

Sunfish Lake Quarterly

Spring 2026 Volume 26 Issue 2

Greetings Neighbors,

After a long Minnesota winter, I hope you were able to stay safe and find moments to enjoy the season's beauty. With spring now upon us, we look forward to warmer days and more time outdoors in our community. I'd like to share a few updates:

Musser Park Trails Cleared
Thank you to the residents who raised concerns about storm damage that made the Musser Park trails impassable. In response, the City Council unanimously authorized our Forester to engage a contractor, and I'm pleased to share that the trails have now been cleared. While an email blast was sent, I wanted to include this here for those not subscribed to City notifications.

Harmon Park Discussion in June
The City Council will be discussing the future direction of Harmon Park at our June meeting. Additional details will be available on the SFL website in late May. I encourage you to attend and share your perspectives, we value your input.

State Zoning Preemption Bills
Proposals have again been introduced this legislative session that would limit local control over building design and construction materials by imposing statewide standards. While often framed as a way to reduce housing costs, these measures are opposed by organizations such as the League of Minnesota Cities, Metro Cities, and many small communities, as they restrict our ability to shape development in ways that reflect local priorities. At this time, the bills do not appear to be advancing, but we will continue to monitor them closely.

Fewer False Alarms – Thank You
We've seen a meaningful reduction in false alarms from home security systems compared to last year. This helps ensure our police officers are available for true emergencies. Thank you for your continued awareness and cooperation.

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City Council	**Planning Commission**	**City Clerk/Administrator**	**In this Issue**
Dan O'Leary, Mayor Steven Bulach Tom Hendrickson Mike Hovey Shannon Nelson	Ginny Beckett Jeannine Nayes Claire Noble John Oakman Kevin Wu	Christy Wilcox cwilcoxclerk@gmail.com	Message from the Mayor 2026 Election Dates Protect Water Quality – Pick Up Waste Celebrating 10 Years of Repair at Fix-It Clinics Septic Pumping Reminder

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 18281
West St. Paul, MN
55118

Mattress & Box Spring Drop-Off Collection

Saturday May 9, 9 am - noon
West St. Paul Public Works (403 Marie Ave East)
Regular price $27 per piece. Scan the QR code to the right to reserve a discounted rate of $15 per piece (quantities limited)

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Community Event: Arbor Day at Horseshoe Lake

Please consider joining your neighbors on Arbor Day, Saturday, May 2 at 9:00 a.m., to help plant trees and shrubs along the south side of Horseshoe Lake. This area was mistakenly clear-cut last fall, and this effort will help restore the landscape. Our City Forester, Jim Nayes, will be on hand to guide volunteers from the Horseshoe Lake neighborhood and the broader community. Arbor Day is always a wonderful community event, and this year offers a particularly meaningful opportunity to give back to one of our natural spaces.

Thank you for your continued engagement and care for our community. Wishing you a safe, enjoyable, and refreshing spring season.

Mayor Dan

2026 ELECTION DATES

State Primary Election: Tuesday, August 13, 2026

Absentee Voting: June 26 to August 10, 2026

State General Election: Tuesday, November 5, 2026

Absentee Voting: September 18th to November 2, 2026

Candidate Filing for City Offices

The candidate filing period opens on July 14, 2026, and closes on July 28, 2026. Offices to be elected:

Mayor	2-year term, beginning January 2027
Two (2) City Councilmembers	4-year term, beginning January 2027

If you are interested in filing for any of these offices, please contact Christy Wilcox at cwilcoxclerk@gmail.com or 612-718-4282 during the hours of 9:00 am to 4:00 pm to complete the Affidavit of Candidacy during the filing period. The filing fee of $5.00 may be paid by cash or check.

PROTECT WATER QUALITY – PICK UP WASTE

When pet waste is left uncollected, it gets washed into the stormwater systems and into our lakes and rivers. The waste decays in the water, releasing ammonia and depletes oxygen levels. This is harmful to fish and other animals. These nutrients also promote the growth of weeds, algae, and bacteria (E. coli) that can cause unsafe conditions for recreation activities.



Tips for Residents:
- Remember to bring plastic bags on your walks.
- Deposit your pet's waste in a trash can. This keeps it from washing into our waterways.
- Utilize pet waste stations if available or use your trash bin at home.
- Remember to "Scoop the Poop"
- Never leave your pet's waste

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF REPAIR AT FIX-IT CLINICS

So many broken items could be saved by repair. From toasters to trousers, Dakota County's monthly Fix-It Clinics make it possible to extend the lives of your favorite items for free. Skilled volunteers help troubleshoot, mend and hopefully repair your items while you learn valuable repair skills you can take home with you.



Bring up to three items that need fixing or mending. No oversized items are allowed. If you need any accommodations to support accessibility, please email access@co.dakota.mn.us at least 48 hours in advance.

Show up to the upcoming Fix-It Clinic on Saturday, May 16 from 11 am to 2 pm at Two Rivers High School in Mendota Heights. The event is free, and you do not need to register to participate.

If you want to lend your craft of repair and save items from the landfill, join the team of skilled volunteers that have been repairing, fixing and mending stuff for 10 years!

For more information or to volunteer, visit www.dakotacounty.us, search *fix-it clinic*.

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

KEEEP IN TOUCH WITH THE CITY FOR INFORMATION YOU WANT OR NEED

Sign up to automatically receive email updates that interest you on the City's website at sunfishlake.org. Give us your email and we will send updates periodically for the items you've selected. You can unsubscribe or add more options at any time.

You information will be retained by the City of Sunfish Lake, but WILL NOT be shared, sold or used for other purposes.

SEPTIC PUMPING REMINDER

Residential septic systems must be pumped every three (3) years to remain in compliance with City ordinance requirements. Please remind the Septic Pumper to send a copy of the report to Dakota County Environmental Services that your septic system has been pumped.

Dakota County will send a reminder postcard to residents who are not in compliance with the three-year pumping requirement. If your septic tank has not been pumped within the last three (3) years, please schedule a pumping of your system within the next 60 days.

Contact information for Dakota County septic pumping records:
jenna.grim@co.dakota.mn.us or 952-891-7575 ben.hoyt@co.dakota.mn.us 952-891-7008 Main Office: 952-891-7000

2026 Sunfish Lake Arbor Day
Lakeshore Restoration Planting Event

Saturday May 2nd, 9:00 am- 1:00 p.m. – Horseshoe Lake

Our Arbor Day Green Event is Saturday, May 2 from 9 am till 1pm. Please join with our neighbors to plant trees, share treats and conversations, and welcome spring to our city. The Arbor Day event will happen **just west of the Robert Trail and 60th Street corner** on the edge of Horseshoe Lake between 1085 – 60th Street and 5980 Zehnder Road. Parking is available on both Zehnder Road and 60th Street.

This year we are doing something very special. Please bring family and friends. We will be planting trees and shrubs for a shoreline restoration adjacent to 60th Street. This area was mistakenly damaged by an invasive species street mowing crew and we will be bringing it back to life this Arbor Day. Bring gloves and your favorite planting shovel. Trees, shrubs, mulch, and a few extra shovels will be on hand. Baby trees will be available to buy plus free coffee and cookies. Please contact Jim Nayes with any questions at 612-803-9033 or at jim_nayes@mac.com





Views: Before (left) and After (right) lakeside mowing.

Trees for Sale

There will be very limited numbers of American plum, river birch, red maple, balsam fir, pussy willow, and American hazelnut at $10.00 each; also very limited numbers of interspecific chestnut hybrids, "Bob Gordon" and "Adams" elderberry (edible juice varieties), white spruce, and concolor fir at $15.00 each. Pre-ordering is OK, just give Jim a call.

Sunfish Lake, Minnesota

Deer and Rabbit Protections

Tree tubes
Wire cages
Repellants
Tall metal stakes

A Great Read

"Wicked Plants" by Amy Stewart. Includes stories about the weed that killed Lincoln's mother and other botanical atrocities.

Good Quote

"Someone's sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago."
Warren Buffett

Sunfish Lake's Arbor Day is cohosted by the Sunfish Lake Tree Board, Recycling Coordinator Courtney Selstad, and your City Forester, Jim Nayes.

www.sunfishlake.org



Left: Tapping the tree using a Spile and collection bag

Right: Boiling the sap to condense it

Bottom: Resulting jars of maple syrup! Recipe: 40 gallons of sap gave about 1 gallon of syrup (sap/syrup ratio varies by type of tree, weather, and temperature)





Maple Syruping

Maple tree tapping and maple syrup cooking is winding down. Did you know that you do not need sugar maples to get maple syrup? You can also tap other maple species such as red maple, Norway maple, boxelder, silver maple, and even amur maple. The principal difference between sugar maple and other maples is that sugar maple sap has a higher sugar concentration and therefore requires less cooking time to get to syrup. Jeannine and I tapped 30 trees on our property this spring. We primarily tapped boxelder and silver maple trees and we were able to make more than 5 gallons of maple syrup from our own trees. It is delicious - especially on chocolate chip pancakes, a Granddaughter favorite.



Everyone Needs a Psycho Path

This pathway (the Psycho Path) starts at our fruit orchard and goes through the developing woodland we began planting five years ago. Some of the one-foot tall white pines are already approaching 10 feet tall. Some fruit trees in the orchard started bearing fruit the second summer after planting. Our fastest growing trees are Dawn Redwoods and they have the potential to someday grow to over 100 feet tall. We have, to date, planted more than 400 baby and larger trees into what used to be a horse pasture. It is truly amazing how quickly our trees are growing and we are excited that we can enjoy the changes on our own relaxing Psycho Path.