

# BELDING BUGLE

DECEMBER, 2009

## *City Manager's Office*

Greetings,

Once again in this newsletter we are making people aware of the Home-buyer Purchase Rehabilitation Program. This is an excellent program if you are planning on buying a house. The program provides up to \$10,000 in down payment and closing cost assistance, which is a ten-year deferred loan at 0% interest. In addition, the best part of the program is that up to \$20,000 can be borrowed to fix up the house. This loan will be forgiven (not have to be paid back) if the homeowner lives in, and does not refinance the home for ten years.

As a result of a couple 100% grants, we will be installing security cameras at City Hall, the Depot, the Dial-a-Ride garage on Front Street, and Central Riverside Park. Installing cameras at Central Riverside Park has long been a goal. Hopefully this will help in minimizing damage to the park.

The M-44 Corridor Enhancement Project is progressing very well. The contractors have done quality work and have been good to work with. So far there have been very few issues on this project. The decorative lights are scheduled to be installed the first part of January. Electrical boxes from Stahlin Enclosures here in town are being used on M-44 project and

also on the Bridge and Main Streetscape project downtown. It is nice to be able to use a local manufacturing company for these purchases.

Future plans call for connecting the pathway on M-44 to the pathway on Water Street, which now ends near Morgan Street. The pathway would go behind the houses on the west side of Water Street along Loveland, which is a platted but undeveloped street, and subsequently connect exactly where the bituminous ten foot wide pathway now ends on M-44. If not for the tough economic times and budget issues, we would have already applied for a grant from the MDNR to make this connection. Now this is not even in the six-year capital improvement plan of the City.

As far as the six-year capital improvement plan goes, there are not a whole lot of items on the plan. Next spring we will be milling and repaving Hall Street from M-44 to Center and also Alderman from Main to Washington. American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Stimulus) funds will pay for 100% of the construction costs, up to \$110,000, for this project. The City will pay for the engineering costs associated with this project.

We received a very timely grant for wastewater

improvements to upgrade two lift stations and to remove residuals from the lagoons at the wastewater treatment facility. The reason for the timeliness is two fold. The first reason is that the MDEQ is mandating that we remove the residuals from pond one by next summer, which would have cost us about \$300,000. Now, we will be able to remove the residuals and upgrade two lift stations for a total cost to the city of \$149,200. The total estimated costs for this project are \$746,000, of which the grant will cover \$596,800, or 80%, and the City's portion will be \$149,200, or 20%.

The second reason for the timeliness pertains to the two lift stations we plan to upgrade. The Stocking Street Lift Station, which was built in the 1960's, is on its last leg and is in desperate need of repair. The West Ellis Lift Station is running at full capacity and is barely able to keep up with the flow due to Candlestone hooking up to the sewer system last year. Once these two lift stations are upgraded, we will have upgraded all seven lift stations.

The capital improvement projects mentioned above are paid for out of the Capital Improvements Fund, Sewer Fund, Water Fund, and a few others. Once the above projects are complete, we do not have anything major in

the works nor are we trying to line up projects. We are going to try and put \$30,000 per year toward local streets, which will not go far, but is at least a start. When funds are available for capital projects, an emphasis will be put on local streets, which are the lesser traveled streets. Please see the April 2008 newsletter, which can be accessed on the City's website, for more information about major and local streets and the funding mechanisms for each. We also are going to try and dedicate at least \$25,000 per year toward City Hall, which has not been given the attention it needs.

However, the one fund where we are having problems is in the General Fund. The State Legislature and Governor have recently cut our funds by another \$90,000. On top of this, our property taxes will be declining by \$50,000 this coming year. We need to cut about \$200,000 out of the General Fund in the coming months. This will be very difficult because there are not many places left to cut. Our full-time staffing level has been cut over 26% in the last five years through attrition. However, we need to have a balanced budget and we will be striving to achieve this requirement.

Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you very much for the opportunity to serve.

Sincerely,  
Randall S. DeBruine  
City Manager

*Belding Police Department*



PLEASE CONTACT THE POLICE DEPARTMENT FOR A VACATION HOUSE CHECK.

RESIDENTS ARE REMINDED THAT THERE IS NO PARKING ON CITY STREETS FROM 2 A.M. TO 6 A.M. FROM NOVEMBER 1ST THROUGH MARCH 31ST.

Take some time to keep from becoming a victim of crime. The best way to AVOID IT is by not giving a criminal the opportunity to commit crimes against you. Do not let yourself be a target.

- Eliminate the opportunity for the thief to steal your property.
- Properly secure your personal property.
- Properly mark your valuables for identification.
- Make it hard for the criminal to commit a crime.
- Report suspicious activity in your neighborhood. Suspicious activity can be best described as a person(s) conduct or actions that does not fit the norm for your neighborhood. If it looks suspicious, don't wait. Report it to the police!

If your going away for an extended period of time please contact the police department directly or visit us at the web [www.belding.mi.us](http://www.belding.mi.us) click on police department for a vacation house check form.

The Belding Police Department received funding from

*Dial-A-Ride*

With winter weather arriving, the demands on our bus system increase. Please allow extra time for the bus to arrive and plan your trips to appointments well in advance so you won't be disappointed. The bus could take up to 1/2 hour or slightly longer from the time of your call to arrive during peak hours.

The bus system will be closed for the holidays on December

the Department of Justice under the 2009 Recovery Act Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program. The funds that were received are being used to improve security with the installation of cameras at City Hall and in Central Riverside Park. The cameras in the park will provide surveillance to the pavilions and park property. This addition will greatly assist the police department with detection of crime and the apprehension of perpetrators.

No Parking on City streets 2:00 a.m. to 6:00 a.m. from November 1<sup>st</sup> through March 31<sup>st</sup>. The signs are posted on the major streets entering the city.

Another parking issue that has become problematic is wrong way parking:

**MICHIGAN VEHICLE CODE (EXCERPT) Act 300 of 1949**

Sec. 675. (1) Except as otherwise provided in this section and this chapter, a vehicle stopped or parked upon a highway or street shall be stopped or parked with the wheels of the

vehicle parallel to the roadway and within 12 inches of any curb existing at the right of the vehicle.

Take some time to review your winter driving tips:

- Keep a safe distance from the vehicle ahead of you.
- Clear all window surfaces of ice and snow.
- Carry a shovel and a winter survival kit in your vehicle. Articles in the kit should include a blanket, non perishable foods, water and a flashlight.
- If your stuck in deep snow and you stay with the car, keep the tailpipe clear of snow, roll your windows down to let fresh air in and keep lights on so that you can be seen. If it appears to be an extended period, run your engine for a short time each hour.

Please keep sidewalks clear of ice and snow and remove accumulation within 24 hours of the ice storm or snowfall.

Please have a safe and joyful holiday season, and prosperous New Year.

24, 25, 26 and 31, 2009, and on January 1 and 2, 2010.

Information about transportation service is available by contacting (616) 794-3278 weekdays between the hours of 6:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m., and Saturdays from 9 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. You may also visit the city's website @ [www.ci.belding.mi.us](http://www.ci.belding.mi.us).

Brochures are available at the Pere Marquette Depot, 100

Depot St., or a brochure can be mailed by request.



PLEASE ALLOW EXTRA TIME FOR THE BUS TO ARRIVE DURING THE WINTER MONTHS.

## Belding Fire Department

The high cost of home heating fuels and utilities have caused many residents to search for alternate sources of home heating. Fireplaces, wood burning stoves, and space heaters are all acceptable methods of heating, but without the proper precautions, they can be a major contributing factor in residential fires.

- Have your chimney or wood stove inspected and cleaned annually.
- Keep the area around heating units free of combustible materials.
- Never use flammable liquids to start a fire.
- Soak ashes in water and place in a metal container outside your home.

Many Fire Departments have been experiencing a recent increase in the number of fires caused by the unsafe use of

candles. Some important safety tips to remember when burning candles:

- Never leave a burning candle unattended.
- Keep lighted candles out of the reach of children and pets.
- Burn candles away from drafts, other heat sources, and all flammable objects or materials such as curtains or decorations.
- Burn candles on a non-combustible surface such as a ceramic saucer or plate.
- Be sure to snuff out candles before falling asleep, going out, or leaving the room.

Extension cords are a common cause of electrical fires.

- Use only extension cords which are rated for the power used by the device

they are powering.

- Extension cords should not be used as a long-term solution.
- Extension cords should never run inside walls or under rugs or furniture.
- Do not use any cord that has become stiff or cracked.

Develop and practice a home fire escape plan with your family. Select a meeting place outside that everyone can get to. Once you are out of the house – ***stay out!***

City of Belding ordinance requires visible house numbers at or near the front entrance of all residences and businesses within the city limits. Visible street numbers are critical to emergency service personnel when trying to locate the origin of an emergency call.

“DEVELOP AND PRACTICE A HOME FIRE ESCAPE PLAN WITH YOUR FAMILY.”

## Finance Department

### **Park Reservations:**

All parks are available to use during the year from May 24<sup>th</sup> until October 1<sup>st</sup>. To reserve a pavilion, please fill out a reservation form. All requests are handled on a first come, first serve basis beginning January 2, 2010. The parks that require reservations are: Lightning Bend, East Riverside, and Central Riverside, which has 2 pavilions. The reservation forms are also available online at [www.ci.belding.mi.us](http://www.ci.belding.mi.us), but please make sure the date is available when the form is turned in at city hall.

### **Water Services:**

Please provide heat in the area where the water meter is

located in your house, since failing to provide warmth in that area may result in the meter cracking or breaking. If meter replacement is required, the homeowner will be billed. The charge for a meter replacement ranges from \$135.00 to \$235.00. There is also a fee for having the water service disconnected at the street level and those charges are as follows:

Order on and order off from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. - \$15.00 per occurrence

Order on and order off on weekends, holidays, or after hours - \$60.00 per occurrence

### **City Taxes:**

City of Belding winter taxes

will be mailed out December 1, 2009, with payment due by February 15, 2010 without any additional penalties. The 2009 summer taxes may be paid at the city until February 28, 2010. After this date, all taxes will be payable at the Courthouse in Ionia.

The 2009-2010 Budget and Financial Audit report are available for review at [www.ci.belding.mi.us](http://www.ci.belding.mi.us)



CITY PARKS MAY BE RESERVED BEGINNING JANUARY 2, 2010.

Code Enforcement

Be a considerate resident!

When snow falls, remember to clean your sidewalks within 24 hours of any accumulation. For those "snowbirds" who leave Michigan, please make arrangements to have someone clean them for you. If the City must contract your sidewalk cleaning, it will be assessed to your taxes.

Any accumulation of garbage or cardboard provides a home for rodents and bugs, such as rats, mice and cockroaches. Please keep all areas around your residence clean.

The National Center for Healthy Housing is advising Michigan residents that bed-bugs are once again appearing in our state. Be clean and sanitary in your living practices. For more information, go to www.centerforhealthyhousing.

Trees in the Community

City and Residents Must Work Together to Keep Urban Forest Healthy

Both the City of Belding and its residents play an important role in keeping Belding's urban forest healthy. With that in mind, it is important for residents to understand the public and private responsibilities that come into play with Belding's tree care.

As defined in the City Code, the City is responsible for the maintenance and care of trees in the right-of-way (ROW) along City streets. Although the ROW varies by street, it is generally the area between the curb and sidewalk and is re-

ferred to as the "parkway".

No unlicensed or inoperable vehicles are allowed within the city limits, unless stored within a four sided enclosed building. Building materials may not accumulate unless a building permit has been issued for that specific address. Garbage receptacles may not be put to the curb any earlier than 24 hrs. before pickup day, and must be removed from the curb within 24 hrs. of pickup.

Animal Ordinances state that no more than 2 dogs and 2 cats are allowed per residence, and there is a Leash Ordinance in effect for all City Parks. Please carry a receptacle and properly dispose of all animal waste. Animal feces must be disposed of properly.

Parking Ordinances do not permit parking of any kind in

ferred to as the "parkway". Many residents consider these parkway trees to be part of their yard and, as such, the City encourages these residents to take an ownership role in these trees by watering, mulching, preventing damage and reporting problems or concerns.

However, the City assumes the role of trimming, treating or removing these trees. Residents should not take these matters into their hands and try to trim or remove a City tree themselves. Not only is this dangerous work, but it can be damaging to the trees.

Trees are an important component of the City's urban envi-

ronment. The City's commitment to tree-lined streets has earned it the "Tree City USA" designation from the National Arbor Day Foundation for the past 6 years.

Any work which is done in the City Right-of-way requires a permit. This helps to protect utilities and street operations from unauthorized digging. Building permits are required for any structure over 200 square feet. A Zoning permit is needed for most types of construction.

City Ordinances are available for review at the Belding Library, City Hall or www.ci.belding.mi.us, so check them out!

For any questions, be sure to call the Building and Zoning Department at 794-1900, Ext. 209. We're here to help you!

A Michigan Winter is the best winter. Enjoy!

Residents are thanked for their efforts in keeping the urban forest healthy for years to come.

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FOUNDATION FOR  
THE PAST 6 YEARS.

## *Belding Housing Commission*

Greetings from Belding Housing Commission . . .

The provision of shelter, clothing, and food in an affordable manner is of utmost importance for individuals and families as we approach the onset of winter and the holiday season. Facing the challenges of daily living in the current economy has been difficult for many, and especially for those who are facing added burdens of job loss, medical bills, termination of benefits or mortgage foreclosures. The Belding community is fortunate to have the availability of many human service agencies ready to provide much-needed assistance to those in need. As a reminder, the local food pantry, emergency fund, Eight-Cap, Goodwill, Mel Trotter Missions, churches, United Way, the Commission on Aging, and the housing commission may be able to assist.

Please do not hesitate to contact one of these agencies if a need exists, or if there is a desire through donation to help those less fortunate.

The housing commission provides rental units, based on both flat rents and income to eligible individuals. Allowances are given for utilities to all residents, and medical deductions are given for seniors, the handicapped and disabled. Information about income limits and qualifying for residency can be obtained by phoning the housing commission at 794-1740, or stopping by the office at 41 Belhaven Street. Belding Housing Commission is an Equal Housing Opportunity agency.

The 2009 Stimulus program for the housing commission has been completed. New roofs have been put on Belhaven I and II, and Wood-

haven. The 2009 funding for routine capital improvements has been released, and work on the items identified in the annual plan will begin over the winter months. Funding for these improvements is provided by grants from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The housing commission is pleased with the work near Taft Court on M-44 with the addition of sidewalk on the north and south side of the road. This enhancement will improve the safety of walkers and will be aesthetically pleasing for this area. Although it has been several years since the city received the funding and authorization from the state for this project, the wait has been worthwhile.

Best wishes for the coming season, and Happy Holidays to all!

PLEASE DO NOT  
HESITATE TO  
CONTACT ONE OF  
THE LISTED AGENCIES  
IF A NEED EXISTS, OR  
IF YOU DESIRE TO  
MAKE A DONATION TO  
HELP THOSE LESS  
FORTUNATE.

## *Homebuyer Purchase Rehabilitation Program*

The City of Belding received a Homebuyer Purchase Rehabilitation grant (HPR). The program will supply up to \$10,000 in downpayment and closing cost assistance, and up to \$20,000 in rehabilitation money to income-eligible purchasers (at or less than 80% median income) for the purchase of a home within the City of Belding.

Currently the following household income limits are based on adjusted gross income:

1 person	under	\$32,850	5 persons	under	\$50,000
2 persons	under	\$37,550	6 persons	under	\$54,000
3 persons	under	\$42,250	7 persons	under	\$58,000
4 persons	under	\$46,950	8 persons	under	\$62,000

The money will be zero-percent deferred loans with the Michigan State Housing Development Authority. All MSHDA loan money is prorated and forgiven after 10 years of residing in the home. If the home is sold or refinanced prior to the 10-year period, the loan must be paid back based on the prorated amount. Income-eligible buyers must be able to obtain a primary, 30-year, fixed-rate mortgage with a competitive interest rate.

If you are eligible for the program, please take advantage of the benefits it has to offer! For more information on the program, please contact Marilyn Smith at 734-341-1866 or [ms@smithhousing.com](mailto:ms@smithhousing.com).

## ALVAH N. BELDING MEMORIAL LIBRARY – Expanding Opportunities, Building Community



**LIBRARY CANDLELIGHT RECEPTION** The Friends of the Belding Library will host their annual **Candlelight Reception** on **Monday evening, November 30, at 8:00 p.m.** Refreshments will be served and the Belding Congregational Church Bell Choir will provide entertainment. A silent auction of special donated gifts will be held to benefit the library's Early Literacy Workstations. Everyone is invited!

**NOTICE OF HOLIDAY CLOSINGS** The Belding Library will be closed for the holiday season December 24-27 and December 31- January 3. The library will be open during regular hours on Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday, December 21, 22 and 23 and December 28, 29 and 30. Regular library schedule resumes on Monday, January 4. Items may be returned in the drop box when the library is closed.

**FRIENDS OF THE BELDING LIBRARY** The Friends are still accepting dues for the 2009/2010 year. Dues are \$10 for individual, \$15 for a family, and \$75 for business. Please support your local library by joining now. The Friends also need people willing to work on committees and special projects.

**2010 BOOKED-WITH-FRIENDS SERIES** Booked-With-Friends programs are held on the third Thursday of each month at 12 noon, January through April. Reservations are encouraged but not required. Please call the library (616-794-1450) the week before the program. Attendees are welcome to bring a sack lunch. Beverages and sweet treat will be provided.

► **THURSDAY, JANUARY 21, 2010 – 12:00 NOON**

**VISIT TROPICAL ST.KITTS-NEVIS** with **Deb and Paul Richardson**. Put your winter blues on the back burner while Deb and Paul guide you through the beautiful island of St. Kitts, Paul's original homeland.

► **TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2010 – 12:00 NOON**

**E-BAY DAYS** - Gregg Boog of the U.S. Postal Service will give advice on how to make eBay and the postal service work harder for you. Discover power-selling strategies and smart shipping solutions. Whether you are looking to list your first item on eBay or you are already an experienced eBay seller, you won't want to miss this eBay Day!

► **THURSDAY, MARCH 18, 2010 – 12:00 NOON** PROGRAM TO BE ANNOUNCED AT A LATER DATE

► **THURSDAY, APRIL 15, 2010 – 12:00 NOON**

**AMERICAN RED CROSS** Susan Zahm and Sharon Bouck will give the latest information about their service with the American Red Cross.

**READING ON THE SAME PAGE IN IONIA COUNTY** The title selected by the *Ionia County Library Association* for the 2010 "*On THE SAME PAGE IN IONIA COUNTY*" reading event is "*The Help*" by Kathryn Stockett. This novel is set during the nascent civil rights movement in Jackson, Mississippi, where black women were trusted to raise white children but not to polish the household silver. Eugenia Skeeter Phelan is just home from college in 1962, and, anxious to become a writer, is advised to hone her chops by writing about what disturbs you. She begins to collect the stories of the black women on whom the country club sets relies and mistrusts by enlisting the help of Aibileen, a maid who's raised 17 children, and Aibileen's best friend Minny, who's found herself unemployed more than a few times after mouthing off to her white employers. Assured and layered, full of heart and history, this bestseller is highly recommended. Readers may check out a copy at the Belding Library and participate in one of the book discussions held January through March, at any of the six Ionia County public libraries, or they form their own discussion group. Bookmarks with the dates and times of library discussion groups will be available at the Belding Library in January. The goal of this event is to have as many Ionia residents reading and discussing the same book at the same time as we can. It will be a great read for the long winter months!! A special countywide, culminating event is being planned and will be announced in 2010.

## ALVAH N. BELDING MEMORIAL LIBRARY – Continued

### ANBL YOUTH PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

Call 794-1450 or stop at the circulation desk to register for any and all of the following programs.

#### WEEKLY CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

- ▶ **WIGGLY WEDNESDAY** for children 3-5 years will be held 10-11 a.m. each Wednesday. Participants will hear stories, do crafts and play games. Parents or caregivers are encouraged to attend the last half hour to help with the crafts.
- ▶ **FRIDAY FRIENDS** for children 18-36 months will be held 11-11:45 a.m. each Friday. Participants will enjoy stories, songs and friends each week. An adult must accompany each child during the program.
- ▶ **BABY TIME** for infants 1-17 months will be held 10–10:20 a.m. each Friday. The program uses music, nursery rhymes, and stories to encourage language acquisition and emotional bonding, which helps prepare children for lifelong learning and literacy. An adult must accompany the child during the program.

#### MONTHLY FAMILY PROGRAMS

- ▶ **FAMILY STORY TIME** Join us the **second Thursday at 6:30 p.m. each month** for a story read by a special guest. Children of all ages are welcome. On **Thursday, December 10**, Santa will be our special visitor. Listen to Santa read a story and visit while you enjoy hot chocolate and cookies.
- ▶ **DROP-IN KID'S KRAFT SATURDAY** Come to the library for family crafts the **third Saturday of each month anytime between 10:00 a.m. and 12 noon**. On **December 19**, we will be doing Christmas crafts.

#### SPECIAL YOUTH PROGRAMS

- ▶ **ANNUAL LEGO CONTEST** Show us your Lego building skills by entering the annual parent & child (grades K-8<sup>th</sup>) Lego building contest. We will meet Thursday, January 7, 2010, at 6:30 p.m. to discuss the rules, theme, important dates and to receive your platform board. You will have two weeks to build your project at home. After this time, finished Lego projects will be brought to the library and displayed for voting. Awards will be given on Saturday, February 6, 2010 at 12 noon.
- ▶ **FANCY NANCY PARTY** for Mothers & Daughters (ages 3-10). Mothers and daughters should dress fancy for this special occasion. We will enjoy tea, snacks, a Fancy Nancy story and more. Due to popular demand, we will offer two Fancy Nancy events, 6:00 p.m. on Thursday evening, March 4 and 10:00 a.m. on Saturday morning, March 6. Choose the time that works best for you and sign up while space is still available. *The library reserves the right to combine the dates to one event if registrations are below minimum.*
- ▶ **MICHIGAN CYBER SAFETY INITIATIVE SERIES (CSI)** *These programs to inform the public about the importance of Internet safety were developed by Attorney General Mike Cox and are being offered by the Alvah N Belding Library. Attend one to educate yourself and your children about Internet safety.*



#### ■ **Thursday, January 21, 2010, 6:30 p.m. – COMMUNITY SEMINAR FOR PARENTS AND ADULTS**

This session provides practical tools including how to access the Michigan Sex Offender Registry, search and access social networking sites (i.e. MySpace and Facebook), view Internet history logs to determine a child's online activity, turn on safe surfing filters, and obtain reliable information on parental control software.

#### ■ **Thursday, January 28, 2010, 6:30 p.m. – FOR 4<sup>TH</sup> & 5<sup>TH</sup> GRADERS**

Through video and interactive curriculum, students will appreciate why it is critical to protect their personal information, why they should never arrange to meet in-person someone they first encounter online, learn how to recognize common techniques predators use to deceive students, and how to avoid and, if necessary, respond to cyber harassment.

#### ■ **Thursday, February 4, 2010, 6:30 p.m. – FOR 6<sup>TH</sup> – 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADERS**

In addition to the topics covered in the 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade seminar, students are cautioned about revealing personal information on social networking sites and watch compelling videos featuring peer Internet predator and cyber bullying victims.



**CITY of BELDING**  
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**Recreation Advisory Board Vacancy**

The board is a five person committee appointed by the City Council with a three-year term. The Board advises the city council and city manager on matters concerning recreation in the city.

An application is available at [www.ci.belding.mi.us](http://www.ci.belding.mi.us) or at city hall.

Please consider serving the community in this way.

*Museum*

**Christmas Trees**

You're invited to visit the Belding Museum on Sunday, December 6th, from 1-4 p.m. Our holiday display will feature Christmas trees that have been decorated by Belding Area Schools students and various organizations from our community. The trees are a delight to see, decked out in handmade or unique ornaments to reflect each group's personality.

**Breakfast with Santa**

Please join us for "Breakfast with Santa" on Saturday, December 5th from 9-11 a.m. at the Belding Museum. Santa will arrive ready to hear your Christmas wishes while you enjoy a warm pancake breakfast, special treats, and a tour of the museum decorated in its holiday finest! All adults must be accompanied by a child! Event is free. Donations gladly accepted.

*Home for the Holidays*

**3rd Annual Celebration**

A community holiday celebration will be held on Saturday, December 5, 2009 at the Covered Village Mall from 12 noon to 5 p.m.

Decorated trees will be on display to earn your vote through a child's unwrapped toy (donated to Toys for Tots), a non-perishable food item (donated to local food pantries) or a small cash donation for community charities.

A Silent Auction will benefit local charities.

Enjoy cookie and ornament decorating, live entertainment, refreshments, and make a card for The Troops.

Santa will be present from 1-3 p.m. to greet children.

The Tree Lighting Ceremony will take place at 4 p.m.

*Lights in the Park*

**5th Annual  
Lights in the Park  
Saturday December 5, 2009  
6-8 p.m.**

The Silk City Nature Trail will be lit with candles from the corner of Ashfield and Park Streets, down throughout the park.

Stop by and visit the Silk City Nature Association for some Holiday Cheer!

Sponsored by the Silk City Nature Association

*New Year's Eve*

**New Year's Eve Celebration**

To celebrate the New Year, a spaghetti dinner will be held at the Belrockton on Thursday, December 31, 2009.

Hors d'oeuvres will be served at 6 p.m., with dinner and entertainment following.

Tickets are limited to 100 and will be available for purchase at city hall at a cost of \$15.00.

The fireworks will take place at 8:30 p.m. at Central Riverside Park.

Following the fireworks, please join us at the Belrockton for cake and punch, free of charge.

Sponsored by the Belding Homecoming Committee.

**City Hall offices will be closed:**  
**December 24, 25 and 31**  
**January 1**