

Cologne Connection

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Legacy Grant funds requested City, County supporting Benton Lake improvements

During the past two years, the City of Cologne has hosted or participated in discussions about Benton Lake water quality issues. Working with the Benton Lake Watershed Conservancy, the City, Carver County Soil & Water and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) have been identifying water quality issues and researching ways to improve the lake so that the greater community will be able to enjoy this natural resource.



As a result of these meetings, Carver County staff recently submitted a Conservation Partners Legacy grant application to the Minnesota DNR. The DNR administers this program, which awards matching grants to nonprofit organizations (including government entities) to help restore, protect or enhance prairies, wetlands, forests, or habitat for fish, game or wildlife in Minnesota. Benton Lake meets that criteria, and the grant application details a \$63,000 project — requiring a 10 percent local match — to help improve the lake.

If the County receives grant funds for Benton Lake, the project will include the:

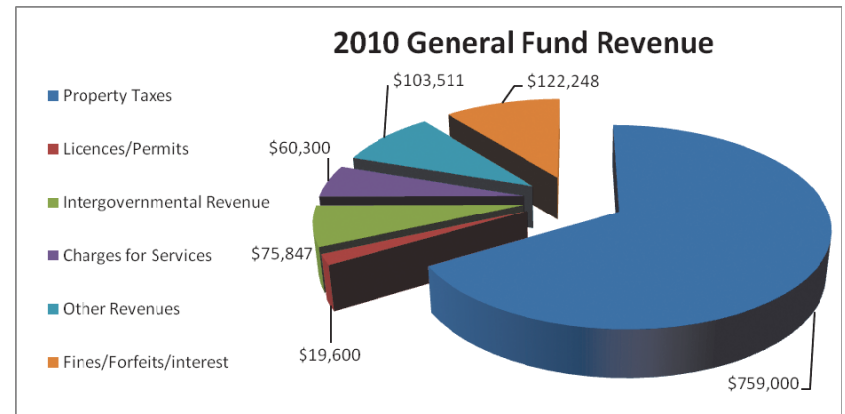
1. Installation of a Minimal Velocity Fish Barrier to prohibit rough fish from entering the lake from downstream;
2. Removal of rough fish from Benton Lake; and
3. Introduction of a new



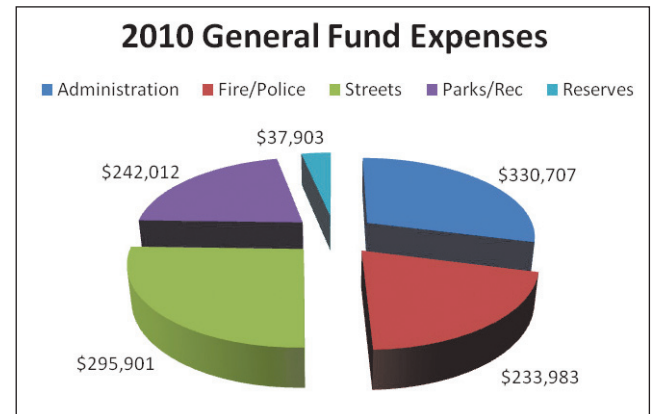
Representatives from the City, County, DNR and Benton Lake Conservancy are working to improve the lake's quality.

Lake Benton • continued on page 2

Reflects loss of state aid City preps 2010 budget



The City of Cologne's preliminary 2010 General Fund Budget is \$1,140,506, down 18 percent from the 2009 budget. Two major changes from 2009 include the additional loss of Local Government Aid (-\$70,171) from the State of Minnesota and a reduction in planned capital purchases from 2009 - 2010 (-\$173,499). Street maintenance was increased \$11,000 to \$60,000 in 2010, allowing for more seal coating of streets and to stay on the City's maintenance schedule. A total of \$10,000 was maintained from the 2009



budget and moved into the 2010 budget to help fund Benton Lake water quality improvements. The general property tax levy was increased \$35,000 (5 percent) to \$759,000. The increase was for scheduled bond payments on the Cologne Community Center and community trail system. For more information, call the City offices at (952) 466-2064.

Cologne completes major projects in 2009

It has been another busy year in Cologne, as several community improvement projects were completed.

■ The Village Parkway/County Road 36 railroad crossing allows safe north-south access throughout the community from County Road 36 to Village Parkway.

■ The Benton Lake trail lighting was completed by Xcel Energy in September. The five new olive green street lights provide additional light to what was a very dark

section of the heavily used trail along the east side of Benton Lake.

■ The County Road 36 trail, along with park trails in Meadow Park and Marion Fields, are finished with just a few punch list items left. The County Road 36 trail is the second major trail project (following the Benton Lake Trail) and completes the trail connection of the community on



Benton Trail lights



TC&W Railroad crossing ribbon-cutting

Projects • continued on page 2

Get together at the CCC

Star ratings
CCC customers
very satisfied

And the surveys say ... customers are very satisfied with the Cologne Community Center (CCC). In post-event surveys completed by CCC customers, the facility has received an overall ranking of 4.6 out of a possible 5 stars. People who have booked the CCC for large events are asked to rate it in six categories ranging from the facility, staff and lease to caterers, alcohol and overall satisfaction. Each category includes additional questions about specific CCC features. Results from the surveys help the City Council address areas that may need improvement. For example, alcohol service was the lowest-rated category in 2008 and, in 2009, showed a 25-percent improvement to reach 4 stars. The CCC is quickly becoming known as the premier facility at which to host social events in the region. Customer survey comments include: "We were impressed with the CCC, and we get great comments about our wedding day," "We can't wait to come back again for another wedding" and "It was fantastic and guests were very impressed with the facility." This is



great news for the CCC and the community.

Seating up to 400 available

The Cologne Community Center is available for a wide variety of social, meeting and business functions — including weddings, anniversary celebrations, special events and more. The Center can host meetings of 16 attendees in its conference room, groups of 75 in the community room and up to 400 people in the reception hall. The CCC's amenities include a great sound/PA system, variable lighting, retractable stage, serving kitchen, round-table setting and hardwood dance floor. Book the CCC today — and encourage family and friends to check out the Cologne Community Center for their gathering needs.

For additional information, call (952) 466-2064.

David Thoele Memorial Gift

The family of David Thoele has donated two items to the City of Cologne, in honor and memory of David. They have gifted a 10-by-10 foot canopy for use during City events such as Glad Days. In addition to the

canopy, the David Thoele family gifted a picnic table for community use. The City of Cologne thanks the Thoele family for their gifts to the community in loving memory of David.

City of Cologne
1211 Village Parkway, P.O. Box 120, Cologne, MN 55322
Web site: www.ci.cologne.mn.us

Contact Us
City Hall/Clerk's Office (952) 466-2064
John Douville, Administrator douville@ci.cologne.mn.us
Public Works Terry Bullock, Jeff Wildung
Emergency/after-hours
public works pager (612) 579-7054

Cologne City Council
Mayor Bernie Shambour
Scott Williams
Jill Skaaland
The City Council meets on the 1st and 3rd Mondays at 7 p.m.

Don Meyer
Matt Lein

Planning Commission
Marcia Tellers
Kenton Exner
Don Meyer (Council Rep)
The Planning Commission meets on the 1st Monday at 6 p.m.

Joel Sievers
David Reif

Park & Recreation Board
Craig Pexa
Scott Rynerson
Open Park Board position

Mark Kalstas
Mark Willems

District #108 Community Education
531 Morse Street, Norwood Young America, MN 55368
Phone: (952) 467-7390
Web site: www.dist108ce.org



Buying used=taxpayer savings

City buys street sweeper

The City of Cologne recently purchased a used 1998 GMC/Elgin Crosswind street sweeper. The City's old street sweeper has been very ineffective and was prone to repair for many years. The City purchased the "new" used sweeper for

\$25,000. This purchase saves the City from having to contract out this service, a \$7,000 annual taxpayer savings or to purchase a brand new machine at approximately \$150,000. An additional \$13,000 will be needed over time to completely refurbish the

sweeper, due to normal wear-and-tear on the machine. The \$38,000 for the machine purchase and refurbishing will come from the Equipment Reserves fund, and leave a current balance of \$383,555 in that fund balance.

Cologne Area Seniors find fun, friends and more



Pictured above, from left to right (back row): Hilton and Betty Born, Mark and Elaine Buesgens; (front row): Marlene Graupman and Lois Droege.

The Cologne Area Seniors hit the road again in August, when they took a trip to the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum. They enjoyed breakfast in the Tea Room, which overlooks the Arboretum's patio and gardens, before participating in a scenic tour of the more than 1,000 acres of trees, shrubs and gardens aboard the Trumpet Creeper Tram.

The next event planned for the Cologne Area Seniors is a Holiday Luncheon on Tuesday, Dec. 15, at noon. All area seniors are invited to attend the luncheon, which will feature a catered meal and music. Call the City offices at (952) 466-2064 to register or for additional details.

The Cologne Area Seniors meet at the Cologne Community Center on the first and third Tuesday of each month at 1:30 p.m. Makes plans to join the group for card playing, fellowship and fun.

City skating rink expanded



It's almost time to lace up those skates. The ice skating rink will again be located west of the Cologne Fire Station this winter. Plans are to grade the site for a more level surface, expand the size of the ice rink and have a warming house available for use by skaters. The warming house was built and donated as

an Eagle Scout project by Max Anderson of Troop 3327. The ice rink opening will be weather-dependent, and information will be sent via the City e-mail system and posted on notices in local businesses.

Snowfall ordinance

All vehicles/trailers need to be off public streets for snow clearing after snowfalls of two inches or more. Please allow Public Works staff to clear the roads. Do not plow/blow driveway/sidewalk snow onto streets. Tickets will be issued to violators.

'Abandoned home watch' Community input/assistance requested

The City is asking Cologne residents to notify staff of any abandoned homes in the community. If you feel a neighbor's house is not being maintained and does not look like there is regular activity and/or no realtor signage please contact the City office at (952) 466-2064. City staff will visit the property and determine if additional action is needed, such as turning off the water to the house.

The community lost a house last winter to frozen water pipes even though the house was being heated. Apparently the heat was set too low and, with no activity, the pipes froze and broke open to cause tremendous damage. In today's economy, it is important to be proactive and protect Cologne's housing stock from a preventable loss. This type of damage delays the house being sold to a new family, creates an eyesore/hazard to the neighborhood, takes additional City resources that could be used elsewhere and lowers the communities tax base. The City appreciates any help that residents may be able to provide.

The community lost a house last winter to frozen water pipes even though the

District 108 Bond Referendum Dec. 1

\$10.2 million bond to fund facility improvements

District 108 is holding a School District Bond Referendum on **Tuesday, Dec. 1.**

Voters in Cologne and other District 108 communities and rural areas are asked to authorize the School Board to issue 0% Qualified School Construction bonds in an amount not to exceed \$10.2 million to improve the Elementary and Middle/High School sites and facilities.

All votes will be cast at the District Office Entrance, 531 Morse St., Norwood Young

America. Public information sessions were held in Cologne, Norwood Young America and Hamburg earlier this month.

Voters are encouraged to visit the District's Web site at www.central.k12.mn.us for more details about the bond referendum, how funds will be used and how property taxes will be affected. Residents may also contact Superintendent Brian Cortlett at (952) 467-7000 or via e-mail at bcortlett@central.k12.mn.us.

City utility rates on the rise

While work is yet to be completed on the water, wastewater and storm water utility budgets for 2010, rate increases are expected after the first of the year. Three primary reasons for the increase are: debt service on the capital improvements such as the water tower, well and the wastewater treatment plant; catching up on years of inflation; and maintaining/repairing

older infrastructure such as lift stations and water mains. The slowdown in the housing sector has led to a reduction in utilities revenue in two ways: first, utility trunk fees are collected when a home is built and help pay for capital improvements (such as a water tower); the second revenue is the monthly sales of utilities to that new home to spread out the costs of operating the utilities.

Open Gym at the CCC

The Community Center's gymnasium is available for Open Gym use on Wednesdays from 7 to 9 p.m. and Sundays from 3 to 7 p.m. (through March 31, 2010). It also is available during District 108 school vacation hours (weekdays, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.), depending on gym availability. The cost is \$1 per person

and clean tennis shoes are needed to participate. Open gym participants can enjoy basketball, volleyball and a climbing wall. Organized games may also be available, such as kickball or battle ball, depending on interest. The gym may be closed during any of the scheduled times due to lack of participation.

Lake Benton from page 1

healthy fish community into the lake, such as pan fish, to control the rough fish population. The dominant carp population in Benton Lake continually stirs up the phosphorous on the lake bottom, creating low visibility and inhibiting natural plant growth to support the healthy fish population.

The City has set aside funding for Benton Lake improvement projects and will

provide \$4,000 of the 10 percent local match requirement, with the Benton Lake Conservancy and Carver County providing the balance. The announcement of grant awards should be made by mid-December.

Residents who are interested in becoming members of the BLWC should call Don Smith at (952) 466-5995.

Projects from page 1

the north and south side of Cologne.

The Cologne Hollanders are installing a new outfield fence at Fritz Field with materials supplied by the City of Cologne. The majority of the work will be completed in 2009 with finishing touches occurring in spring 2010.



New fence at Fritz Field

Community Calendar

Cologne Lions

Meetings held on the second and fourth Tuesdays, Sept.-June, 6:30 p.m., Louis Hall. Guests welcome. Call Lion Tom Stuewe at (952) 466-2570.

Cologne Area Seniors

Meetings held on the first and third Tuesdays, 1:30 p.m., Cologne Community Center. Call (952) 466-2064.

Friday, Dec. 4

St. Nick's Dinner Social 7 to 10 p.m. St. Bernard School Dinner, silent auction, entertainment and "Kids' Night Out" activities (children ages 3 to 12). Call the St. Bernard School Office at (952) 466-5917 for tickets and more information. Hosted by the St. Bernard Home and School Committee.

Tuesday, Dec. 15

Cologne Area Seniors Holiday Luncheon Noon Cologne Community Center

Thursday, Dec. 24

Zion Lutheran School Christmas Program 7:30 p.m. Zion Lutheran School