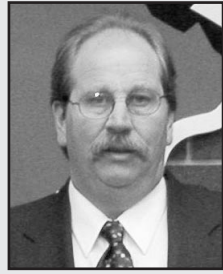


# CITY SCENE



Mark Gillette

## Is Webster City Expensive? by Mark Gillette

In the three years I have served on the city council, the one common complaint by many citizens and non-citizens is the shared opinion that Webster City is an expensive place to live. Even before I was elected, many citizens of our town often complained about the high taxes and high cost of utilities. As a councilman I guess I'm supposed to say "If you check the statistics, we're right in line with other cities", but I don't agree. I believe our taxes and utilities are too high. We have often been given statistics and comparatives but I have come to believe that many times those are used to work to the favor of those who gather them.

It is quite irritating when we are satisfied when the statistics or comparables place us at a five on a scale from 1 to 10. Why not go for a one? Why can't we be the lowest? If we are comparing for instance our electric rates, water rates, or even the number of employees to other entities, logic would tell us that perhaps we may not be as efficient as we could be.

I remember Councilman Foster, during our election forum, when he voiced his concerns that if our largest employer decided to leave town, we needed to be ready for that day. I agreed then and I agree now. The question now is, "Are we as efficient as we can be?"

As councilpersons, I believe one of our primary responsibilities is to provide three basic services; police protection, fire protection, and infrastructure (electric, streets, water, waste water). We do have other responsibilities that would include recreational opportunities, Fuller Hall, trail system, midget league and other quality of life issues but for now we'll talk about the issues that affect our personal budgets the most.



Comparing services in like size towns is difficult if not impossible when it comes to providing essential services. How can we compare our water plant, which pumps out of the Jordan aquifer, to Boone which pumps from shallow ground water wells? In waste water, how much infiltration is there in our lines and how much clean water are we treating because of sump pumps running into the sewer. It all adds up in the total cost. The water, electric, and waste water all have a base charge because whether one uses the utility or not, there is still a real cost. The employees and the cost are still there.

I do know that our water, waste water, and electric departments as far as the amount of manpower is concerned, are as efficient as possible. The police department has also had vacancies that have not been filled and the fire department has been at four full-time with fortunately thirty or so volunteers.

Having said that, do I believe our city is as efficient as it can be? No, but things are looking up. The council also has the responsibility to set the budget, set policy, and set the direction to the city manager and he will carry out that direction. The direction has been set and I believe in the next year, there will be some very positive changes.

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Ed Sadler

## Putting Our Best Foot Forward

I believe that if we as a City are going to attract new businesses and new residents that we have to put our best foot forward and that means in every aspect including our appearance. What will people think about us if our City is trashy and junky and it appears that we have no respect for our appearance or our property? I doubt that it is a place they want to move to or invest time and money into. People and businesses that do not take care of their property affect the value not only of their property, but also of the surrounding properties. Considering that our homes and /or businesses are probably our single biggest investment, it is not something we want to lose money on because property values are declining. This will get even worse if no one wants to move here, and then there is no demand for our property and again the value declines. Like many older towns, this aspect easily slips away if not tended to. For Webster City to be a prosperous city, this is an issue that we must address with something other than lip service through ordinances that we only selectively enforce.

Several groups and individuals have appealed to the City to do something about this problem. City Council did make some changes to City Ordinances last year to make enforcement easier and more expeditious. The City also spent time last year painting up, fixing up and cleaning up City properties and continues to do so. Now, the City is ready to take the next step, and the City's plan is as follows:

1) Inspect every City block during the month of April to identify violations.

2) In May, notices of warning will be sent to all businesses and residents with violations, informing them that they are in violation and also informing them of the citywide cleanup in late May or early June and also informing them that should the issues not be resolved by this or other means, that official enforcement action will be taken by the City.

3) In mid June, all properties are again inspected for compliance and those that still have violations receive official notices of violation and the City Attorney's office is brought into the actions.

In association with this effort, we have asked the PRIDE Committee to try and put together five or six groups of people from churches, schools, service clubs, etc. to assist those individuals that may not be capable of hauling the accumulation of items to the curb for the citywide cleanup days. I believe that this is an integral part of this cleanup process that we can not ignore to assist our neighbors and to help ourselves. If you or your group is interested in assisting with this aspect, please contact City Hall to volunteer.

If the City is serious about revitalizing the City, it must also be serious about putting its best foot forward to make this happen. The City has cleaned up the appearance of its properties and continues to do so. It is now time for its residents and businesses to follow suit. This summer we are inviting people to our City for numerous events including the sesquicentennial. We need to put our best foot forward and make a good impression on everyone who comes. We are a City with PRIDE!

## WC Betterment Fund...A Gift that Allows You to Leave a Community Legacy by Tami Hejlik

**Make a Choice...** Webster City means a lot of different things to a lot of people. It is where we have raised our families, spent a significant part of our lives, pursued business careers and developed lasting friendships. The formation and support of a Webster City Betterment fund can help you celebrate your good life and share the fruits of your labor with those you love and care for. It can be a lasting legacy of your life and commitment to your community.

**What does a community fund do?** A designated community fund is a vehicle enabling the donor to direct charitable dollars toward a specific community that benefits and helps ensure continuity of a specified community and supports many charitable organizations and purposes within those communities. The Endowment portion of the

fund will distribute investment income to the community or community agencies on an annual basis, creating a stable income stream.

**How do you get involved?** Since we are in the beginning stages of the fund's formation, we must first develop an advisory board that is diverse of the community's interests to determine the needs and how the money will be disbursed. There will be a meeting on **Thursday, April 5th** to introduce this idea to potential board members who will help in the initial formation and marketing of the fund. The meeting will be held at 6 p.m. at Swine Graphics and will be open to anyone willing to help fund, promote, and market the Webster City Community Betterment Fund. For more information and questions, please contact Tami Hejlik at 832-2564.

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City Scene

**By Gary Sandholm**

**Time 21:** Movement on what has become a multi-generational project appears to be gaining support and priority. The Iowa Department of Transportation recently completed a study, [Time 21](#), to assess future transportation needs. Highway 20 was identified as an important part of the "Commercial/Industrial Network" that serves as the backbone for commerce. This network has the highest priority for maintenance and improvement.

One extremely crucial point raised is that our current formula to fund highway maintenance and construction will be adequate only to cover maintenance costs by 2015 with nothing available for new road construction. That is terribly distressing in a state that historically has relied on highways to bring raw materials to markets or factories and that exports foods, grains, manufactured products, and now fuels. This is not just an Iowa problem as every state is in much the same situation. States that successfully navigate the morass of increasing costs and greater needs will be able to capitalize on opportunities while other states will be left behind.

Bottom line – the state, along with all others, needs more money. The last time the road use tax changed was January 1, 1989 – the year when this year's high school graduates were born. Inflation has eroded the purchasing power by 50%. Many options may be used to amass the funds to meet transportation needs. Making adjustments to a mix of sources such as fuel taxes, vehicle registration fees (especially pickups), drivers license fees, and other items so as not to place undue loads on any one area. The [Time 21](#) study and its recommendations are under consideration in the statehouse. Please read the study at [www.dot.iowa.gov/time21](http://www.dot.iowa.gov/time21).

**Highway 20:** The Highway 20 Corridor Association has been very active promoting the completion of the four land project. On February 8 a presentation was given to the House Transportation Committee. On March 15, several members attended the Senate Transportation Tour stop in Fort Dodge. The

message that Highway 20 needs to be finished is getting through, but sustained effort will be continued.

On April 13, the US 20 Summit will be held in Sioux City to show the progress that is being made and build support for completing the upgrade of the road. The Nebraska Department of Transportation will also be participating in the Summit which points out the regional importance of this highway. The public is invited to attend. Webster City Area Development is one of the sponsors of the event.

**Small Business Development Center:**

After several years of absence, a new center will soon open to serve north central Iowa. Initially, it will be housed at the ISU Extension office in Fort Dodge. Serving both new and existing businesses, this will be a valuable resource to support local businesses. The Mid Iowa Growth Partnership of which we are a member worked very hard to bring this asset back to the region.

**Arrow Acme:** After closing last fall, several things have happened at the Arrow Acme plant. An equipment auction was held in January. Most of the production machinery has been removed. Wells Fargo Business Credit has taken over the real estate and is now working to sell the property. We have posted the building on the Location One website for industrial site selectors and are working with Wells Fargo to facilitate the marketing process. With 65,000 square feet, the plant may be an opportunity for either local business expansions or as a location for a new business in the community.

**Business visits:** WCAD is in the process of visiting with local industries and performing a survey using the Synchronist software program. This Project began on a limited basis last year and is being expanded to a larger group of industries. The information gathered often helps identify opportunities for local businesses and helps gauge the local business climate.

**Business support:** Webster City Area Development is here to help you solve problems and find opportunities. Please call us if you need help. We have an extensive network of contacts – many offering free services – that may be able to help you navigate through obstacles and maximize your business results.

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Spring 2007

## Building Smarter Everyday

Safe and proper construction of buildings is rarely on your mind when you enter a home or building. Fortunately, the staff in the Webster City Inspection Department thinks about building safety and fire prevention everyday. To help raise your awareness of building safety, the City of Webster City Inspection Department is celebrating Building Safety Week from May 6th through the 12th. During this worldwide celebration, we will be promoting the use, enforcement, and understanding of building safety and fire prevention codes to protect lives and property. "Building Smarter...for Disasters and Everyday Life" is the theme of Building Safety Week 2007.

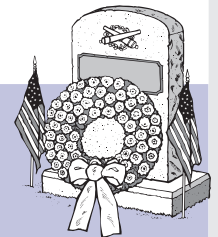
The importance of regulating and enforcing building codes is often overlooked until a catastrophic tragedy occurs. By inspecting buildings during and after construction, we help to ensure that buildings in the community are safe places in which to live, work, play, and learn.

Building code regulations in Webster City help to ensure that buildings are as safe as possible. Codes address all aspects of construction including structural integrity, electrical, mechanical, and plumbing systems, energy efficiency, and property maintenance. Effective code enforcement

requires the support of homeowners, architects, builders, engineers, and others in the construction industry.

Building Safety Week recognizes the important professionals who make sure the buildings in our community are safe. Public safety is our number one concern. Building and fire officials are here to help you understand building safety issues. In this age of do-it-yourselfers it is extremely important for homeowners to work with the Inspection Department to make sure their residences fully comply with building safety codes.

Building Safety Week, first observed in 1980, is sponsored by the International Code Council Foundation, an organization dedicated to changing the devastating effects of natural disasters and other building tragedies. The City of Webster City is an active member of the International Code Council, a membership organization dedicated to building safety and fire prevention. The International Code Council develops the codes used to construct residential and commercial buildings, including homes and schools. Most U.S. cities, counties, and states that adopt codes choose the International Codes developed by the International Code Council.



## Graceland Cemetery Spring Cleanup Reminder Notice

The City of Webster City would like to remind all persons the Spring cleanup removal will start on April 1 at Graceland and Foster's Baby Addition Cemeteries. It is requested that all flower boxes, wreaths, decorations, and flowers (this includes items in above-ground fixtures-saddles, vases, planters, Shepard hooks) be removed before April 1. If these items are not removed they will be picked up and disposed of by the Cemetery staff.

After April 10 persons will be permitted to place flowers and other decorations on above-ground fixtures (i.e., saddles, vases, planters, Shepard hook type hangings as

long as they do not interfere with mowing/trimming). All decorations that will be placed on the ground will not be permitted until nine days prior to Memorial Day (this year after May 20-May 31 is Memorial Day). The post Memorial Day removal of flowers (placed on the ground) will begin on June 10.

In addition, the United States' flags placed on the Veteran's graves will be removed at this time. New flags will be placed on Veteran's graves in time to observe Memorial Day. Please direct any questions to Graceland Cemetery at 832-9125.

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City Scene

## What to expect when you are stopped by a Law Enforcement Officer by Mike McConnell & Staff

Routine traffic stops, as they are sometimes called, sometimes turn out to be anything but routine. Officers find uninsured drivers, drivers with suspended licenses, impaired drivers, illegal firearms, drugs, and fugitives. Discoveries like these are all in a day's work for many officers. This is why officers are trained to place a great deal of emphasis on their safety and take a defensive posture at the stop until the risk of confrontation or injury is diminished. Many officers are killed each year and thousands more are injured in traffic related incidences. For example, in 1999, over half of all officer line-of-duty deaths were related to traffic incidences. Every stop for a traffic violation has the potential for danger. The routine stop is only routine when it's finished.

### Reasons for a traffic stop

There are many different reasons why a driver might be stopped by a law enforcement officer. The reasons range from simple equipment violations, such as burnt out lights, to more serious violations such as drunk driving. Traffic stops can be a stressful and embarrassing encounter, however, with some simple hints and a few explanations on what to expect may help make an unpleasant encounter, at least a bit more understandable. Most people have been or will be stopped once or twice in the course of their driving career, but not everyone knows what to do or to expect when they see those bright flashing lights in their rearview mirror. Each traffic stop will basically start the same way with red and blue flashing lights in the rearview mirror. The reasons for an officer to stop a vehicle are so numerous that there simply isn't enough room in this article to go into them all. However, some of the more common reasons are excessive speed, vehicle lighting defects, seatbelt usage, and stop sign violations.

These lights are signaling for you to pull to the right hand side of the road as soon as safely possible. At no time should you attempt to pull to the left or continue on for an extended time. The police officer is expecting you to pull to the right side. Remember, it is possible that the officer is not trying to stop you, but instead may be attempting to get around you for a different reason. All emergency services, EMT's, fire fighters, and police officers are trained to expect vehicles to pull to the right side of the road.

When being stopped by a police officer there are a few things you should know that the officer expects of you. First, the officer wants you to remain inside your vehicle with your hands visible. The easiest way to accomplish this is to keep your hands on the steering wheel. The reasons for this are to keep the officer safe and to allow the officer to observe suspicious movements from within the passenger compartment.

Once at your car window, the officer will normally identify himself along with why you are being stopped. At any traffic stop, you should be prepared to supply your driver's license, vehicle registration, and proof of insurance, as these are common items that the officer will ask for.

### Passengers

In some cases, an officer may request the identity of the passenger(s). Unless there are extenuating circumstances, the passenger may refuse. Given that the traffic stop occurs for no other reason than an alleged traffic offense, officers do not need to know who is in the vehicle.

However, if the officer suspicions that there may be criminal activity afoot by the individual passenger and identifying the passenger may uncover or resolve the concern, it may be necessary to proceed in interviewing the occupant(s). If an officer insists upon identifying the passenger whereupon legal action is taken against the passenger, the officer will likely be required by the court to show why the passenger was seized. The court will determine the legality of the identification and seizure based on the specific facts of the case and the law.

For example, if an officer suspicions that the driver may be under the influence of alcohol or drugs and there is a passenger, the officer may request passenger identification to determine if the passenger can legally drive the vehicle in the event the driver is impaired. If the passenger refuses and cannot produce a valid driver's license, and is not under the influence, the vehicle may be towed as opposed to letting the passenger drive it.

Lastly and most importantly, the officer's personal safety must always be considered.

According to the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy, 12 percent of all on-duty officer deaths occur during the so-called routine non-felony traffic stop. If the officer does not recognize the passenger and can articulate a concern, it may indeed be reasonable to ask for the passenger's identification. This issue boils down to the exact circumstances of each traffic stop. No two traffic stops are exactly the same and it is unacceptable to make a blanket statement that passengers will always be or never be asked to provide identification. Once again, the facts of the immediate traffic stop along with the law are the guides the officer uses to make that determination. Suffice to say, lacking any other reason; passengers are not normally involved when it comes to the average traffic stop.

### The end of the traffic stop

After the officer has gathered all of the desired

*Continued on page 8*



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Spring 2007

## Employee Recognition

The City of Webster City held its annual Employee Recognition Dinner on Saturday, March 3, 2007 at the Moose Lodge. The following individuals were recognized and awards were presented.

### Service Award



Years of Service Awards were presented to the following people (left to right) front row, Rich Seiser - 40 years, Liz Pevestorf - 5 years, Beth Chelesvig - 15 years. Back row, Bill Conaway - 15 years, Lanny Bauer - 10 years, Bob Smith - 5 years, Tim Ziegenbein - 5 years, Mike McConnell - 5 years

### Attendance Award



Attendance Awards were presented to employees who used no sick leave in 2006. (left to right) Mark Glascock, Neal VanderLeest, Ted Knutson, Don Zehner, Carol Clabaugh, Mike Lund, Brandon Hayes, Kent Harfst, Pat Segar, Ann Smith, Rhonda Schulz, Jan Andrew, Pat Nokes, Lanny Bauer. Not pictured is Mark Whaley.

### Safety Award



The following departments had no injuries in 2006 and were presented with a Safety Awards. Water, Wastewater, Fire, Recreation and Administration.

New employees recognized for 2006 included Ed Sadler - City Manager, Jason Ostrem - Public Works Technician - Street Department, Weston Van Donge - Police Officer, Tina Tedrick - Part-Time Dispatcher.



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City Scene

## Wanted: Vendors & Entertainers

The City of Webster City is looking for vendors interested in participating in a Farmers Market this summer to be held at the new City Hall Plaza located at 400 Second Street in Webster City. The City is also looking for entertainers to perform Saturday evenings this summer. The Farmers Market is scheduled to run from June through October on Saturday mornings from 8:00am-12:00 noon. Approved items for sale include Iowa home grown produce or home baked goods, products or crafts. There will be no cost of any kind for vendors to display.

Entertainment at the new City Hall Plaza is scheduled for early Saturday evenings from June through September and can include bands, musicians, singers or karaoke. All styles of music are welcome and the City will pay a small stipend. Acts will be scheduled on a first come, first served basis. For more information about the Farmers Market or live entertainment please contact Pat Nokes at City Hall in Webster City. PO Box 217, Webster City, IA 50595 515-832-9141, pat\_nokes@webstercity.com

## Protected Water Areas

In 1985, the State of Iowa introduced the Protected Water Areas program into legislation. This program is very similar to the National Park Service's Wild and Scenic Rivers and National Scenic Riverways. Protected Water Areas are designated because of their natural, historic, and cultural qualities; the main goal of the program is to preserve these qualities. The Boone River (from Brewer Creek to the mouth) was selected as the first PWA in the state (currently there are a total of 5).

In 2006, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources hosted several outreach meetings to determine the location of a pilot project to further the PWA program; again, the Boone River was selected.



This year the IDNR, along with several other organizations, are working with landowners adjacent to the Boone River to discuss several options pertaining to voluntary land protection and educate them about the PWA. For more information:

<http://www.iowadnr.com/watertrails/protected.html>

## Iowa River Town of the Year!

The Board of Directors of Iowa Rivers Revival announced the selection of Webster City as Iowa River Town of the Year 2007 at the Iowa Rivers Revival Conference 3.4.07. There were several strong nominations, and Webster City received a majority of votes due to a lengthy list of attributes supported by public and private organizations, citizens, and multiple units of government that exemplify the mission of Iowa Rivers Revival – Helping Iowans Restore, Protect, and Enjoy Our Rivers. For more information on Webster City's nomination please go to [www.iowarivers.org](http://www.iowarivers.org)

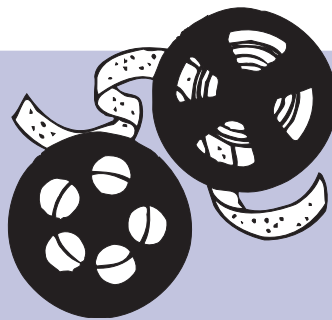
Iowa Rivers Revival will collaborate with Webster City to promote and host a Mini River Revival during the annual Boone Bash River Dash June 9-10, 2007.

## Cameras, Action, Popcorn

On Monday, March 19, the City Council approved the idea of free movies for all in Webster City. The staff is now busy putting together the details, but the initial plan is to show older movies for one and all to enjoy after dark on Saturday evenings in the summer on Hospital Hill. If this doesn't work out due to street lights and noise, optional sites are being considered. This plan is made possible by the support of City Council and the many people in Webster City who have volunteered to sponsor the actual movies for the summer and volunteered to help put on the events each week.

Why you may ask? No, the City does not want to compete with our local movie theater and should we find that we are adversely affecting their business, the idea will be re-thought. The idea is to give people one

more reason to stay in town and to come to Webster City from other areas. The City along with others in the community are planning more and more events designed to keep people in town and bring people to town. Bringing people to town and keeping people in town is good for our economy and it doesn't matter whether they come for the Farmers Market, the music in the Plaza, the sesquicentennial, the car races or whatever else we have planned. So, on a nice Saturday evening this summer, plan to stay in town, enjoy the events and top it off with a movie for the entire family!



*Continued from page 5*

paperwork, the occupants should remain inside the vehicle until the officer returns. You may wonder what occurs while you are waiting for the patrol officer to return to speak with you. During this time, the officer typically checks your driving status along with checking for any un-served warrants. The officer may also be writing a warning or a traffic citation. When the officer returns to your vehicle, you will be told if you are receiving a warning or traffic citation. If you receive a warning, there are two typical types of warnings you can receive. One is a written warning, and serves as a courtesy reminder of what traffic law you violated; the other is a fix-it ticket. The fix-it ticket will have instructions on what to do once you have corrected the violation.

If you are issued a traffic citation, the officer will explain it to you including the cost to pay the traffic citation along with a court date.

There are certain tickets that require a court appearance. In those cases, you must appear or face further court action. The officer will explain that if applicable. If you pay the fine before the court date, you do not have to go to court. If you do not feel the traffic citation is justified, you have the option to contest the traffic citation in court.

Going to court is your legal right and the choice to contest a traffic citation is your decision. It makes no difference to the police officer whether it is contested or not. Contesting a traffic citation does not cost you

more, even if you are found guilty. The exception is if you request a jury trial or hire an attorney. In those cases, there may be additional costs; however, representing yourself in court is always an option. After the officer explains the traffic citation, you will be asked for your signature. Your signature is not a plea of guilty, but serves as a promise to appear in court or pay the fine on the traffic citation. Your signature also indicates that the information you provided is true and correct. If you refuse to sign the ticket, the officer will place you under arrest for the violation. Failing to sign the traffic citation, is an assertion that you do not promise to pay for or appear in court for the traffic violation. Once you sign the traffic citation, the officer will give you two copies. One copy is for the court (when you pay the fine or appear in court) and the other is for your own records.

At this point, the typical traffic stop is completed and the officer will advise you that you are free to leave. The officer will return to the police car and wait for you to get back into traffic. Remember that the police officer is just trying to do his job and keep everyone as safe as possible. Most of our squad cars are equipped with video/audio recorders for both the officers' safety and yours. If you feel an officer acted inappropriately, feel free to contact the police chief at 832-9166 who can review the video.



## Webster City Needs Your Voice

This is your community.

Please let us know if you have suggestions or changes that need to be made.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

For all valid comments, signatures are required.

My name is \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**Clip and mail to:**  
CITY SCENE COMMENTS  
P.O. Box 217  
Webster City, IA 50595

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City of Webster City

Ph: 515-832-9151

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