rates to finance major projects, saving money for the county, and ultimately, taxpayers. "The AAA rating recognizes our fiscally responsible approach to managing Anoka County's tax dollars," Sivrajah said. "Despite an extremely challenging economic climate, Anoka County is thriving. I look forward to the challenges and opportunities ahead and know that by continuing to work hard, and work smart, we can look forward to an even brighter future."

**VOTER PHOTO ID FORUM SET FOR FEB. 27 BY LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS**

The League of Women Voters ABC and the Anoka Ramsey Community College Student Senate will be sponsoring a Voter Photo ID forum on Monday, Feb. 27, at 6:30 p.m. in the Legacy Room at the Anoka Ramsey Community College. Call any of the following phone numbers with questions; 763-421-7334, 763-754-9447, or 763-421-3875.

**MNVOTES Voter Education Workshops**

In order to increase voter participation, encourage enthusiasm and create comfort around the electoral process, the Secretary of State's office has created an interactive workshop that takes community members and first-time voters through the entire voting process. This exciting presentation will simulate a day at the polls, from filling out voter registration applications to placing ballots in the ballot counter. By the end of this presentation participants will feel prepared for and excited about voting in Minnesota elections.

The workshop is designed for students and first-time voters and can be presented in a variety of settings. If you would like to schedule a workshop for your school or community group, please visit <http://www.sos.state.mn.us/index.aspx?page=500#workshops> to fill out a workshop request form.

**ANOKA ENHANCES ITS RESIDENTIAL RECYCLING PROGRAM**

Residents in the city of Anoka have an opportunity to increase their recycling efforts and reduce garbage amounts. Anoka is pleased to announce that Allied Waste Services will be accepting and recycling several new household

consumer plastics goods through the city's residential recycling program.

Beginning in January 2012 all city of Anoka residents in single-family and multi-family households can place items such as yogurt tubs, margarine tubs, clear plastic clam-shell packaging, and other food and beverage plastic containers (marked with the triangular recycling codes #3- #7) into their recycling containers, along with the already accepted #1 & #2 marked plastics.

This also includes collection of plastic bags received at grocery and retail stores. However, Allied Waste requires customers place multiple bags inside one bag in the recycling container to allow for processing. Allied Waste customers may also leave the caps on plastic pop and water bottles.

Rich Hirstein, municipal services manager for Allied Waste, stresses that they cannot accept any over-sized plastic items such as plastic siding, plastic piping, and small plastic pools. He said as a rule of thumb, they cannot take anything bigger than an ice cream bucket.

"There is a potential cost savings to the amount residents recycle. By increasing recycling efforts, their garbage volume can be reduced allowing them to switch their garbage container to a smaller size, thus saving some money," said Pam Bowman, recycling coordinator.

The city of Anoka has a recycling tonnage goal to achieve each year. Together with Allied Waste, the city works hard to provide the most economical and convenient curbside recycling program and encourages Anoka city residents to utilize the program for both economical and environmental benefits.

In addition to the curbside recycling program, the city organizes spring and fall recycling drop off events the last Saturday of April and September every year.

Residents may contact Allied Waste Services at 952-941-5174, the city recycling coordinator at 763-576-2725, or visit [www.ci.anoka.mn.us](http://www.ci.anoka.mn.us) for general recycling information.

**Adult Open Hockey  
Is Moving To . .**

**Monday's & Wednesday's  
11:30 am - 1:00 pm**

Beginning January 2012

Check monthly calendar for specific dates/times  
Open Adult Hockey will not be offered days School Dist #11 is not in session.

**\$5 Per Skater  
Goalies Skate Free**

**Andover Community Center  
Ice Arena**

15200 Hanson Blvd. NW  
Andover, MN 55304  
763-767-5100

**Helmet and gloves are required.**

Open Skate/Hockey Schedules available:  
[www.andovermn.gov/acc](http://www.andovermn.gov/acc)

**Statutory Facts****121A.11 UNITED STATES FLAG.****Subdivision 1. Displayed by schools.**

Every public school in Minnesota must display an appropriate United States flag when in session. The flag shall be displayed upon the school grounds or outside the school building, on a proper staff, on every legal holiday occurring during the school term and at such other times as the board of the district may direct. The flag must be displayed within the principal rooms of the school building at all other times while school is in session.

**Subd. 2. School boards to provide flags and staffs.**

The board must provide the flag for each of the school buildings in their districts, together with a suitable staff to display the flag outside of the school building and proper arrangement to display the flag in the building, and a suitable receptacle for the safekeeping of the flag when not in use.

## MINN. SECRETARY OF STATE NOTIFICATION PRECINCT POLITICAL PARTY CAUCUSES TO BE HELD STATEWIDE FEB. 7

Precinct caucuses are meetings organized by Minnesota's political parties to begin the process of selecting candidates for the 2012 election and policy positions to shape the party platform. Caucuses are a great opportunity to engage directly in the political process at the "grassroots" level.

Precinct caucuses are open to the public and participation is encouraged by the political parties. In order to vote, offer resolutions or become a delegate at a precinct caucus, attendees must be eligible to vote in the 2012 election, live in the precinct and be in general agreement with the principles of the political party. This year political parties will conduct a straw poll to gauge caucus attendees' presidential candidate preference.

The Republican, Independence, Green, Democratic-Farmer-Labor, and Constitution Parties will hold caucuses on Tuesday, February 7, 2012 at 7 p.m. The Libertarian and Grassroots Parties will not hold caucuses in 2012.

A precinct caucus brochure that provides general information about the upcoming caucuses as well as contact information for each of Minnesota's six political parties is available online at: <http://www.sos.state.mn.us/index.aspx?page=886>.

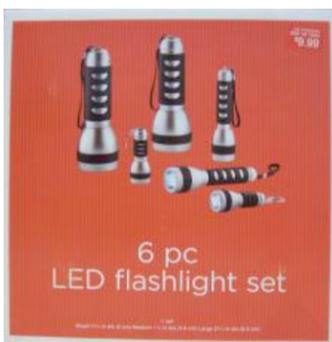
### **Caucus Finder: The Online Way to Locate Your Precinct Caucus**

Caucus Finder is an online application that assists Minnesotans in locating the major party precinct caucus meeting of their choice. Caucus Finder is scheduled to be available in mid-January, and will be linked to this office's homepage at: [www.mnvotes.org](http://www.mnvotes.org).

## U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION NOTIFICATION

### TARGET RECALLS LED FLASHLIGHT SETS DUE TO FIRE AND BURN HAZARDS

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, in cooperation with the firm named below, today announced a voluntary recall of the following consumer product. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed. It is illegal to resell or attempt to resell a recalled consumer product.



Name of Product:  
6-pc. LED  
Flashlight Sets

Units: About  
55,000

Importer: Target  
Corporation, of  
Minneapolis,  
Minn.

Hazard: When  
turned on, the

flashlights can heat up, smoke or melt, posing fire and burn hazards.

Incidents/Injuries: Target has received reports of four incidents with the flashlights, including two minor burn injuries to consumer's hands.

Description: This recall involves 6-pc. LED Flashlight Sets. They are made of silver plastic with black rubber around the handle and light base. The flashlight sets have UPC code 490021010049 printed on the back of the package. They were sold in sets of six, including two small flashlights measuring about 3 inches long, two medium flashlights about 6 inches long and two large flashlights about 7 1/2 inches long.

Sold exclusively at: Target stores nationwide from October 2010 through December 2011 for about \$10 per set.

Manufactured in: China. Consumers should immediately stop using the flashlights and return them to any Target store for a full refund.

Consumer Contact: For additional information, contact Target at (800) 440-0680 between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m. CT Monday through Friday, or visit the firm's website at [www.target.com](http://www.target.com)

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is still interested in receiving incident or injury reports that are either directly related to this product recall or involve a different hazard with the same product. Please tell us about your experience with the product on [www.saferproducts.gov](http://www.saferproducts.gov)

Under federal law, it is illegal to attempt to sell or resell this or any other recalled product.

To report a dangerous product or a product-related injury, go online to: [www.saferproducts.gov](http://www.saferproducts.gov), call CPSC's Hotline at (800) 638-2772 or teletypewriter at (800) 638-8270 for the hearing impaired. Consumers can obtain this news release and product safety information at [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov). To join a free e-mail subscription list, please go to <https://www.cpsc.gov/cpsclist.aspx>.

## LINO LAKES WILL BE LEASING OUT SPACE AT ITS CIVIC CENTER COMPLEX

After 13 years, the City of Lino Lakes is losing dozens of adorable little tenants who occupied a part of the Lino Lakes Civic Complex on Town Center Parkway. The Centennial School District Early Childhood Family Education Center (ECFE) will be moving out of its space between the city hall and the police station at the end of the school year. City employees will miss the energy and laughter of the children and their parents who used the facility, as well as the school district staff who they got to know as friends.

The City is seeking a new user for the 10,000 sq. ft. facility. With classrooms, large room play areas, a reception and office area, and child sized bathrooms, the space is readymade for another type of child care use. Private or nonprofit child care centers, church run daycares, or charter schools may find this first class facility just right for their needs. With little modification, the facility could also easily accommodate a business needing quality office space in a prime location right off the 35W/Lake Drive interchange. Employee morale would soar in this beautiful setting with fabulous hiking and biking trails right outside the door.

If you or someone you know is looking for office space or a facility for daycare, call Mary Divine at 651-982-2423 or email [mary.divine@ci.lino-lakes.mn.us](mailto:mary.divine@ci.lino-lakes.mn.us) for more information.

## BLAINE FIRE DEPT. RESPONDS TO 98 CALLS IN DECEMBER

- 16 Co detector malfunction
- 1 chimney fire
- 2 CO incidents
- 1 cooking fire, contained
- 20 false alarms
- 6 good intent
- 6 lift assist
- 5 medical assist
- 3 mutual aid given / received
- 1 outside fires
- 17 personal injury incidents
- 3 smoke removal
- 1 structure fire
- 1 vehicle fires
- 15 other
- 5 Recess Visits
- 2 Safety Presentation
- 5 Santa Parade
- 3 Station Tours
- 1 Other

### Upcoming Events

- Friends & Family CPR Tuesday February 28, 1P/6P held at Mounds View Community Center, 5394 Edgewood; This "Take Heart Minnesota" class covers adult CPR, this class is intended for those who simply wish to know the skills of CPR but do not need a credential. Each class meets for 1 hour and is free to attend.
- Adult CPR Thursday January 19, and February 16 class held at Station Three, 11920 Ulysses in Blaine.

Contact Blaine Park & Recreation at 763-785-6164 to register.

## Anoka County RECORD

Vol. 1 No. 9 Jan. 19, 2012

**A bi-weekly free publication  
published by Anoka County Record LLC**

Available by subscription; sent 1st Class  
U.S. Mail \$50.00/year  
(payable by check or money order)

**P.O. Box 21014  
Columbia Heights MN 55421-0014  
(763) 220-0411**

[editor@anokacountyrecord.com](mailto:editor@anokacountyrecord.com)

**The Anoka County Record  
is also available on our website:  
[anokacountyrecord.com](http://anokacountyrecord.com)**

### NEXT ISSUES:

**FEB. 2 FEB. 16**  
**(Deadline Jan. 30) (Deadline Feb. 13)**



## FIRST-CLASS LETTERS HIKED TO 45 CENTS U.S. POSTAL SERVICE RATES TO GO UP JAN. 22

The cost to mail a first-class letter will go up a penny Jan. 22 to 45 cents. The last increase for first-class stamps was in May 2009.

Postcards will be going up three cents to 32 cents; additional ounces for first-class letters will remain unchanged at the present 20 cents.

Letters to Canada or Mexico, up to one ounce in weight, will increase five cents to 85 cents, and there will be a seven-cent increase to letters going to other international destinations.

Other changes however will be advantageous to consumers, such as an option of renting a post office box for three months instead of the previous minimum of six months; and delivery confirmation will be included free with many parcel products since the deliveries can be tracked by the consumer on-line.

While actual percentage price increases for various products and services varies, the overall average price increase across all mailing services is capped by law at 2.1 percent, the rate of inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index.

For business mailers, the changes may be good news for First-Class Mail Presort mailers since the second ounce for presorted letters will be free. "This gives companies expanded opportunities to advertise new services and products to their customers as part of bill and statement mailings," said Paul Vogel, president and chief marketing/sales officer.

### FISCAL YEAR 2011 RESULTS IN \$5.1 BILLION LOSS

The U.S. Postal Service ended its 2011 fiscal year (Oct. 1, 2010 – Sept. 30, 2011) with a net loss of \$5.1 billion. The year-end loss would have been approximately \$10.6 billion had it not been for passage of legislation that postponed a congressionally-mandated payment of \$5.5 billion to pre-fund retiree health benefits.

USPS delivers nearly forty percent of the world's mail, yet 2011 mail volume declined by 3 billion pieces, or 1.7 percent, from 2010. The Postal Service's largest and most profitable product, First-Class Mail, continued its annual decline, from \$34.2 billion in 2010 to \$32.2 billion in 2011 (5.8 percent), which dwarfed continued growth in its more competitive products, packages and Standard Mail.

USPS Shipping Services revenue, which includes Priority Mail and Express Mail, increased \$530 million in 2011 (6.3%). The increase in Shipping Services revenue was driven by strong growth in the Parcel Select and Parcel Return Services, due to increased mailings of packages, as customers continued to use the Internet more often to purchase products. Revenue from Standard Mail increased by \$495 million (2.9 percent) on a volume increase of 2 billion pieces (2.6 percent). Operating revenue for FY 2011 of \$65.7 billion was below the FY 2010 figure of \$67.1 billion. Operating expenses for FY 2011 were \$70.6 billion compared to \$75.4 in 2010.

"The Postal Service can become profitable again if Congress passes comprehensive legislation to provide us with a more flexible business model so we can respond better to a changing marketplace," said Postmaster General and CEO Patrick Donahoe. "To return to profitability we must reduce our annual costs by \$20 billion by the end of 2015. We continue to take aggressive cost-cutting actions in areas under our control and urgently need Congress to do its part to get us the rest of the way there."

Since 2001, the Postal Service has reduced work hours by 28 percent, while delivering to almost 14 million additional addresses.

"The continuing and inevitable electronic migration of First-Class Mail, which provides approximately 49 percent of our revenue, underscores the need to streamline our infrastructure and make changes to our business model," said Chief Financial Officer Joe Corbett. "Since peaking at 213 billion pieces in 2006, our volume has continued to decline each year."

### NEW FEATURES AND PRICING FOR PACKAGE SHIPPING

Postal Service customers will be able ship a box for overnight delivery anywhere in the country for one price regardless of weight (up to 70 lbs) starting Jan. 22, 2012. That's when the Express Mail Flat Rate Box debuts and new Shipping Services prices take effect.

"The introduction of the Express Mail Flat Rate Box leverages the success of our Priority Mail Flat Rate advertising campaign and further positions the Postal Service as the best value in the shipping business," said Paul Vogel, president and chief marketing/sales officer. The new box, priced at \$39.95, for domestic mailing, will be available for customers who need overnight service for items larger than what can be placed in an Express Mail Flat Rate Envelope.

Other Express Mail changes include lower retail prices for half- and one-pound packages and commercial packages to local and close-in areas. The new retail price for the Express Mail Flat Rate Envelope is \$18.95.

The overall price change for all Shipping Services is 4.6 percent, with Priority Mail prices increasing an average 3.1 percent and Express Mail prices increasing an average 3.4 percent. The Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) will review the prices before they become effective Jan. 22, 2012, the same day Postal Service Mailing Services prices take effect. Today's Shipping Services price filing will be available on the PRC website at [www.prc.gov](http://www.prc.gov) and the new Mailing Services prices are available at <http://pe.usps.com>.

New domestic retail pricing for Priority Mail Flat Rate products include:

- Small box — \$5.35
- Medium box — \$11.35
- Large box — \$15.45
- Large APO/FPO/DPO box — \$13.45
- Regular envelope — \$5.15
- Legal-size and Padded envelope — \$5.30

Commercial base Priority Mail pricing will offer an average 6.8 percent discount off retail prices for customers using online and other authorized postage payment methods. A new, larger Regional Rate Box C (12" x 12" x 15") will be added to the existing two sizes. If any of the three Regional Rate Boxes is entered at retail, a 75-cent additional charge will be applied.

### THUMBNAIL HISTORY OF FIRST-CLASS MAIL POSTAGE RATES

AUGUST 1958 — 4c (POSTCARDS 3c)

JANUARY 1963 — 5c (POSTCARDS 4c)

JANUARY 1968 — 6c (POSTCARDS 5c)

MAY 1971 — 8c (POSTCARDS 6c)

MARCH 1974 — 10c (POSTCARDS 8c)

DECEMBER 1975 — 13c (POSTCARDS 9c)

MAY 1977 — DOMESTIC AIR MAIL FIRST-CLASS LETTER RATE DISCONTINUED

MAY 1978 — 15c (POSTCARDS 10c)

MARCH 1981 — 18c (POSTCARDS 12c)

NOVEMBER 1981 — 20c (POSTCARDS 13c)

FEBRUARY 1985 — 22c (POSTCARDS 14c)

JANUARY 1995 — 32c

JUNE 2002 — 37c (POSTCARDS 23c)

JANUARY 2006 — 39c

FEBRUARY 2007 — "FOREVER" STAMPS GO ON SALE

JANUARY 2012 — 45c (POSTCARDS 30c)

Source: <http://www.akdart.com/postrate.html>

Also new for 2012 is Package Intercept for commercial mailers, available through a customer interface on Business Customer Gateway. For \$10.95 plus Priority Mail postage, customers can request mail be intercepted before final delivery is attempted to the initial delivery address. The shipment can be returned to sender, held for pick up at a Post Office, or redirected to an alternate address. Intercepted packages are shipped using Priority Mail.

### UNION NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUING

The Postal Service and two of its major unions have agreed to extend separate labor contract negotiations until Jan. 20, 2012. Contracts with the National Association of Letter Carriers, AFL-CIO (NALC) and the National Postal Mail Handlers Union, AFL-CIO (NPMHU) expired at midnight Sun., Nov. 20, 2011. The extension will allow the parties to continue to work on the important economic, health care, workplace and other contractual issues being discussed.

The NALC represents more than 195,000 employees who work as letter carriers delivering mail primarily in urban areas. The NPMHU represents more than 46,000 employees who work in mail processing plants and Post Offices. Respectively, wages and benefits for NALC- and NPMHU-represented employees exceeded \$15.7 billion and \$3.5 billion last year. Should negotiations fail, a process begins which could result in a third party determining contract terms and work rules for more than 240,000 employees. Unlike the private sector, when negotiations come to an impasse, postal employees are not permitted to strike as Congress has designated the Postal Service as an essential service to the nation. An arbitrator determines the final outcome and is not legally required to consider the Postal Service's financial obligations when rendering a decision.

**ZIP+4 (introduced in 1983) was supposed to make mail delivery faster and hold down costs. Is delivery any faster? Since nine-digit ZIP codes were introduced, there have been twelve rate increases.**

# Anoka County GOVERNMENT MEETINGS

## Anoka County Board

Anoka County Government Center  
2100 3rd Ave  
Anoka, MN 55303-5024  
Ph.: 763-323-5700  
www.co.anoka.mn.us

**Mon. Jan. 23**  
Library Board — 5:30 pm, Library Services Bldg. next to Northtown Library

**Tues. Jan. 24**  
Anoka County Board (Mgmt Cmte 8:30 am); Board meeting — 9:30 am, Rm 705, ACGC

## Andover

Andover City Hall  
1685 Crosstown Blvd NW  
Andover, MN 55304  
Ph: 763-755-5100  
www.ci.andover.mn.us

**Thurs. Jan. 19 & Feb. 2**  
Parks Comm. — 7 pm

**Tues. Feb. 7**  
City Council — 7 pm

## Anoka

Anoka City Hall  
2015 1st Ave. N.  
Anoka, MN 55303-2270  
Ph: 763-576-2700  
www.ci.anoka.mn.us

**Mon. Jan. 23**  
City Council (work session) — 5 pm

**Mon. Jan. 30**  
City Council "Goals" session — 6:30 pm, Greenhaven

## Bethel

Bethel City Hall  
23820 Dewey St. / PO Box 64  
Bethel, MN 55005  
Ph: 763-434-4366  
www.bethelmn.govoffice2.com

No information available at press time

## Blaine

Blaine City Hall  
10801 Town Square Dr NE  
Blaine, MN 55449  
Ph: 763-784-6700  
www.ci.blaine.mn.us

**Thurs. Jan. 19 & Feb. 2**  
City Council — 6:30 pm (Workshop); 7:30 pm (meeting)

**Tues. Jan. 24**  
Park Board — 7 pm

## Centerville

Centerville City Hall  
1880 Main St  
Centerville, MN 55038  
Ph: 651-429-3232  
centervillemn.com

**Wed. Jan. 25**  
City Council — 6:30 pm

**Wed. Feb. 1**  
Parks Comm. — 6:30 pm

## Circle Pines

Circle Pines City Hall  
200 Civic Heights Circle  
Circle Pines, MN 55014  
Ph: 763-784-5898  
www.ci.circle-pines.mn.us

**Wed. Jan. 18**  
Utilities Comm. — 4:30 pm

**Mon. Jan. 23**  
Planning Comm. — 7 pm

**Tues. Jan. 24**  
City Council — 7 pm

## Columbia Heights

Columbia Heights City Hall  
590 40th Ave NE  
Columbia Heights, MN 55421  
Ph: 763-706-3600  
www.ci.columbia-heights.mn.us

**Thurs. Jan. 19**  
Charter Comm. — 7 pm

**Mon. Jan. 23**  
City Council — 7 pm

**Tues. Jan. 24**  
HRA — 7 pm, Parkview Villa

**Wed. Jan. 25**  
Park Rec. Comm. — 5:30 pm, Murzyn Hall

**Wed. Feb. 1**  
Library Board — 6:30 pm, Library

## Columbus

Columbus City Hall  
16319 Kettle River Blvd.  
Columbus, MN 55025  
Ph: 651-464-3120  
www.ci.columbus.mn.us

**Thurs. Jan. 19**  
Park Board — 6:30 pm

**Wed. Jan. 25**  
City Council — 7 pm

**Wed. Feb. 1**  
Planning Comm. — 7 pm

## Coon Rapids

Coon Rapids City Hall  
11155 Robinson Dr.  
Coon Rapids, MN 55433  
Ph: 763-755-2880  
www.coonrapidsmn.gov

**Thurs. Jan. 19**  
Planning Comm. — 6:30 pm  
Historical Comm. — 7:30 pm

**Thurs. Feb. 2**  
Bd of Adjustment/Appeals — 6:30 pm

**Wed. Feb. 8**  
City Council — 7 pm

## East Bethel

East Bethel City Hall  
2241 - 221st Avenue NE  
East Bethel, MN 55011  
Ph: 763-367-7840  
eastbethel.govoffice.com

**Wed. Jan. 18 & Feb. 1**  
City Council — 7:30 pm

**Tues. Jan. 24**  
Planning Comm. — 7 pm

## Fridley

Fridley City Hall  
6431 University Ave NE  
Fridley, MN 55432  
Ph: 763-571-3450  
www.ci.fridley.mn.us

**Mon. Jan. 23**  
City Council — pre-agenda 7 pm; 7:30 pm mtg

**Wed. Feb. 1**  
Appeals Comm. — 7 pm

**Thurs. Feb. 2**  
HRA — 7 pm

## Ham Lake

Ham Lake City Hall  
15544 Central Ave NE  
Ham Lake, MN 55304  
Ph: 763-434-9555  
www.ci.ham-lake.mn.us  
Hours: M-Th 7 AM - 4:30 PM  
Fri: 7 AM-12 NOON

**Mon. Jan. 23**  
Planning Comm. — 6 pm

**Mon. Feb. 6**  
City Council — 6 pm

## Hilltop

Hilltop City Hall  
4555 Jackson St. NE  
Hilltop, MN 55421  
Ph: 763-571-2023

City Council — 1st & 3rd Mon., 7 pm

## Lexington

Lexington City Hall  
9180 Lexington Av  
Lexington, MN 55014  
Ph: 763-784-2792  
www.ci.lexington.mn.us

**Thurs. Jan. 19 & Feb. 2**  
City Council — 7 pm

## Lino Lakes

Lino Lakes City Hall  
600 Town Center Pkwy  
Lino Lakes, MN 55014  
Ph: 651-982-2400  
www.ci.lino-lakes.mn.us

**Mon. Jan. 23**

City Council (work session & mtg) — 5:30 pm

**Wed. Jan. 25**  
Environmental Board — 6:30 pm

**Thurs. Feb. 2**  
EDAC — 8 am

**Mon. Feb. 6**  
City Council work session — 5:30 pm

## Linwood Township

Linwood Town Hall  
22817 Typo Creek Dr. NE  
Linwood, MN 55079  
Ph: 651-462-2812  
linwoodtownship.org

**Mon. Jan. 23**  
Parks & Rec. Comm. — 7 pm

**Tues. Jan. 24**  
Town Board — 6 pm

## Nowthen

Nowthen City Hall  
19800 Nowthen Blvd.  
Elk River, MN 55330  
Ph: 763-441-1347  
www.nowthenmn.govoffice2.com

**Mayor's Saturday hours at city hall**  
2nd Saturdays — 9 am

## Oak Grove

Oak Grove City Hall  
19900 Nightingale St. NW  
Oak Grove, MN 55011  
Ph: 763-404-7000  
oakgrove.govoffice.com

**2nd and last Monday of month**  
City Council — 7 pm (EDA 8 pm on last Mon)

**3rd Wednesday**  
Parks Comm. — 7 pm

## Ramsey

**3rd Thursday**  
Planning Comm. — 7 pm  
Ramsey Municipal Center  
7550 Sunwood Dr. NW  
Ramsey, MN 55303  
Ph: 763-427-1410  
Fax: 763-427-5543  
www.ci.ramsey.mn.us

**Tues. Jan. 24**  
City Council (worksession) — 5:30 pm; mtg 7 pm  
HRA — follows City Council mtg

**Thurs. Feb. 2**  
Planning Comm. — 7 pm

**Mon. Feb. 6**  
EPB — 6:30 pm

## St. Francis

St. Francis City Hall  
23340 Cree St. NW  
St. Francis, MN 55070  
Ph: 763-753-2630  
stfrancismn.org

Hours: M-Th 7AM-5:30 PM  
(Closed Fri)

**Meetings held at ISD #15 offices**  
4115 Ambassador Blvd NW

City Council  
1st & 3rd Mondays — 6 pm

Planning Comm.  
3rd Wednesday — 7 pm

## Spring Lake Park

Spring Lake Park City Hall  
1301 81st Ave NE  
Spring Lake Park, MN 55432  
Ph: 763-784-6491  
www.ci.spring-lake-park.mn.us

City Council  
1st & 3rd Mondays — 7 pm

## HAVE A LETTER? AN ANNOUNCEMENT?

Send them to us:  
editor@anokacountyrecord.com

## NEXT ISSUE THURS. FEB. 2

**NOTE: All meetings listed on this page are subject to change of time or date — call ahead to verify**

**FREE TAX SERVICE**  
**COON RAPIDS CIVIC CENTER**  
**TUESDAYS & WEDNESDAYS**  
**8:30 A.M. – NOON**  
**February 1 - April 11, 2012**  
For Seniors, Disabled Adults or Households with Low to Moderate Income  
**FREE, NO APPOINTMENTS!**  
**FIRST COME, FIRST SERVE**

## Notice for City of Andover National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Public Meeting

The City of Andover is required to comply with the latest State storm water quality regulations. The City is authorized to discharge storm water into water bodies as long as it meets the permit requirements as administered by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). The City accomplishes this by a series of Best Management Practices (BMP's). These are found in the City's Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program (SWPPP). A public informational meeting will be held during the City Council meeting, 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, February 7th at Andover City Hall.

**Meeting Components:**  
The public will have an opportunity to make oral and/or written comments on the adequacy of the City's program. To request a copy of the City's SWPPP contact City Hall or visit the City's website at www.andovermn.gov

The City will consider comments received and include them in its Annual Report to the MPCA.

## NOW TAKING ORDERS ANOKA CONSERVATION DISTRICT ANNUAL TREE AND SHRUB SALE

The Anoka Conservation District offers a wide variety of trees and other native planting stock, including black cherry trees, mixed oak trees, red maple trees, and white pine trees. Most are approximately 18" to 24" in height and take the form of bare root seedlings. They may be purchased in bundles of ten for \$16, or twenty-five for \$29. There is an additional cost of \$1 for online orders.

If you are interested, visit the Anoka Conservation District website at www.AnokaSWCD.org. Once there, click on tree and shrub sale listed on the bulletin board. The website contains links to detailed descriptions and photographs of each of the varieties being offered. If you need advice regarding the kinds of trees and shrubs to plant in your particular situation or need planting directions you may talk directly to Anoka Conservation District staff by calling 763-434-2030.

You may purchase these trees and shrubs in three ways. Call and have an order form mailed to you. Go to the website, print a form and send it with payment. Or, use the online payment and ordering option. **Orders will be accepted until Friday, April 13 and will be available for pickup Saturday April 28 at the Anoka County Fairgrounds in the morning. A reminder post card will be mailed in mid-April with pickup details.** Please order early to guarantee availability.

**SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

**Anoka-Hennepin ISD #11**

11299 Hanson Blvd NW  
Coon Rapids MN 55433  
Ph.: (763) 506-1000  
http://www.anoka.k12.mn.us

**Mon. Jan. 23 & Feb. 27**  
School Board — 6:30 pm  
**Mon. Feb. 13**  
School Board (work session) — 6 pm

**Centennial ISD #12**

4707 North Rd  
Circle Pines, MN 55014  
Ph.: (763) 792-6000  
isd12.org

**Mon. Jan. 23 & Feb. 6**  
School Board (work session) — 5:30 pm

**Columbia Heights ISD #13**

1440 49th Ave NE  
Columbia Heights, MN 55421  
Ph.: (763) 528-4436  
columbia.mn.schoolwebpages.com

School Board Meetings  
**Tues. Jan. 24** — 7 pm

**Elk River Area ISD #728**

815 Hwy 10  
Elk River, MN 55330  
Ph.: (763) 241-3400  
School Board mtgs 2nd and 4th  
Monday, “generally at” Elk River City  
Hall, council chambers, 13065 Orono  
Pkwy. — 7 pm  
“Listening Sessions” with public, 2nd  
Mondays — 6:30 pm

**Forest Lake ISD #831**

6100 N 210th St  
Forest Lake, MN 55025  
Ph.: (651) 982-8100  
School Board meetings: held, with a  
few exceptions, at 7 p.m. on the first  
Thursday of each month in the District  
Office Boardroom, 6100 N. 210th St.,  
Forest Lake. *Listening Sessions:* Resi-  
dents are invited to speak informally  
with representatives of the board, prior  
to regular meetings, at 6 p.m.

**Fridley ISD #14**

6000 W Moore Lake Dr  
Fridley, MN 55432  
Ph.: (763) 502-5000  
fridley.k12.mn.us  
School Board mtgs held at Fridley City  
Hall, 6431 University Ave NE; Work  
Session — 5:30 pm, Public Comment  
— 7 pm; Meeting — 7:30 pm  
**Next meeting: Tues. Feb. 21**

**St. Francis ISD #15**

4115 Ambassador Blvd  
St. Francis, MN 55070  
Ph.: (763) 753-7040  
stfrancis.k12.mn.us  
School Board mtgs 2nd & 4th  
Mondays 6:30 pm  
Public comment; Meeting 7 pm

**Spring Lake Park ISD #16**

1415 81st Ave NE  
Spring Lake Park, MN 55432  
Ph.: (763) 786-5570  
School Board mtgs 2nd Tuesday 7 pm  
4th Tuesday scheduled as needed

**White Bear Lake ISD #624**

4855 Bloom Ave  
White Bear Lake, MN 55110-5418  
Ph.: (651) 407-7501  
whitebear.k12.mn.us  
School Board mtgs  
**Mon. Jan. 23** — 5:30 pm (work  
session)

**Anoka Conservation  
District**

1318 McKay Dr NE #300  
Ham Lake, MN 55304  
Ph.: (763) 434-2030  
anokaswcd.org  
Schedule not available at press time

NOTE: All meetings listed on this  
page are subject to change of time or  
date — call ahead to verify

**DEC. 31 MN GOP STATE CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
REMARKS OF NEW MN. REPUBLICAN PARTY CHAIR**

Lino Lakes resident and political consultant Pat Shortridge was elected chairman of the Republican Party of Minnesota at their State Central Committee meeting Dec. 31 in St. Cloud (see ACR, 1/5/12). We publish his remarks here:

Thanks very much ladies and gentlemen, thank you David (6th Congressional District chairman David FitzSimons) and Kurt (Daudt, MN House Representative, District 17A) for the kind words and thank you all for coming out on the last day of 2011, to inaugurate 2012 — it is going to be a good year for Republicans. I appreciate the commitment you’ve shown to this party; it’s easy to be a stalwart, and a regular, and doing everything you can for your party when times are good, but when times are tough, it’s really hearten-ing to see so many people out here fighting for the party they put their hearts, soul, blood and sweat and tears into, so thank you.

One of President Reagan’s favorite stories was the one about the little boy who came downstairs on Christmas morning only to find a big pile of manure under the tree. And that boy, rather than being disappointed, excitedly grabbed his shovel, started digging and said, ‘oh boy! a pile of manure this big, there must be a pony around somewhere!’

Now the skeptics and the naysayers would say that we would have to be as wildly and naively optimistic as that boy to think that 2012 is going to be a good year for Republicans. But I’ll tell why I think we should be very optimistic about the future . . .

Our vision, our ideas, our values and our principles are stronger than ever; we are winning more adherence than ever, whether that’s been at the ballot box in 2010, as we took majorities in the house and senate, and elected Chip Cravaack in the 8th Congressional district . . . and whether its in the legislature where thanks to our Republican house and senate members, we held the line against Governor Dayton’s tax increases and we now have an over \$800 million budget surplus. When we stand up for our principles, we win and we are successful, both in the lives of the state and our kids, and politically at the ballot box.

And I’ll say to you my optimism comes from the fact that the core of our party is strong — we have some management, structural and organizational issues that we can fix. And fix them we will starting this afternoon and for the next 10 months and for the next 10 years, so we grow this party to be the long term governing majority in Minnesota, so we save this state from decline.

Our friends on the other side have some much more fundamental problems — their core values and beliefs don’t work. The President’s approval rating has declined. The Congressional approval rating has declined. Obama Care, the stimulus, the rest of the failed liberal agenda in Washing-ton; Governor Dayton’s agenda, whether it’s higher taxes or forced unionization of child care workers, is being rejected by people all over the state.

We have the ability to build and seize a new majority in Minnesota that we build for the long term. They can’t fix core fundamental problems because it’s who they are as a party;

I stand before you today as someone who wants to come in and lead this party for the next year, to serve out the remainder of this term, to come in for no reason other than to make good decisions, to get us moving on the right track, to fix the structural and systemic problems that we have, to balance our budget, pay down our debt, but even more importantly: get our party on a strong foundation so we move forward and win elections in 2012.

While we always have to focus on the internal workings of the party, our bottom line is we have to focus on the Number One job which is moving forward to win.

Look, we have to be guided by three things:

We have to persuade Minnesotans that we’re right and the other team’s wrong.  
We have to win at the ballot box in 2012, our majorities in the house and senate, reelect our members of Congress

and pick up new opportunities whether it’s in Congress or the United States Senate. To do that, we have to focus on helping those people pass agendas, because we’re not just about being right, we’re about changing the fundamental direction of this state, whether it’s a school board, a county commission, a city council, the state legislature or the United States Congress.

And we do that by doing a few basic things well in our party. We have to get back to the blocking and tackling that makes us so successful and lets our guys win at the polls. We have to be the experts at voter identification, targeting, and list development for our local party units and our candidates. We have to be expert at delivering messages that help Minnesotans understand why our vision, values and solutions are better than the other side’s.

It’s not enough to say no, we have to explain why we’re right. And finally, we have to keep on the other side and hold them accountable. We have to hold Democrats accountable for their votes and their vision.

As we move, reform and restructure, and pay off our bills at the Republican Party, I’m not running just to change the names on the door at party headquarters; it’s about reinvigorating and galvanizing our activists, our BPOU’s, our congressional districts, so that we have thousands and thousands of people who have a stake in this party and who care deeply about it, to restore their trust and their confidence in what we are doing; to let our donors know that their money is going to be spent wisely, no matter how much they give; to present a clear, credible and consistent plan for how we move forward together — a plan that’s not my plan but that we all agree on — and it’s just not about getting it done fast, we all want to make decisions yesterday, but it’s about getting it done right, whether we are paying off our bills or moving forward or appointing new officers to party positions.

Let me close with this:

We are going to confront these things unified and together as we have always done.

We are going to say a prayer, we’re going to roll up our sleeves, we are going to deal with things honestly and straight forwardly and respectfully as we move forward.

And we’re going to always realize we are in this for things larger than ourselves — that we care deeply about limited government, personal freedom, a strong America, traditional values, rights that come from God, and liberties that are guaranteed by our Constitution.

I ask for your vote and your support today so we can move this party forward and let us remain the long term governing majority in this state to preserve the best of it for ourselves and our children.

**NORTH METRO TELECOMMUNICATIONS  
COMMISSION ANNOUNCES 2012  
MEETING SCHEDULE**

*Operations Committee* meetings will be held the Tuesday, before the first Wednesday of each month, at the North Metro Community Television facility, at 12520 Polk St. NE, Blaine, MN 55434, beginning at 10:30 a.m.: Jan. 3, Jan. 31, Mar. 6, Apr. 3, May 1, June 5, July 3, July 31, Sept. 4, Oct. 2, Nov. 6, Dec. 4.

*Executive Committee* meetings will be held at 6 p.m. at the same location on these dates: Jan. 4, Feb. 1, Mar. 7, Apr. 4, May 2, June 6, July 11, Aug. 1, Sept. 5, Oct. 3, Nov. 7, Dec. 5.

*Cable Commission* meetings are held at Spring Lake Park City Hall at 6 p.m. on these dates: Jan. 18, Feb. 15, Mar. 21, Apr. 18, May 16, June 20, July 18, Aug. 15, Sept. 19, Oct. 17, Nov. 21, Dec. 19.

**JOB POSTING: CITY OF COON RAPIDS PART-TIME ARTS COMMISSION EVENTS ASSISTANT**

City of Coon Rapids is accepting applications for part-time Arts Commission Events Assistant. This position assists with preparation and coordination of Arts Commission activities. Proven experience with public relations, coordinating community events and managing cash receipts required. Previous experience with municipal or advisory commissions preferred. Applicants must be 18 years of age or older. Approximately four evening hours/month January-April, four-five hours/week for summer concerts, and occasional weekend hours as needed for additional events. Starting salary range: \$11-12/hr. DOQ. To apply, call (763) 767-6447. City application must be completed and on file no later than 4:30 p.m., on Monday, January 23, 2012.EOE/

Community  
**North Metro Home & Garden Show**  
Saturday, February 25, 2012 • 9:00 am to 2:00 pm  
National Sports Center’s Schwan Center, Blaine, MN  
www.northmetrohomeandgarden.com Find us on Facebook!

