Plowing Through Challenges

Jeff Lengsfeld grew up on a farm not far from the Inver Grove Heights Public Works facilities, where he has worked full-time for thirty-four years. At sixteen, he says, he "walked up the street" to get a job with the city of IGH. That was 1977, and Jeff started part-time with the Parks department, mostly mowing and maintaining hockey rinks. Now a year from retirement, he leads a team of seven full-time employees in the Streets Division of Public Works dedicated to street maintenance, tree trimming, de-icing, plowing public sidewalks and clearing the city’s eight plow routes. Jeff also leads up to twenty additional full-time maintenance employees from Parks, Utilities and Central Equipment, who assist the Street Maintenance Division with snow removal duties.

Jeff has seen his share of bad storms and long, cold winters. The worst he remembers was a double snowstorm over Halloween in 1991, a three-day snowstorm, which began just a few hours before trick-or-treaters started making their rounds on Oct. 31, and dumped more than twenty-eight inches of snow on the city. The Halloween blizzard still holds the record for highest snowfall total of any single storm and highest snowfall total in a twenty-four-hour period, according to the University of Minnesota. "We worked insane hours, around the clock," remembers Jeff. His boss, Street Maintenance Superintendent Barry Underdahl, remembers it, too, partly because of how difficult it was for equipment to move that much snow, and partly because he couldn’t take his three-year-old son trick-or-treating. The crew worked a twenty-two-hour shift during the storm, but laws have since changed, and employees are now limited to working sixteen hours straight.

Whenever possible, plowing starts between midnight and 3 a.m., before the morning commute, with priority given to fire stations and police parking lots, then roads and residential streets, then cul-de-sacs and sidewalks. If a plow truck breaks down, it can set things back considerably because the team is not only down a vehicle, but also down

“I always think about how I would like the street plowed if I lived there.”

– JEFF LENGSFELD, LEAD WORKER, STREET MAINTENANCE, IGH PUBLIC WORKS

— Continued on page 2
the worker who is fixing it. The “Old Village” area of IGH, hilly neighborhoods and cul-de-sacs, which are plentiful in IGH, are particularly challenging. “Courts and cul-de-sacs take a great amount of time to do correctly, so that we don’t leave any more snow in driveways than we have to. We don’t want to plow anybody into their driveway. That’s a fallacy. I always think about how I would like the street plowed if I lived there,” says Jeff. In addition to street plowing, Jeff’s team also provides a service that is rare in Minnesota communities — sidewalk snow clearing.

When not clearing snow, Jeff’s team keeps busy responding to service requests from residents, which top 900 per year, and oversees the collecting and disposing of dumped items left on the sides of our roadways — couches, mattresses and refrigerators to name a few. “People don’t seem to care when they dump stuff,” says Jeff. Jeff adds that over the years, the Streets Division has had to make sacrifices to keep up with growing demands. When he started with the city, there were fewer street miles to maintain. These days there are three times as many street miles, but few people have been added to the Streets team.

A life-long resident of IGH and award-winning marksmen, Jeff looks forward to bow hunting, fishing and visiting with his three grandkids once he retires. Although he plans to spend more time at his cabin north of Duluth, he still feels a strong sense of personal responsibility and motivation for the job he does for the city, even after more than three decades of service. Or, as Jeff puts it, “everybody has a job to do, and this is mine. I want to help the people who live here.”

Jeff, thank you.

HOW CAN YOU HELP PLOWS BE EVEN MORE EFFECTIVE ON YOUR STREET?

FOLLOW THESE TIPS FOR HOMEOWNERS:
* Keep garbage and recycling containers in the driveway, out of the street.
* Don’t crowd the plows. Give them room on the road and stay back a safe distance.
* Check mailbox posts. If they’re rotten, wet snow moved by plows may break the posts.
* Please obey winter parking rules.
* When possible, avoid shoveling the last two feet of your driveway until the plow goes by. This way, the snow that’s collected on the plow isn’t deposited into your driveway.
* Use driveway markers to mark where curbs are on your property, especially alongside curved roads.
* Plowing takes time, so please be patient.
Plowing Through Challenges, continued from page 1

the worker who is fixing it. The “Old Village” area of IGH, ... Student Judges (those who will be at
least 16 years old on the election day they work) are encouraged to apply.

TIP: Keep anything that can burn at least three feet away from heating equipment, like a furnace, fireplace, wood stove or portable space heater.

TIP: Have a three-foot “kid-free zone” around open fires and space heaters.

TIP: Never use your oven to heat your home.

TIP: Have a qualified professional install stationary space-heating equipment, water heaters or central heating equipment according to the local codes and manufacturer’s instructions.

TIP: Have heating equipment and chimneys cleaned and inspected every year by a qualified professional.

TIP: Remember to turn portable heaters off when leaving the room or going to bed.

TIP: Always use the right kind of fuel, specified by the manufacturer, for fuel-burning space heaters.

TIP: Make sure the fireplace has a sturdy screen to stop sparks from flying into the room. Ashes should be cool before putting them in a metal container. Keep the container a safe distance away from your home.

TIP: Test smoke alarms at least once a month.

**Use Less Salt this Winter for Healthier Lakes in the Summer**

A recent study found that 78 percent of the salt applied to roads ends up in the water, and it never leaves. This means that the lakes and streams are getting saltier every year. It only takes one teaspoon of salt to permanently pollute 5 gallons of water, which means that your typical fifty-pound bag of sidewalk salt can permanently pollute nearly 20,000 gallons of fresh water.

Only in the past few years have people become aware of the problem of the increasing salt content in Twin Cities lakes. The usage of salt has been steadily increasing for the last twenty years, because the thought was always, “more is better.” Salt usage can actually be cut significantly without an increased safety risk, and many area cities have begun to cut down their salt usage. The City of Inver Grove Heights has reduced its salt usage by half in the past ten years.

If we use too much salt, we risk turning our lakes into our own collection of “Dead Seas,” where the presence of normal aquatic life is impossible. To help protect our lakes and aquatic life, please limit the amount of salt you apply to your driveway and sidewalks. If you have salt left over after the ice has melted and dried up, please sweep it up and throw it away. Remember, more salt doesn’t mean more melting, it only means fewer fish. You only need one to three cups of salt per 1000 square feet for it to be effective. This means that if the typical driveway in Inver Grove Heights were completely covered in ice, you would only need about 4 cups of salt to de-ice it.

Knowing that, next time you’re salting, please ask yourself: Am I using too much salt?

**Winter Heating Safety Tips from IGH Fire Department**

Did you know that heating equipment is one of the leading causes of home fire deaths? With a few simple safety tips and precautions, you can prevent most heating fires from happening.
IGH PUBLIC WORKS

Protecting Our Water Supply

Based on statewide recommendations from the Minnesota Department of Health to all public water systems, the City of Inver Grove Heights Utility Division began a city-wide, cross-connection control program. Initiated in the spring of 2018, this proactive safety project has yielded many improvements to the safety and security of the Inver Grove Heights Public Water System. The results of the on-going program have yielded 1,084 individual points of backflow prevention that have been verified as safe, and identified 218 cross-connection/backflow issues requiring corrective action. “This important safety program identifies potential hazards between our safe drinking water (potable) supply, and a source of contamination or pollution,” says Dan Helling, Utilities Superintendent. “The reality is, until all plumbing connected to our drinking water is closely surveyed, unknown potential cross-connections are likely to exist. In the event of a water main break or sudden change in water system pressure, backflow prevention methods, assemblies and devices are a critical protection point for our potable water system.”

Three Conditions Are Required For A Backflow Incident:

1. CROSS-CONNECTION
2. HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE
3. HYDRAULIC CHANGE

WELLNESS, SUSTAINABILITY & NEWS

MAKING A COMMITMENT TO WELLNESS

Serve Up a Fresh Approach to Healthy Eating This Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving is a time to be thankful for family, friends, good health and great food. This year, instead of serving the old standbys – turkey smothered in gravy, candied yams, buttered corn and pumpkin pie – try healthier recipes, like wild rice stuffing.

Thanksgiving recipes provided by the Mayo Clinic have all the taste, but less fat, calories and sodium. Search “thanksgiving” at www.mayoclinic.org for delicious, healthy recipe ideas.

Democracy Needs Participation. We Need You!

The City is seeking judges to staff our polling precincts. If you are interested in serving your community as an Election Judge, please visit our website at www.invergroveheights.org, choose the Employment Button, and you will be taken to the application site. There are two postings; one for regular Election Judges and one for Student Judges. Student Judges (those who will be at least 16 years old on the election day they work) are encouraged to apply.
Top 7 Headaches for Recycling Facilities

Recycling seems more complicated than ever — it’s time to get back to basics. Now that bottles, cans and paper go in one recycling cart, knowing what to keep out is more of a challenge. The items below cause the most problems at sorting facilities. Help keep these out of the recycling cart:

1. Plastic bags wrap around machinery and must be cut out by hand. Do not put your recycling in a plastic bag — toss your recycling in your bin loose. Bring clean plastic bags and wrap to your local grocery or retail store to recycle.

2. Batteries can cause fires at recycling facilities and in collection trucks. Store used batteries safely at home by taping the terminals. Bring all batteries to The Recycling Zone in Eagan (3365 Dodd Road) for free.

3. Tanglers like chains, holiday lights, extension cords and garden hoses wrap around moving machinery. Put tanglers in the trash or find out where to donate or recycle them on the Green Guide page (www.invergroveheights.org/greenguide).

4. Shredded paper is so small that the scraps end up where they are not supposed to at recycling facilities and often does not get recycled. To save time and money only shred sensitive documents. Bring already-shredded paper to The Recycling Zone in a closed paper bag marked “shredded paper,” or find businesses that offer shredding services on the Green Guide page (www.invergroveheights.org/greenguide).

5. The small stuff, like loose bottle caps or pieces of tin foil, are too small to make it through all the sorting machines. Anything smaller than your fist goes in the trash. Keep all caps and lids on your containers. Ball up clean and dry tin foil, so it’s larger than your fist to place in recycling.

6. Random metal objects like pots and pans, nails and pipes damage machinery and can hurt workers. Take scrap metal to The Recycling Zone or a scrap metal drop-off.

7. Diapers do not belong in the recycling bin. Put them in the trash.

For more information on where to properly dispose of unwanted items, please visit the Green Guide page at www.invergroveheights.org/greenguide.

Partially funded by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and Dakota County.

Holiday Lights Recycling

Kick-off the holiday season by properly recycling your holiday lights and electrical cords! Did you know these tanglers wrap around and get stuck in the moving machinery at recycling facilities? To properly recycle these, drop off your holiday lights and extension cords at IGH Holiday Light Recycling collection:

WHEN: Nov. 15, 2019 – Jan. 10, 2020

WHERE: Veterans Memorial Community Center, Grove Entrance (Door A) at 8055 Barbara Ave. (City Hall will not be a collection site.)

ACCEPTED ITEMS: Holiday lights and electrical cords

Partially funded by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and Dakota County.
If you or someone you know does not feel safe at home, you’re not alone. **360 Communities Can Help**

360 Communities is a large non-profit agency serving Dakota County. It offers programs and services with a focus on violence prevention and intervention, school success, and access to community resources. Staff are in over 40 locations across the county to ensure people have access to a circle of support wherever they are. One of these locations is the Inver Grove Heights Police Department, where Tammy, an outreach advocate with 360 Communities, has an office and serves residents in the area who are experiencing domestic violence. We asked Tammy about the important work she does every day:

**Tell me about your role with 360 communities.**
I’ve been with 360 Communities for a little over a year. I am an outreach advocate assisting survivors of domestic and sexual violence. My main role is to support victims, offering them emotional support, safety planning and community resources. I know ending the cycle of violence is very challenging for many reasons, but when someone decides to end that cycle, my role is to support them.

My role as an outreach advocate was created in partnership with the Inver Grove Heights Police Department to help victims of domestic and sexual violence access services and safety in Inver Grove Heights. My role is much different than that of a police officer, but we both have the same goals of victim safety and offender accountability when it comes to domestic violence and sexual assault. Another part of my role is to focus on the Latino population in the city and help bridge language and cultural barriers, specifically as they relate to victims of domestic and sexual violence.

**What motivated you to do the work you do?**
I like that I can partner with law enforcement to bring resources into my community for people that are experiencing domestic violence. I used to work in the for-profit world, but I did not find fulfillment in what I did. It’s very important for me to do something that has meaning and directly impacts my community.

**What are the needs you see in the community?**
We need to educate our kids about healthy relationships as well as raise awareness of the resources available for those experiencing violence in their homes. We also need to change the conversation about domestic violence, that it’s not ok and something we will not tolerate. A popular saying is “violence thrives in silence.” The more we talk about these issues, the more they are not accepted, the more victims will come forward, and the more we will be able to hold perpetrators accountable.

**What should neighbors/friends do if they suspect that someone they know needs help? How can the community access 360 Communities’ services?**
One of the best ways to support victims is to believe them if/when they disclose domestic violence. The response the victim gets from others will shape their entire experience. Sometimes people don’t want to say the “wrong thing.” Therefore, another way to help support victims is to educate yourself on the dynamics of domestic abuse. Remember that, for victims/survivors, leaving an abusive relationship is one of the most dangerous times. Be very supportive and remind them they’re not alone, and that we are a resource for them. You can contact 360 Communities by calling 651-437-1291, by going to our website: www.360communities.org, or by calling the Inver Grove Heights Police Department at 651-450-2525 and asking for Tammy.

**What is one success story?**
I recently helped a woman who had been experiencing emotional and verbal abuse, and one night her abuser physically assaulted her while she held their baby in her arms. One of her neighbors called the police and the abuser was arrested. After her abuser went to jail she found herself alone, without a job and with a baby to care for. 360 Communities became her support system. I reached out to her and answered questions, I connected her to community resources, attended civil court with her and helped her navigate the legal system. She now has her own apartment and lives a healthy life with her kids. She is hoping to find a job soon so that she can provide for her kids.

**How could a person interested in helping the community learn how to do what you do?**
Contact 360 Communities. We have many different ways you can volunteer and support what we do. www.360communities.org

If you know of someone who is in an abusive relationship, please call the 360 Communities domestic violence hotline at 651-437-1291.
Community Development Director Heather Rand and her team continue to roll out the welcome mat to exciting, new small businesses here in Inver Grove Heights. Join us in supporting their openings and continued success!

OPENING EARLY NEXT YEAR

**OYESPA**

7741 Amana Trail, Inver Grove Heights

https://oyespa.com/

OYESPA, a new Aveda Lifestyle Salon and Spa, is under construction and scheduled to open in early 2020. OYESPA’s goal is to provide a holistic, full-service day spa and salon that offers a closer to home experience that adheres to a loving mission to promote wellness to the people and the planet.

OYESPA is pleased to partner with Aveda due to their commitment to high-quality services, sustainability, and a focus on earth-friendly products that are derived from plants with no animal testing. The owners are making plans to give back to the community through organizations that certify them as a Green Circle Salon and B Corporation, which requires them to meet the highest standards of verified social and environmental performance, transparency, and accountability to use business as a force for good.

OYESPA is based on using holistic and ayurvedic principles, creating experiences that benefit customers beyond the time they are in the spa. Services include haircuts, styling, extensions, coloring, facials, hair and body treatments, massage therapy, manicures, pedicures, aromatherapy, Aveda rituals, special occasion services, and more.

OYEVIDA, the spa’s cafe, will offer chef-inspired, nutritious food options for breakfast, lunch and dinner along with fair trade, organic, and GMO-free beverages from Peace Coffee, Dr. Smoothie and Rishi Tea.

OYESPA is currently hiring talented Stylists, Estheticians, Cosmetologists, Baristas, Managers and Administrative Staff who are looking for an opportunity to create a truly superior experience for clients. Learn more at https://oye.careers.

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**PARKS & RECREATION ACTIVITIES**

Look What’s Happening in Your Parks & Recreation!

Visit our website at www.invergroveheights.org/parksandrecreation and sign up to receive email alerts, or follow us on social media. Winter recreation programs start soon, visit www.invergroveheights.org/recreation!

DON’T MISS THIS SPECIAL EVENT!

**VMCC Open House** | Monday, Dec. 30 | FREE!

Come check out the Community Center and all it has to offer! This includes access to the fitness center, drop-in fitness classes, pools, open skate and open gym, all for free!

If you decide to become a member, the enrollment fee is only $19. Visit our website for membership benefits and rates: www.invergroveheights.org/register

Have a Splashing Good Time in our Pools

**EXTENDED POOL HOURS ON FRIDAY NIGHTS** | For the rest of 2019, our pools will be open until 8:30 p.m. every Friday!

So grab the family and friends and splash the night away!

**NO SCHOOL? HEAD TO THE POOL!** | Our indoor Water Park and Lap and Dive Pools are the perfect place to splash away your day off from school! Our pools are open extended hours on non-school days recognized by ISD 199.

Visit our website for the most up-to-date schedule for each pool: www.invergroveheights.org/pools
WE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU
If you have any comments, give us a call at 651-450-2500.

CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS
George Tourville, Mayor 651-450-2507
Tom Bartholomew 651-450-2505
Rosemary Piekarski Krench 651-450-2504
Kara Perry 651-450-2506
Brenda Dietrich 651-450-2503

CITY ADMINISTRATOR
Joe Lynch 651-450-2511

ON THE WEB
www.invergroveheights.org EMAIL cityhall@invergroveheights.org

MONTHLY MEETINGS | November/December 2019

CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSIONS AND REGULAR MEETINGS
Monday, Nov. 4 | Work Session at 6 p.m. in Council Chambers
Tuesday, Nov. 12 | Regular Meeting at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers
Monday, Nov. 25 | Regular Meeting at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers
Monday, Dec. 2 | Work Session at 6 p.m. in Council Chambers
Monday, Dec. 9 | Regular Meeting at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMISSION
Thursday, Nov. 21 at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers
Thursday, Dec. 19 at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers

PARKS & REC ADVISORY COMMISSION
Wednesday, Nov. 13 at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers
Wednesday, Dec. 11 at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers

PLANNING COMMISSION
Tuesday, Nov. 5 at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers
Tuesday, Nov. 19 at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers
Tuesday, Dec. 3 at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers
Tuesday, Dec. 17 at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers

HOUSING COMMITTEE
Tuesday, Nov. 26 at 5 p.m. in Council Chambers

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Meet quarterly – remaining regularly scheduled 2019 date is
Tuesday, Nov. 12 at 5 p.m. in Council Chambers

LOWER MISSISSIPPI RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT (WMO)
Wednesday, Nov. 13 at 3 p.m. at West St. Paul City Hall
Wednesday, Dec. 11 at 3 p.m. at West St. Paul City Hall

INVER GROVE HEIGHTS BEYOND THE YELLOW RIBBON COMMITTEE
Wednesday, Nov. 13 at 6 p.m. at the VMCC National Guard
Armory Training Center, Room B