



City Voice

October 2011

City of Caro
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GREETINGS

BY TOM STRIFFLER, MAYOR



It is with mixed emotions that I write my last article as Mayor of the City of Caro. I have been on the Council for about 18 years, so it is time for me to step aside as an elected member of our community and move on to other things. It has been an honor to serve on the Village Council, as Village President and as Mayor. I have seen slow steady change over the years, while Caro has remained a great, safe place to live, work, shop and play. We have had challenging times with reduced revenue sharing, lowering property values and expensive improvements to water and sewer systems. Caro has weathered this storm well so far. I encourage you to look at the “dashboard” on the City of Caro website.

I feel that construction and operation of the Poet Bio Refining plant has helped both Caro and the surrounding area, as has the Chippewa Bridge and Trail, the reinventing of the Farmer’s Market, the downtown facade program and many other small changes that have occurred over the last few years. We are starting to see new investment in Caro and I believe that Caro will become even more of a focal point for the thumb of Michigan. There are still many things that need to be improved, including streets, playgrounds,

water lines, and encouraging entrepreneurial businesses.

The continued improvement of Caro is not up to the City Council. It is up to our citizens, business persons, volunteers and caring community members.

The Council must make policies and approve budgets that make sense for today and the future, BUT it is up to every one of US as community members to help make a POSITIVE impact on our neighbors and the community as a whole. One of the ways city residents can get involved is to VOTE November 8 in the City Election.

So as I leave elected office, I hope to join many more of you as, caring, involved citizens who make a positive impact on life here in Caro.



City offices will be closed on
Thursday November 24 &
Friday November 25, 2011
in observance of
Thanksgiving

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THE MANAGER'S CORNER

BY BRENT D. MORGAN



Utilizing Grant Dollars for Infrastructure Improvements

The City of Caro in collaboration with the Downtown Development Authority are recipients of a Michigan Strategic Fund Community Development Block Grant for improvement to the East Burnside Parking Lot in the amount of \$153,813. This parking lot is heavily utilized by the schools, downtown business owners and patrons to downtown services. For those Caro Residents with children or grandchildren enrolled in Schall Elementary School, employees of the school district, and business owners whose patrons utilize the parking lot we apologize for the inconvenience of the lot being closed during construction.

Prior to the improvements being made the parking lot had numerous issues running the gamut from a dilapidated guard rail causing cars to park on the sidewalk and creating obstacles for pedestrians to navigate to either downtown businesses, Schall School or other areas in the downtown; to water retention and major failed pavement areas. This grant provided funding to implement improvements that have alleviated these issues by removing the guardrail and installing a curbed island with sidewalk, complete mill and overlay of the entire parking lot, and replacing the current lighting design with LEDs that provide a clearer and crisper lighting that will use less energy. The new lighting will also be compatible with the balance of the City's decorative lighting systems making operation and maintenance more efficient.

These aesthetical and structural improvements to the parking lot provide for a safe smooth surface for parking and pedestrian traffic to nearby stores located downtown and enhance the community perception that Caro is committed to improving the infrastructure and downtown parking.

Witness the improved conveniences firsthand the next time you venture downtown to go shopping or pick your child up from Schall School park at the E. Burnside Parking Lot. Furthermore, as a resident you will be pleased these improvement were funded by a grant and the Downtown Development Authority.

A WORD FROM THE CLERK

BY KAREN J SNIDER, CMC

It is a known fact, things change and adjustments have to be made but it doesn't mean some of the changes are not going to make us sad. I have been with the Village/City of Caro for over 10 years and have had the opportunity as the "clerk/treasurer" to work with and for Mayor Striffler. He has been my boss, my mentor and my friend. He has helped me through some very difficult work related decisions and shared a lot of good times. He didn't necessarily give me answers, but would point me in the right direction. Although Mayor Striffler is stepping down, I know he is not stepping away. When we look out into the audience on meeting nights, I expect to see his face looking back (just a different chair).

The City of Caro will have an election on November 8 at the Caro Municipal Building, fire hall. Polls open at 7 a.m. and close at 8 p.m. Remember – The last day to register for the election is October 11. To view a sample ballot go to www.tuscolacounty.org and on the home page scroll to Sample Election Ballot (November 8, 2011) and click on "view here". A screen will come up and click on 2011, November 8 Sample Ballot – and click on "view". That will allow you to preview the ballot before the election.

The City of Caro will be mailing tax bills December 1, 2011. The City collects the taxes on the December bill for the following entities: Caro Area District Library, Caro Transit Authority, County Special Voted Millages, MCF Renovation, Caro School – debt, Caro School – operating and Tuscola Intermediate School. If you have any questions, call the City Treasurer at 989-673-7671.

“SO LONG THOMAS”

BY DICK POULIOT

MAYOR PRO-TEM



Saying goodbye is never easy like saying goodbye to a summer that quickly passed and hello to autumn. The saddest goodbye will be to Mayor Thomas Striffler as he leaves his position on Council to pursue other endeavors.

It has been both a great privilege and joy to serve on the Council with Mayor Striffler. He has demonstrated strong leadership and integrity throughout all the years of his service as Mayor to the City of Caro. The Council and the City of Caro have seen Mayor Striffler navigate the community in the transition from Village to City and has currently lead us resourcefully through one of the most challenging economic times that we have been faced with as a community.

He leaves the City in a very strong financial position, as well as having very competent administrative staff and other employees.

While it has been my experience to have served with other village presidents with different leadership styles, Mayor Striffler has been one of the most intuitive, pragmatic and resourceful leaders that has ever governed the Council during my years of service to the community.

On behalf of the entire City Council, Mayor Striffler will be missed as the Chief Executive Officer of the City, confidant and leader to all. We wish him well as he steps down from his position but realize his best interest will always be the community as a whole.



City offices will be closed on
Friday December 23, and
Monday December 26, 2011

Have a Safe and Happy Holiday

PUBLIC WORKS HIGHLIGHTS

BY CHARLIE SUNDBLAD

DPW SUPERINTENDENT



Well summer is just about over and that means that leaf season is soon to be upon us. The leaf pickup schedule will be in the paper, on the radio and on the sign at city hall. The last day for brush pickup will be October 3rd. Remember there is a brush policy regarding how much we will pickup. If you need a copy of the policy you can get one from city hall or on the city web site. If you have more than the allotted amount you can take it to the Luder Road dump. When putting your leaves in the street PLEASE do not put grass clippings or sticks in the piles as this will plug the equipment. We will be flushing hydrants the week of October 16th.

WASTEWATER TREATMENT

BY CURTIS WELLS

WWTP SUPERINTENDENT

School is back in session so keep an eye open for our children getting on and off the buses as well as crossing the streets. Thanks to a grant from the Department of Homeland Security the security project is now complete and up and running at your Caro area Wastewater Treatment Plant. The collapsed digester cover has been removed so we can again utilize the digester tank. We are currently looking at options from the engineers, and other issues, to determine the next course of action. We also just a few weeks ago had our bio-solids removed and beneficially land applied to local farm fields. As always we are proud to serve the citizens of Caro and would like to remind everyone to be aware of everything we flush down to your Caro area Wastewater Treatment Plant. Disposable does not mean flushable. Also the RV dump station will remain open from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday (excluding holidays) until we start receiving freezing weather.

CARO FIRE DEPARTMENT BY CHIEF DAVID MATTLIN



As we approach the fall and winter seasons it is time that we discuss some safety tips. We recommend you have your furnace checked by a licensed heating contractor to ensure it is working properly and the filters have been replaced. It is good to ensure your smoke

detectors have fresh batteries and have been cleaned. Carbon Monoxide is called the silent killer. Having a carbon monoxide detector is a good investment and it could save your life and the lives of your loved ones.

With the flooding, wildfires, tornadoes, and the possibility of ice storms that may occur we also encourage you to develop an emergency plan with your family. We are told that in case of a natural or manmade disaster we may be on our own for the first 72 hours after the event. That fact is borne out by what has occurred in recent tornadoes and floods where entire communities have been cut off and their citizens have had to rely on themselves for the basic necessities, food, water, clothing and shelter. Are you ready? Are we ready as a community? We strongly recommend you develop a plan and an emergency kit.

There are two excellent websites where you can access information on how to develop a plan and a kit. They are www.fema.gov and www.ready.gov

Fire prevention week is just around the corner and we encourage you to again review your fire safety plan with your family. The theme this year is "Protect Your Family From Fire."

As always, if we can be of assistance please do not hesitate to call the fire department business line at 673-2002.

SWEARING IN OF NEW FIREFIGHTERS



Fire Chief David Mattlin, Corey Howden, and
City Clerk Karen Snider



Fire Chief David Mattlin, Brett Sakuta, and
City Clerk Karen Snider



Fire Chief David Mattlin,
Ed Rushlo, and
City Clerk Karen Snider

**CARO POLICE DEPARTMENT
BY CHIEF BRIAN NEWCOMB**

MAPLE TAR SPOT

It's hard to believe that summer is waning and fall is on the way. Those of us at the Caro Police department hope that everyone had a fun, safe summer. The Tuscola Fair has come and gone and this year it was a success. We were blessed with good weather and a good turnout. Obviously, it is time for school to start which means that there are children walking in the city. We ask that motorists continue to drive carefully during the morning and afternoons when the children are walking to school. There have been a few developments in our notification systems, specifically regarding Nixle. To make a long story short Nixle considered charging for its use. With few municipalities having the ability to pay for this service Nixle decided it was in the best interest of public awareness to continue to provide this service free of charge. The Caro PD explored other methods of notification in case the Nixle system was no longer available free of charge. We were approached by the Tuscola Advertiser, who offered to continue a notification through Tuscola Today Online. We also started a facebook page for the Caro PD. As a result, we now have three notification systems for free. Please feel free to check these notification systems. If you have any questions, please leave a message at the department or city hall and I will contact you. Have a great fall and we look forward to seeing you at the Pumpkin Festival, October 6-9th.



Several homeowners are experiencing numerous spots on their maple tree leaves. According to Michigan State University Extension, it is a disease caused by several fungi in the genus Rhytisma and infects silver, sugar, red and Norway maple.

Tar spot disease is readily visible and easy to diagnose. The first tar spot symptom usually shows up in early summer and the spots enlarge and color intensifies as summer progresses. The disease is usually a cosmetic problem but may reoccur in the spring if proper management is not taken. Residents should rake and destroy infected leaves in the fall to prevent infecting new leaves in the spring.

MSU Extension has posted excellent information regarding Maple Tar Spot at www.migarden.msu.edu.



UPCOMING MEETINGS



Council	Oct 3 & 17 Nov 7 & 21 Dec 5 & 19	7:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m.
Planning	Oct 11 & 25 Nov 8 & 22 Dec 13 & 27	7:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m.
DDA	Oct 12 Nov 9 Dec 14	Noon Noon Noon
Historical	Oct 26 Nov 23	6:30 p.m. 6:30 p.m.
Parks & Rec	Oct 20 Nov 17 Dec 15	7:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m.



City offices will be closed on
Friday December 30, 2011 and
Monday January 2, 2012

Have a Safe and Happy
New Year's