



The **CURRENT**

For the township, by the township



TOWN OF KINNICKINNIC

APRIL 2018

The Town Board has authorized the renewal of The Current. The goals are to increase elector involvement in Township affairs, inform electors on Town business and timely topics, and increase awareness of what Kinnickinnic Township has to offer residents.

Submissions will first appear in the Current News section (formerly Newsletter section) of the Town Website. When sufficient content is reached in Current News a print copy of The Current containing those submissions will be made available at the Town Hall. It will also be on the Town website.

A BASIC GUIDE TO NAVIGATING YOUR TOWN GOVERNMENT By Current Staff

This article is intended as a guide for Town of Kinnickinnic residents. Additional information can be obtained by contacting the Town Clerk during regular office hours, the Town Website, or by contacting your Town officials.

The Town Hall

The Town Hall belongs to the people of Kinnickinnic Township. All regular Town meetings are held there.

- The Town Hall is open for regular office hours on Tuesday and Thursday from 9 A.M. to 2 P.M.
- The Town Hall is available for rental. This is for Town residents only. Rental is \$75 for the day with a \$200 deposit required.



Kinnickinnic Town Hall

In this Issue

A BASIC GUIDE TO NAVIGATING YOUR TOWN GOVERNMENT (1)

ROAD MUSINGS (7)

KINNICKINNIC CHURCH'S 150TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION (8)

FOR THE BIRDS (9)

A RIVER TO LIVE BY (11)

SUBMIT TO THE CURRENT (12)

The deposit is refunded after cleaning by those using the hall. No alcoholic beverages are allowed and the Hall capacity is 99 people.

- Contact the Town Clerk for details and reservations.
- The address for the Kinnickinnic Town Hall is 1271 County Road J, River Falls, WI 54022.

The Town Board

The Town Board of Kinnickinnic consists of a Town Chairman, four Supervisors, the Clerk, and Treasurer. Each Supervisor serves a 2 year elected term. Two of the four Supervisors are up for election or re-election each year. Some of the duties of the Town Board include:

- Conducting the financial affairs for the Township including preparing the annual budget, financial statement, and annual audit.
- Designating public depositories for Town funds.
- Approving contracts and bills to be paid.
- Obtaining fire and ambulance service for Town residents.
- Maintaining and caring for our roads.

Town Chairperson

The Town Chairperson serves a two year elected term. Some of the Chairperson duties are as follows:

- Presiding over meetings of the Town Board and being responsible for Board meeting agendas.
- Serving on the Planning Commission, Road Committee, and presiding at Town elector meetings.
- Signing documents such as ordinances, resolutions, contracts, etc.
- Signing checks and transfer orders.

Town Clerk

The Kinnickinnic Town Clerk is appointed by the Town Board. Some of the duties of the Clerk include:

- Being the custodian of the Town records including Town finances
- Recording minutes at all Town meetings, providing a monthly report to the Board, and conducting regular posted office hours.
- Preparing and properly posting agendas for Town meetings, ordinances, resolutions, and bids.
- Working with the Board in September to create the Annual Budget for the following year.
- Performing election functions such as scheduling election workers, supervising completion of election paperwork and testing election equipment.
- Processing alcohol licenses and providing notices.
- Attesting to and signing documents such as ordinances, resolutions, contracts, etc.
- Signing checks, drafts, and transfer orders.
- Preparing the tax roll and delivering it to the Town Treasurer.

Town Treasurer

The Treasurer is appointed by the Town Board. Some of the Treasurer's duties are:

- Receiving and taking charge of all monies belonging to the Town.
- Providing monthly financial reports to the Board, and working with the clerk to make sure it all balances each month and at the end of the year.

- Providing dog tags to residents upon receipt of proof of rabies vaccinations and appropriate fee. Providing an up-to-date list to Board members and to the County throughout the year.
- Assisting the county with Lottery Credit audits and sending out the appropriate letters to residents.
- Working with the Board in September to create the budget for the following year.
- Preparing and mailing property tax bills in mid-December, and collecting the first half of the property taxes due by January 31.
- Signing checks, drafts, and transfer orders.

Dog Licenses

Dog licensing is required annually by statute. Contact the Town Treasurer at (715) 425-1180 with questions. A printable form for obtaining an annual dog license is available from the Town Website: www.kinnickinnicTwp.org. The Form is also mailed each December with the Tax Bill (s) for the year. Fees: **\$4** if neutered/spayed - **\$9** if not. All dogs must be licensed, 5 months of age or older, or 5 months old within the license year. Proof of Rabies shots must be submitted on purchase of license. Dates of area Rabies Clinics are published in the newspapers and shoppers. If the tag should get lost throughout the year, please contact the Town Treasurer for a replacement tag.

Town Meeting Agenda Information

An agenda is posted for all town meetings that are subject to State of Wisconsin open meeting laws. This would include agendas for Town Board meetings, Annual Town

meetings, Planning Commission meetings, and Road Committee meetings.

These agendas are posted on the Town Hall front door, in the River Falls Journal, at the County Road J bulletin board, and on the Town website.

Town Board Meetings

Regular Town Board meetings are held once a month (normally the first Tuesday) and are subject to State of Wisconsin open meeting laws.

- An agenda is posted for public viewing in advance of each meeting.
- Except for a time allotted for public comments the Board must stick to the topics on the agenda.
- Town residents may bring matters of concern to the Town Board by requesting that an item be placed on the agenda. This must be done at least 2 weeks in advance of the meeting date. Residents doing so should be prepared to comment and answer questions regarding the chosen topic *only*.

Annual Town Meeting

Each year in April there is an annual Town meeting and all Township residents are invited to attend.

- Residents are free to bring up any topic concerning the Township.
- Concerns of all Town residents are heard at this meeting.

Kinnickinnic residents are urged to attend the Annual Meeting each year.

Township Ordinances

A Town Ordinance is an authoritative rule or law.

- They are used to regulate or prohibit certain types of conduct or actions.

- They have prohibitions or regulations typically with penalty provisions for failure to comply.
- The Town Board passes, amends, or repeals Town Ordinances.
- Ordinances can be viewed on the Town website.
- New Ordinances are posted at the Town Hall, in the River Falls Journal, at the County Road J bulletin board, and on the Town website.

Township Resolutions

A Town Resolution is a formal determination or expression of opinion by the Town Board.

- Resolutions do not contain penalties.
- They are often used to establish internal Board policy positions.
- Resolutions may be viewed on the Town website.

Elections

- Contact the Town Clerk to register to vote in Kinnickinnic Township.
- You must be a resident of Kinnickinnic Township for a minimum of 10 days in order to vote in the Township.
- You may also get information and register at the website; www.myvote.wi.gov
- Information about elections can be found on the State website at www.elections.wi.gov
- Voters must present an ID when voting.

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission was created by Town Ordinance 2005-2 and usually meets the third Wednesday of the month.

- The commission is made up of the Town Chairperson, one additional member of the Town Board, and 5 citizen members who are not otherwise Town officials.
- The Commission is primarily concerned with land use matters and is considered the Town planning agency.
- To get on the Planning Commission agenda a request requires a minimum of 2 weeks lead time.
- Planning Commission meetings are subject to Wisconsin State Open Meeting Law.
- Meeting notices and agendas are publically posted in the same place as Town Board meetings.

Road Committee

The Road Committee was established by resolution of the Town Board.

- The Road Committee advises the Board on all matters concerning Town roads.
- Road reviews are done on a semi-annual basis, (one review in the spring and one in the fall).
- You must be on the Road Committee agenda if you wish to bring up a topic at the meeting. A 2 week lead time is required.
- Road Committee meetings are subject to open meeting laws and notices are posted on the Town Hall front door, at the County Road J bulletin board, and on the Town Website.

Roads and Driveways

A driveway permit is required by the Township to access Town roads. For County roads contact the St. Croix County Highway Department. For State roads contact Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

Town of Kinnickinnic Road and Driveway Ordinance 2013-4 spells out requirements for driveways and for placement of mailboxes.

The Town of Kinnickinnic contracts St. Croix County to perform snow plowing and mowing duties. In addition, a private contractor performs woody vegetation removal for the Town.

Fire Numbers

The Road and Driveway Ordinance 2013-4 spells out the requirements for placement of house addresses. Emergency responders rely upon these numbers when responding to an emergency call.

- Fire numbers should be placed on the right side of the driveway, when facing the driveway from the road, and at the right-of-way line.
- The sign shall be kept clear of obstruction and shall be placed parallel to the road for visibility in both directions.
- Fire numbers are issued for new building permits and are to be picked up at the Town Hall.
- It is the responsibility of the home owner to place these signs properly.

Property Tax Assessment

The Property Tax Assessor for the Township is a state certified independent contractor appointed by the Town Board.

Open Book

The "Open Book" is held during the month of May and is publically noticed.

- At the Open Book the Township Assessor is present at the Town Hall to review questions and concerns regarding property tax assessment.
- If residents disagree with their property tax assessment and it is not resolved at Open Book, then they may request that their argument be heard at the Board of Review (BOR).

Board of Review

The Board of Review is a quasi-legal body made up of members of the Town Board.

- Residents who have not resolved property tax issues at Open Book may wish to be heard at the Board of Review (BOR).
- Those wishing to bring their case to the BOR must file to do so no less than 48 hours prior to the BOR's first meeting. This can be done with the Town Clerk during regular business hours at the Town hall.

Zoning

The Township of Kinnickinnic falls under the zoning laws of St. Croix County. The St. Croix County website, www.co.saint-croix.wi.us provides detailed information on zoning law.

Building Inspector & Building Permits

The Town of Kinnickinnic Building Code (Ordinance 2010A) provides for the Board to hire a Building Inspector.

- Our State Certified Building Inspector issues permits and performs inspections for Kinnickinnic Township.

- Permits are required for new structures, and certain remodeling, electrical, plumbing projects, septic systems, driveways, etc.
- Ordinance 2010-1A, Building Code for Kinnickinnic Township spells out the requirements for permits.

Fire and Ambulance Service

Fire and ambulance services are provided by the City of River Falls.

Burning

Actual burning permits are not issued but you must contact the St. Croix County Dispatch at 715-386-4701 on the day you intend to burn. When issued, County burning bans must be obeyed. If you live on the border of Pierce and St. Croix Counties it would be advisable to call Pierce Co. Dispatch also.

Garbage and Recycling

The Town offers a recycling container which is on the Town hall property. The recycling facility is for Town of **Kinnickinnic residents only. Only items listed on the container may be deposited in the bins.** Examples include; Newspaper, cardboard, magazines and other paper products suitable for recycling, like office paper, bundled or put in brown paper bags. Metal (food cans, pop cans, etc. tin and aluminum, flattened will take up less space), Plastics (#1 and #2 caps removed). Glass products, rinsed and caps removed.

St. Croix County offers special collections for hazardous waste, appliances, electronics, and tires. www.co.saint-croix.wi.us/Departments/Recycling/

St. Croix County

Kinnickinnic Township is one of 21 townships that make up St. Croix County. An official directory for St. Croix County can be obtained for \$1.00 from the County Clerk's office at the St. Croix Co. Government Center at 1101 Carmichael Road, Hudson, WI 54016. Visit the St. Croix County website at www.co.saint-croix.wi.us

Law enforcement services for Kinnickinnic Township are provided by St. Croix County. For emergencies call 911 and for non-emergencies contact the St. Croix County Dispatch at 715-386-4701.

Kinnickinnic Township Contact Information

Chair: Jerry Olson – 715-307-4627
kinnijerry@gmail.com

Supervisor 1: Axel Bogdan – 715-426-6119
kinnisupervisor1@icloud.com

Supervisor 2: Dave Nelson – 715-425-8774
kinnisupervisor2@icloud.com

Supervisor 3: Alex Williams – 715-222-4111
kinnisupervisor3@icloud.com

Supervisor 4: Mae Wolfe – 715-821-9350
kinnisupervisor4@icloud.com

Clerk: Nicky Thompson -- 715-425-8082
kinniclerk@icloud.com

Treasurer: Brenda LaValley -- 715-425-1180
kinnitreasurer@icloud.com

Assessor: Ron Meyer – 715-232-9068

Blding Inspector: Brian Wert – 715-386-5410
www.brianwert.com

Town Website:
www.kinnickinnicTwp.org

ROAD MUSINGS

By Nick Jilek

Nick Jilek has lived on Evergreen Drive since 1993, when he and his family moved west from way out east in Pleasant Valley Township.

Spring is here (well, some days, anyway), and with it come the pleasant days and warm evenings we enjoy spending outside. In our rural township, our cars, SUVs, and pickups will be sharing the roads with couples and families out for walks, joggers, bicyclists, folks on horseback, motorcyclists, and farm vehicles. In all cases these present challenges for drivers – there is never a time to drive while distracted (honest, officer, I wasn't texting ... I was reading my email!) – but it can be especially dangerous during our warm months.

Many of the roads in our township are posted at **45 mph**, with good reason. We live in an area of gentle (and some not so gentle) rolling hills, resulting in road and driveway entrances that cannot be seen until we are almost upon them. Add to this mix a pedestrian or a bicyclist or two, a swerve to the center of the road, and oncoming traffic coming over the hill ... and you get the idea.

One needs to be especially careful when the sun is low in the sky (mornings / evenings). This could have happened to anyone, but it happened to me two summers ago while I was passenger in a vehicle. We were heading west on Evergreen late in the day, and were about 1/2 mile east of JJ heading into bright sun,

which was just above the hills to the west. The sunlight was blinding where we were, but the intersection of Evergreen and JJ and several hundred feet of Evergreen prior to that intersection were shaded by the hills (the sun had already set there). The driver was doing less than 35 mph due to the blinding sun, and we were already slowing for the stop sign ahead when we crossed the threshold into the shade ... and almost immediately saw three folks on horseback less than fifty feet ahead. To the driver's credit, the brakes were applied before I completed shouting HORSES!, and a tragedy was averted. There are lessons here for all ... for drivers, and for pedestrians, bicyclists, and horse aficionados. When 'blinded by the light', drivers need to slow and be extremely cautious. Folks on foot, bicycle, or horseback need to be aware when they are in a shaded area and a vehicle is coming towards them out of full sun as there is an excellent chance that driver will be unable to see them and unaware of their presence in the roadway.

Bicyclists, horseback riders, and motorized vehicles use the *right* side of the road. Pedestrians should walk on the *left* side of the road *facing* traffic. Additionally, it might be a lot safer if dog walkers have their dog on a lead. Wisconsin State

Statute 346.21 states that "The operator of a motor vehicle shall yield the right of way to livestock being driven over or along any highway but any person in charge of such livestock shall use reasonable care and diligence to open the roadway for vehicular traffic."

Ah, yes, ... motorcycles. As a rider myself, I am well aware many drivers simply do not see motorcycles. I'm still amazed when my three headlights aren't adequate and someone pulls out right in front of me, but I'm not surprised - as it happens so often. About four years back I had to take the ditch when the driver of an oncoming SUV took my lane while swerving around a jogger - I'm still convinced the driver never saw me. Again, lessons for all - drivers PLEASE be aware of and on the lookout for motorcyclists, and motorcyclists - remember many drivers will never see you.

All y'all be careful out there, and enjoy the outdoors!

K

INNICKINNIC CHURCH'S 150TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

By Amy Thurston

Amy Thurston is a retired English teacher and has been President of the Kinnickinnic Historical Society since 1998.

Located at County J and JJ, the Kinnickinnic Church has served as a treasured landmark for many generations. The church was built in 1868 and was shared by the area's Methodists and Congregationalists for services on alternate



Kinnickinnic Church in the Early 1900's

Sundays. As Methodist numbers declined, Congregationalists bought the building in 1895.

Early farmers and their families drove horse-drawn buggies for as many as ten miles to attend the religious services, returning at dusk to milk the cows. These worshippers also took time "to neighbor" at these gatherings as they discussed their mutual and personal problems. Harvest help outs and barn raisings were arranged at such times, and a warm sense of community emerged.

Bill Nye, a contemporary of Mark Twain, was a journalist, lecturer, and author who had associations with the little church. He lectured and preached at the Kinnickinnic Church on many occasions. Bill Nye also enjoyed practicing his speeches at the church. It is said that he acquired his substantial oratorical skills speaking to empty pews at the church.

The Congregationalists used the building as their church until 1951. Then it stood empty for eleven years.

The Congregationalists found a buyer who planned to convert the building into a house. Concerned about the loss of the church, some fifty people assembled at the town hall to oppose the sale. In 1962, they formed what became the Kinnickinnic Historical Association. Since that time, the church and its grounds have been lovingly maintained by this group. The Kinnickinnic Church is on the National and State Registers of Historic Places.



*The Kinnickinnic Church Today
Photo by Sally Jilek*

Each year, an Ice Cream Social is held, and the proceeds are used to maintain the church. The next Social will be held on Sunday, August 5, 2018.

Currently, a committee is planning a weekend of celebration for the little church's upcoming 150th anniversary on September 15th and 16th, 2018. On that Saturday, the events will include a historical program at the church, including a letter from the December 1868 dedication, and sing along with organ. Also on Saturday, there will be a historical tour of the nearby Kinnickinnic cemetery. On Sunday we will

celebrate with a service in the church, a potluck after the service, and children's games from that time period.

Please see the Kinnickinnic Historical Association's Facebook page for specific times as the celebration draws near. We'd love to have as much community involvement as possible. Please contact Jullianne Bartos at [**\(julianne.mcgowan@att.net\)**](mailto:julianne.mcgowan@att.net) if you would like to help make this a great community event as we celebrate the church's 150th anniversary.

FOR THE BIRDS (OF KINNICKINNIC TOWNSHIP)

By Tom Andersen

Tom Andersen is a resident of Kinnickinnic Township and an avid birder. He is the lead Editor of The Current.

One of the joys of living in our Township is the flora and fauna we encounter on a daily basis. Our open fields, farmlands, prairie restorations, and woodlots host a great number of birds for our viewing enjoyment. Some of our feathered friends are with us year around. Other birds migrate through every spring to points north to nest and then migrate through again in the fall to points far south for the winter. Additionally, some of the migrants nest in Kinnickinnic Township.

In this and future articles I'll introduce you to some of our birds. All the pictures are taken right here in Kinnickinnic Township.



Hermit Thrush

The chubby little **Hermit Thrush** is a friendly little bird that usually shows up here sometime in April every year. They have a distinct habit of flicking their tail quickly up and then slowly down. They often occur in good numbers. Sometimes they're seen in yards mixed in with the Robins. Brushy areas of woodlots and low wet areas are preferred locations. It is not uncommon to see a dozen or more at one time when they first migrate through. If you approach them carefully you just might be able to get within a few feet. "Plump" is the best word to describe them.

The Hermit Thrush does nest in Kinnickinnic Township. They are usually ground nesters. As one might imagine, their nests are very well camouflaged.

The **Ovenbird** is a secretive little bird that can be very hard to spot. They are quite common but often go unnoticed. They are shy. They are most often identified by their call. Teacher, teacher, teacher, TEACHER is usually how it is described. Hence the common name "Teacher Bird". Trying to get a glimpse of this bird by following the call can be a frustrating experience. I've found the best way to spot them is to get close to the bird's call and then simply wait patiently, without much movement, for the bird to show itself. If you try to walk directly to the call they simply stop moving and

their coloration makes them difficult if not impossible to see. If flushed, watch carefully and mark where they land which is often close. Then move in closer with care. I'm reminded of the words of an old ornithologist friend. "Wait a while", he would advise. That's the best way to find them. Ovenbirds usually show up in mid-April to early May. They do nest in our township. They build a domed ground nest that looks like a little oven. They prefer brushy understory growth amongst the hardwoods.



Ovenbird

There are excellent resources for identifying our feathered friends. Three very good books that I find useful are *Sibley's Guide to Birds*, *Stokes Field Guide to Birds Eastern Region*, and *The Crossley ID Guide Eastern Birds*. The St. Croix Valley Bird Club is an active group of birders some of whom live in Kinnickinnic Township.

A RIVER TO LIVE BY

By Tom Andersen

Tom Andersen is the Editor of The Current and an avid trout angler.

The Kinnickinnic River is a class 1 trout stream. That designation indicates that it is a stream of the highest water quality and has naturally reproducing trout. Nearly 20 river miles of this special water resource flow through our township. Brook Trout are the native species to the Kinnickinnic River and tributaries. Brown Trout and even Rainbow Trout were stocked at one time. Brown Trout gained a foothold and they have not been stocked in many, many years. While Brook Trout are still present, Brown Trout are more abundant. As residents of Kinnickinnic Township we are indeed fortunate to have such a great resource close to home. In our township over 400 acres of land adjacent to the river as well as significant Department of Natural Resources access on the river is available to us for a whole variety of outdoor activities.

I've been a resident of Kinnickinnic Township for over 20 years. My connection to this area goes back to the 1960's when I attended college at River Falls State University. It was then that I "honed" my trout catching skills on the "Kinni" when it might have been best to spend more time in the classroom. In the spring when the trout season opened I'd spend some of my meager funds on exotic trout flies at Lund's Hardware. The Kinnickinnic River was my first real exposure to the secrets of trout. Little did I know at the time that it would eventually lead me to a rewarding career in the fly fishing industry.

I was amazed at how beautiful Kinnickinnic Township was in comparison to the Jack Pines and Scrub Oak where I grew up. It was the "Kinni" that really captured my attention. After my college years I continued to spend a great deal of time fishing the Kinnickinnic. I fished the water from well above Hwy. 94 all the way to town. We lived in Hudson and later near Burkhart in those days. Many summer mornings were spent on the river near Sumner's Farm and campground. On summer evenings I would often fish the water across from Gibson's on Hwy. 65. I'd listen for trout slurping up Mayflies and get irritated by the distraction of cars going by. Usually I fished with Corky Hope, my landlord at the time and a well known former St. Croix Co. Sheriff and WI Game Warden. He had an intimate knowledge of the "Kinni" and its history. We stood in the river together many nights and I listened to wonderful stories of trout fishing and local anglers of the past.

When we were looking for a new home a local realtor told us about a piece of land he owned in the Township. It wasn't actually for sale but he said he would consider parting with some of the property. We parked on Evergreen Drive, walked into the woods and sat on a big rock to contemplate our future. The "Kinni" was nearby. This was home.



A Native Kinnickinnic Brook Trout

While much has changed since I first fished the Kinni, many things have stayed the same. When darkness settles in on a July night and you're standing in your waders waist deep in the Kinni, your legs still get numb from the cold water. The same smells are there, and maybe a Whippoorwill too. And yes, the sound of a trout rising to sample a mayfly or gobbling a mouse bold enough to swim across the river can still be heard. You just might be lucky enough to catch a handsome Brown Trout that will accompany scrambled eggs and toast for your breakfast.



Kinnickinnic Brown Trout Breakfast

Guidelines for submissions to The Current:

- Submissions to *Current News* may come from any Town of Kinnickinnic resident and should be turned in at the town hall during regular office hours.
- Submissions may be sent to the Editor @ ttrout@pressenter.com
- Submissions should be in a Word file if sent by e-mail or typed or handwritten if presented to the Town hall.

- Submissions should be approximately 1000 words or less. Pictures may be used and they should be in jpg format.
- All submissions must be accompanied by the author's name and contact information.
- Questions about submissions may be directed to the Editor at- ttrout@pressenter.com
- Current Editor and Town Board must approve all submissions.
- Current Editor and or Town Board reserve the right to proof and make necessary corrections [grammatical errors, etc.] in all submissions.
- All submissions must strive to be factual.
- Partisan political submissions will not be accepted.
- Op-Ed submissions will not be accepted.
- Ideas for articles are welcomed.

**BE SURE TO VISIT YOUR KINNICKINNIC
TOWNSHIP WEBSITE-**

www.KinnickinnicTwp.org

Special thanks to Town resident Sydney Wachtler for designing, creating the template, & writing for The Current.