

BLOOMINGTON BRIEFING



NOVEMBER 2024



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Community Outreach and Engagement Coordinator Emily Larson helps a resident draw what they are excited to see in a new community center at a celebration event in September.

MOVING BLOOMINGTON FORWARD

In November 2023, Bloomington voters approved a new half-percent sales tax to provide \$155 million for the enhancement and protection of the Nine Mile Creek corridor and Moir and Central parks, construction of a new community health and wellness center and renovations to the Bloomington Ice Garden. This fall, project teams connected with community members to inform each of the three projects.

BLOOMINGTON ICE GARDEN

After an “ice-breaking” event in September, work on the Bloomington Ice Garden renovations began. Major components of the project are new arena flooring, dasher boards and an ice system. No interruptions to BIG operations are expected as a result of the renovation until mid-March 2025 through fall 2025 when the facility is anticipated to close for construction.



NINE MILE CREEK CORRIDOR AND MOIR/CENTRAL PARK RENEWAL

After an array of public engagement events over summer and into fall, the Nine Mile Creek project team kicked off concept plan review on October 21. Visit bloomingtonforward.org/9mile to see a summary of the engagement work that’s gone on so far and what’s coming next.



COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTER

HGA Architects and City staff are in the process of creating a selection of draft designs of the new community health and wellness center for the community to give feedback on. In early 2025, there will be an event where community members can review and comment on the designs. Learn more at bloomingtonforward.org/chwc.



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BLOOMINGTON MN.gov



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Scramblin' Egg owners Nick Peterson and Grant Veitenheimer in front of their food truck.

MAYOR'S MEMO

SCRAMBLIN' EGG WINS HATCH BLOOMINGTON

By Mayor Tim Busse

Scramblin' Egg, a restaurant concept developed by food truck owners Grant Veitenheimer and Nick Peterson, is the inaugural winner of the Hatch Bloomington business pitch competition.

The winning entry was selected based on two rounds of community voting, with additional input from a seven-judge panel that reviewed contestants' pitches at the Top 25, Top 10 and Top 3 stages.

For the past year and a half, the Scramblin' Egg food truck has been serving fast, casual breakfast options in Bloomington, focusing on quality, service and timeliness. Grant and Nick plan to use the Hatch award to establish a permanent brick-and-mortar location in Bloomington offering quick yet high-quality breakfast choices to better serve their growing customer base. Their long-term vision is to develop a business model that can expand nationally, and eventually globally, with Bloomington as the starting point.

The Hatch Bloomington competition aligns with the City's strategic objectives and developmental priorities by encouraging local entrepreneurs to develop business ideas that will positively impact Bloomington's future.

The response to Hatch Bloomington has been remarkable. Sixty applicants presented a diverse range of ideas, each aimed at solving real-world challenges and enhancing the quality of life in our city.



SUPPORT BLOOMINGTON BUSINESSES, SHOP LOCAL

Be part of the movement! Join millions of individuals, businesses and communities who have embraced Small Business Saturday to celebrate their local businesses the Saturday after Thanksgiving.

Shopping in your community supports your neighbors and drives the local economy. That means jobs, economic power and a diverse set of businesses by and for local residents. Small Business Saturday is the perfect time to get acquainted or reacquainted with your neighborhood economy. The City is partnering with Hennepin County on the Love Local campaign to highlight business districts and encourage residents to support local business owners across the County.

Don't forget to shop local this November 30 and participate in the Shop Local selfie contest to help spread the word and win! Submit your selfie by posting it on Instagram with the hashtag #ShopLocalBloomington. The City will share winners for the following categories: Most Creative, Best in Shop (a photo in the local store you shopped in), and Most Friend-Filled Selfie. The prize for each category will be bragging rights. Watch for the winning selfies to be shared on the City's Instagram account (@bloomington_mn) the first week of December.

BRIEFING

Volume 32, Number 11

The *Briefing*, published monthly by the City of Bloomington, is mailed to residents and businesses. Direct your comments and requests for Braille, larger print or computer file to Communications Administrator Janine Hill, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, Bloomington MN 55431-3071; PH 952-563-8819; MN Relay 711; FAX 952-563-8715; Email: jhill@BloomingtonMN.gov
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Assistant City Manager Kathy Hedin and Management Fellow Kaytlyn Danielzuk accept the award from Polco.

CITY RECEIVES NATIONAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS AWARD BASED ON RESIDENT FEEDBACK AND COMMUNITY DATA

The City of Bloomington recently received the 2024 Voice of the People (VOP) Award in the category of Transformation in Health & Wellness from Polco and the International City/County Management Association.

The VOP Awards are the only national awards to honor local governments based on resident feedback and community data. A panel of judges reviewed the applications received in this category and selected winners and finalists.

In its award-winning application, the City highlighted high marks received through the National Community Survey and other surveys from residents for being an excellent place to live and work.

The City also provided examples of improvements in health and wellness services, particularly in its COVID-19 response, as well as in strategic tobacco prevention and mental health efforts. One result of this work is an innovative pilot program in the Police Department to match licensed therapists with students completing their clinical practice requirements. This partnership has helped individuals in crisis receive timely mental health support.

“Bloomington has always strived to be a place where people want to live,” said Assistant City Manager Kathy Hedin. “Polco has been an invaluable partner in understanding our community’s priorities and concerns. Their tools and insights have helped the City of Bloomington innovate and adapt our public health services to better serve the evolving needs of our community.”

JANINE HILL RECEIVES 2024 MAGC LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Bloomington Communications Administrator Janine Hill received the Minnesota Association of Government Communicators (MAGC’s) highest honor, the Lifetime Achievement Award during this year’s Northern Lights contest.

Janine has a storied career in government communications. And she’s not done yet. Janine began with Bloomington as a part-time communications specialist in 1999, went full time in 2003 and was promoted to communications administrator in 2007. She manages the City’s print publications, video production, websites, social media and cable television franchise administration and has led the Communications Division to more than 100 local and national awards.

“I have so enjoyed producing and leading communications for Bloomington and working with so many talented, service-driven employees and wonderful residents, businesses and organizations over the years,” Hill said. “I am thrilled to be recognized with this achievement award by my peers.”

Janine has also served as president of MAGC and the Minnesota Association of Community Telecommunication Administrators and on the board of directors for the City-County Communications and Marketing Association.



CITY COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVES STATE AND NATIONAL RECOGNITION

Bloomington Communications received 10 awards from the Minnesota Association of Government Communicators 2024 Northern Lights Awards. Four of the awards were first-place honors and one was an individual special achievement award. There were 162 entries submitted to this year’s contest from Minnesota organizations. The list of Bloomington awards includes:

Northern Lights Awards (first place) for the *Bloomington. Tomorrow. Together.* State of the City—Special event category, *Bloomington. Tomorrow. Together.* Corporate Report, Top Fun: Highway to the Open House video, and the Sidewalk Snow Removal Priorities video.

Silver Awards (second place) for the Bloomington Forward public information project, the *Bloomington Briefing* newsletter, the Bloomington Today cable TV show and the Notable Neighbor video series.

The City also received a Bronze Award (third place) for the Snowplow Heroes video.

In the national 3CMA Savvy Awards contest, Bloomington Communications won honors for three projects. A first-place award for the Bloomington Forward communications plan, a second-place award for the Notable Neighbor video series and a third-place award for the *Bloomington Briefing*. There were more than 1,000 entries from across the country in the Savvy Awards contest this year, a record high.



CITY WELCOMES NEW HRA ADMINISTRATOR

Sarah Abe, Bloomington’s newest Housing and Redevelopment Authority Administrator, started in September.

Abe holds two master’s degrees, one in social work from the University of Minnesota and one in public policy from the Humphrey School of Public Affairs. Her last position was with the city of Brooklyn Park where she was senior project manager.

Along with coordinating and administering HRA programs and activities, Abe facilitates the development and implementation of policies and action plans and manages the HRA budget. Her team also advocates for solutions on critical housing issues.

“I’m looking forward to serving the community and enhancing housing opportunity in Bloomington,” Abe said. “Along with the HRA team, I am excited to address the challenges and opportunities of preserving and promoting affordable housing.”

To learn more about affordable housing in Bloomington, visit blm.mn/hra, or contact Abe directly at seabe@BloomingtonMN.gov or 612-523-5662.

SELLING YOUR HOME? SCHEDULE AN INSPECTION

Did you know, the City of Bloomington requires a Time of Sale (TOS) inspection for all single and two-family dwellings, condominiums, townhouses and mobile homes offered for sale? (Multi-family buildings with four or more units are not included.)

The TOS Evaluator will examine:

- The dwelling’s visible structural elements.
- Heating, electrical and plumbing systems.
- Other components of construction.
- Accessible, unoccupied areas such as attics and crawl spaces.

The TOS inspection costs \$250. The inspection must be completed and the resulting TOS Housing Evaluation Report must be filed with the City before your home is listed on the market. The inspection certification and evaluation report remain valid for one year.

The report gives potential purchasers information about the dwelling, including the home’s energy efficiency.

Learn more online at blm.mn/tos. To schedule an inspection, call 952-563-8930.



INTERESTED IN SAVING MONEY ON YOUR UTILITY BILLS?

Winter is coming. Applications for the 2024-2025 Energy Assistance Program opened October 1. Bloomington residents apply for EAP through the Community Action Partnership of Hennepin County.

Income eligibility for Energy Assistance is calculated by gross income for a one-month period.

Services for homeowners and renters may include:

- Payment of gas and electric bills.
- Education on efficient and safe use of home energy.
- Repair or replacement of homeowners' broken heating systems.

If your household is experiencing a no-heat emergency crisis or an active utility disconnection, you may be eligible for assistance up to \$600. Get details at blm.mn/energyhelp or call CAP Hennepin at 952-930-3541.

INCOME ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

| HOUSEHOLD SIZE | MAXIMUM 1-MONTH GROSS INCOME* | MAXIMUM ANNUAL GROSS INCOME* |
|----------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | \$2,722 | \$32,667 |
| 2 | 3,559 | 42,719 |
| 3 | 4,397 | 52,770 |
| 4 | 5,235 | 62,822 |
| 5 | 6,072 | 72,874 |
| 6 | 6,910 | 82,925 |
| 7 | 7,067 | 84,810 |
| 8 | 7,224 | 86,695 |
| 9 | 7,381 | 88,579 |
| 10 | 7,538 | 90,464 |

*Gross income is total earnings before taxes and other deductions

WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Bloomington renters and homeowners in single- to four-unit housing enrolled in the Energy Assistance Program are eligible for free weatherization assistance. Weatherization assistance may include installing insulation, reducing air leaks, performing heating tune-ups and modifications and replacing appliances for energy efficiency and safety. Learn more online at blm.mn/weatherize or call the Sustainable Resources Center at 612-870-4255.



City Public Works crews use an anti-ice brine solution with less salt in the winter months to prevent icy roads.

EARTH ACTION HEROES: REDUCING THE SALT FOR WATER HEALTH



A growing number of Bloomington businesses, such as Friendship Village and Toro, as well as the City, are stepping up as Earth Action Heroes by becoming smart-salting certified through the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

Smart-salting training helps improve operator effectiveness and reduce chloride pollution while keeping roads, parking lots and sidewalks safe. Participating organizations have been able to reduce their salt use by 30-70%.

"The Toro Company chose to be Smart Salt Certified to help reduce salt usage and better protect our lakes, streams, plants and other surfaces," said Drew Fischer, Toro Facilities Technician. "We have reduced our annual salt usage by hundreds of pounds, reducing costs, and minimizing salt impact outdoors on vegetation, soil, water and vehicles and indoors on carpets and flooring."

The MPCA tracked two winters in Dakota County and found a reduction of 55 tons of salt per snow event after smart salt training. This protected about 40 million gallons of freshwater per snow event from chloride contamination.

"After the training, I applied salt differently," said Charlie Rhein, the lead groundskeeper at Friendship Village of Bloomington. "We learned how the salt brine and salt crystals react differently depending on temperatures and the different ways of spreading salt that reduces use and saves us a lot of money."

To join this growing list of Earth Action Heroes, visit blm.mn/eah.



PET POO POLLUTES, SO PLEASE PICK IT UP

Think that pet waste in the grass or snow is a natural part of ecosystem? Think again.

Pet waste left on the ground washes into storm drains, lakes and streams and exposes people, pets and wildlife to harmful bacteria. It also contributes to excessive algae growth and other water quality issues in our community.

City ordinances require owners to clean up waste year round in their yard, while walking a pet and at the dog park.

So, pick up pet waste from your yard and throw it in your garbage. Carry disposable bags while walking your dog and at the dog park. If you are feeling exceptionally neighborly, feel free to pick up extra you might see while walking your pet.

HOLIDAY SOLID WASTE COLLECTION SCHEDULE

The Thanksgiving holiday falls on Thursday, November 28, and will delay garbage, recycling, yard waste and organics recycling collection by one day for the rest of the week. Residents whose regular pickup day is Thursday will be serviced on Friday and residents with Friday pickup will be serviced on Saturday. The holiday falls during a recycling week and is also the last week of the yard waste collection season. For more information, visit blm.mn/garbage or call Utility Billing at 952-563-8726.

 RECYCLE WEEK

 BETTER FUTURE'S BULKY ITEM PICKUP WEEKS

 HOLIDAY; PICKUP IS DELAYED BY ONE DAY

YARD WASTE SEASON*:
APRIL 8 – NOVEMBER 30,
WEATHER PERMITTING

*SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE, EXTRA CHARGES APPLY
CITY OBSERVED HOLIDAYS THAT ARE NOT LISTED ON THE CALENDAR DO NOT DELAY COLLECTION

| November | | | | | | |
|----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S | M | T | W | T | F | S |
| | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |

| December | | | | | | |
|----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S | M | T | W | T | F | S |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 | 30 | 31 | | | | |



Community Outreach staff Emily Larson, far left, and Amanda Crombie, far right, pose with students from Ukraine.

BLOOMINGTON HOSTS UKRAINIAN STUDENTS FROM YOULEAD

For the third year, the City partnered with the Global Synergy Group to host Ukrainian students from YouLEAD, which stands for Youth Leadership Engagement and Development Program.

This month-long program equips young people from Ukraine with the skills necessary to aid in the redevelopment and healing of post-war Ukraine. Sixteen students spent a day immersed in Bloomington, where City staff from various departments provided an in-depth look into local government and showcased Bloomington's strong model for community engagement and public participation.

City staff led an interactive activity where students built their dream city, crafting three-dimensional models as part of a hands-on learning experience. The students from YouLEAD will go back to Ukraine and help rebuild their communities with the knowledge and skills gained through the program.

READY TO GET INVOLVED? SERVE ON A BOARD OR COMMISSION

Serving on a board or commission is a great way to get more involved in your community. Residents who participate on boards and commissions serve as a voice of the community. As a board or and commission member, you'd be able to help shape City policies and initiatives by providing insights and recommendations that help City Council make decisions.

"Serving is an opportunity to contribute to your community, learn more about how the City works and use your own knowledge and experience in a different venue to see results," said a Sustainability Commission member.

Applications for multiple openings are being accepted through December 22, 2024:

- Advisory Board of Health
- Creative Placemaking
- Human Rights
- Sustainability
- Parks, Arts and Recreation

Questions? Contact the Community Outreach and Engagement Division at 952-563-8733 or outreach@BloomingtonMN.gov. Visit blm.mn/boards for more information, and to complete the online application.



The Sustainability Commission toured Bloomington Ice Garden this year.

CELEBRATE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DURING NATIONAL AMERICAN INDIAN HERITAGE MONTH

On August 3, 1990, President George H.W. Bush declared November National American Indian Heritage Month. The declaration invited all U.S. organizations and residents to observe and celebrate Native American lives and ensure their rich histories and contributions thrive.

A BRIEF HISTORY

In Minnesota, the original people were the Anishinaabe (Ojibwe) and the Dakota (Sioux). Bloomington sits on Mni Sota Makoce, the ancestral lands of the Dakota people.

According to the Bloomington Historical Society, Native Americans traveled, settled and traded along the Minnesota River for centuries. Dakota Chief Penasha led a village of about 1,900 Dakota people in Bloomington in 1780. By the 1820s, Fort Snelling became the first European settlement. Many early settlers were missionaries who came to convert the resident Native Americans.

In the 1850s, more European settlers arrived and tensions over land increased. This led to the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862 which forced many Dakota people to be relocated to reservations outside of Minnesota.

Learn more by visiting minneapolis.org/calendar/holidays/native-american-heritage-month and indigenous-roots.org.



THE FIRST STEP TO END LONELINESS: START WITH HI!

Start with Hi! is a new public awareness campaign by Bloomington Public Health to increase social connection. It kicks off in Bloomington in November in connection with World Kindness Day on November 13.

This campaign was created in response to growing mental health concerns locally and across the country. Start with Hi! seeks to:

- Increase residents' awareness of isolation and loneliness on health.
- Provide simple and effective tools to increase connectedness.
- Inspire collective action to support a culture of togetherness.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Loneliness and isolation can increase the risk of heart disease by 29% and risk of stroke by 32%.
- In 2023, the U.S. Surgeon General declared loneliness and isolation an epidemic.

To learn more and get involved, visit blm.mn/StartwithHi.



WELCOME TO BLOOMINGTON OFFERS NEW RESIDENT MEETINGS AND MORE

Welcome to Bloomington is an effort designed to help people new to Bloomington and those who have long been underrepresented in Bloomington feel more welcome.

To support connections and create an inclusive community, Welcome to Bloomington hosts new resident meetings to provide general information about Bloomington and its services. The effort also offers a Bucket List, a list of fun things to do and places to see to get to know Bloomington better. Completed Bucket Lists can be traded for a Bloomington t-shirt.

The next new resident meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 19, 6-7:30 p.m., location TBD.

To learn more about Welcome Bloomington meetings and activities, visit blm.mn/welcome.



WINTER FARMER'S MARKET OFFERS SEASONAL SELECTIONS

As autumn moves into winter, the first farmer's market of the season moves indoors starting Saturday, November 9, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., inside Bloomington Civic Plaza, 1800 W. Old Shakopee Road.

Stock up on fall produce and start your holiday gifting with handmade seasonal décor, home goods, clothing and jewelry. There will be a variety of artisan foods, canned goods, farm-raised meats and a wide variety of crafts.

Purchasing from local vendors sustains operations during the winter season and strengthens the local economy and community. Learn more or read a vendors list at blm.mn/market.



BIG'S ICE IS CALLING YOU FOR OPEN SKATE

Now through March 9, 2025, the Bloomington Ice Garden invites all skaters and the skate-curious to come on down and get their glide on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays and on school release days from 9-10:30 a.m., and Sundays from 5:30-6:45 p.m.

FEES AND DISCOUNTS

Open skate is \$5 for all ages. Coupon books are \$25 for six coupons. Skates can be rented for \$5, and your skates can be sharpened for \$8.

Remember, BIG will be closed March 10 - October 1, 2025, for remodeling. To confirm open dates and times and holiday closures, visit blm.mn/BIG.

BLOOMINGTON CENTER FOR THE ARTS

FALL 2024 - WINTER 2025 PERFORMANCE SERIES

The Bloomington Center for the Arts Performance Series includes awe-inspiring live theater, dance, choral and instrumental concerts. Performances are held in the Schneider or Black Box theaters, located in the Bloomington Center for the Arts at the corner of 98th Street and West Old Shakopee Road. Free parking is available on-site. Purchase tickets at the box office or online at blm.mn/bcatix.

CHECK OUT THIS AMAZING LINEUP OF SHOWS

Programs, artists and prices subject to change. All ticket sales are final. No refunds or exchanges.



ARTISTRY: GIFTS IN THE GALLERY

Artistry's annual holiday boutique shopping event features a stunning array of items from over 50 local artists. Pick up gifts for everyone on your list in the Inez Greenberg Gallery at Bloomington Center for the Arts.

DECEMBER 5-23
PRICES VARY



CONTINENTAL BALLET COMPANY: THE NUTCRACKER

Come enjoy this holiday classic with Continental Ballet Company this festive season! The ballet is to feature CBC's professional company members.

DECEMBER 7, 14, 7:30 P.M.

DECEMBER 8, 15, 3 P.M.

TICKETS \$30 ADULT, \$25 SENIOR (60+), \$25 STUDENT, \$15 AGES 13 AND UNDER



BLOOMINGTON CHORALE: WINTER TAPESTRY

Enjoy a collection of heartwarming holiday favorites old and new including: *Magnificat*, *Feliz Navidad*, *Silent Night*, *What Child is This* and many more.

DECEMBER 20, 7:30 P.M.

DECEMBER 21, 4 P.M.

TICKETS \$25 ADULT, \$20 SENIOR (60+), \$20 STUDENT



MEDALIST CONCERT BAND: SOUNDS OF THE SEASON

Enjoy both classic and contemporary favorites in this popular holiday program from the Medalist Concert Band.

DECEMBER 22, 4 P.M.

TICKETS \$19 ADULT, \$17 SENIOR (60+), \$17 STUDENT



ARTISTRY: SWEET CHARITY

Hapless but unflappable Charity Hope Valentine desperately seeks love in New York City in the 1960s. In this exuberant, groovy, hilarious musical comedy, Charity tries again and again to find her dream and make something of herself.

JANUARY 23-FEBRUARY 16, 2025

SHOW TIMES VARY

TICKETS \$33-64 (INCLUDES FEES)



ANGELICA CANTANTI YOUTH CHOIRS: BROADWAY, MOVIE AND POP SONGS

Five choirs with singers in Grades 2-12 will perform contemporary choral favorites at our Annual Fundraiser Concert and Silent Auction event to support the ACYC organization.

FEBRUARY 23, 2025

2 P.M. AND 4 P.M.

TICKETS \$40 (ALL SEATS, ALL AGES)

LIGHT UP THE DARKEST NIGHTS WITH THE WINTER LIGHTS TOUR

Did you know at winter solstice, Minnesota gets less than nine hours of sunlight a day? That's some deep darkness. To help spread cheer during the long nights, Bloomington Parks and Recreation coordinates a Winter Lights Tour. There are two ways to participate. Choose one or both!

LIGHT UP YOUR HOME

String up some exterior illumination (lights and decorations) and register to have your house included on the tour by November 18.

TAKE THE TOUR

Once the City releases the Winter Lights Tour locations and route on December 2, tour the lights of Bloomington and pick your favorites.

Find details and the tour map at blm.mn/winter-lights.





Officer Desmond Daniels, far left, with community members at the cookout.

COOKOUT WITH THE COPS HAD A SIZZLIN' TURNOUT

More than 500 community members attended Bloomington Police's Cookout with the Cops in September. Those who attended enjoyed a raffle, a meal outside at Moir Park, face painting, activities and great conversations. See more photos of the event at blm.mn/bpdfacebook. Learn about more BPD-hosted community engagement events online at blm.mn/police.



LOWER SPEED LIMITS EQUAL INCREASED ROAD SAFETY

Have a safe drive. Go 25. Following posted speed limits makes streets safer by lessening crashes and increasing safety for cyclists and pedestrians.

Last summer, a citywide speed limit of 25 miles per hour (unless posted otherwise) went into effect. Speed limits on larger roadways vary from 25 to 35 miles per hour. New speed limit signs have been posted on main roadways so if you're accustomed to going a certain speed on a street, be sure to check the new signs.

Bloomington joins Richfield and Edina which have already implemented the 25 miles per hour speed limit for neighborhood streets.

For more information, visit blm.mn/speed.

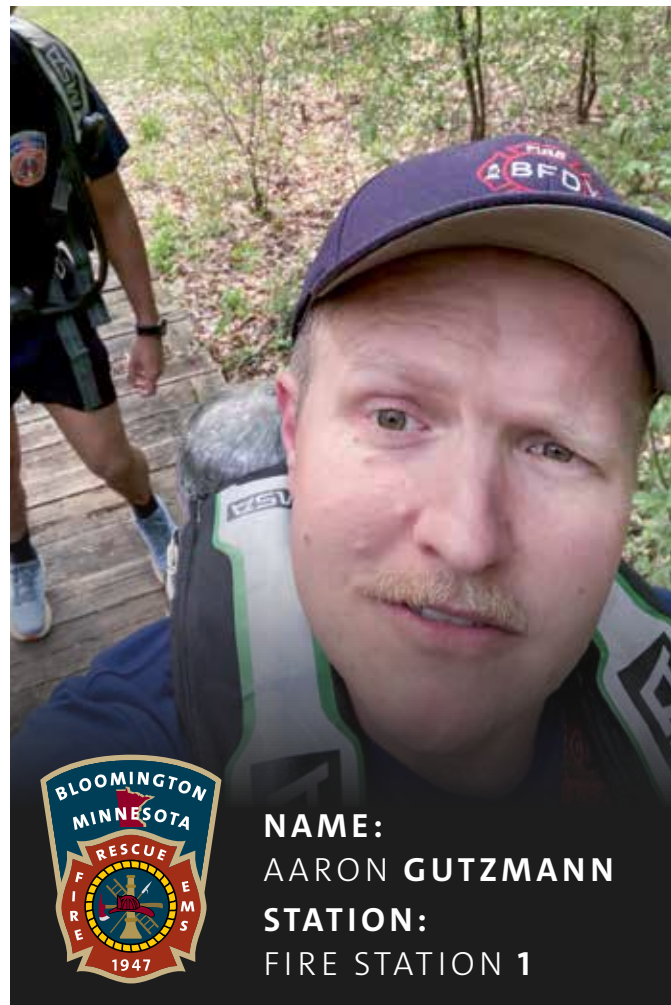
SPACE HEATER SAFETY TIPS

As winter approaches, many residents use space heaters to stay warm. However, these devices can pose safety risks. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission reports that space heaters cause over 25,000 residential fires annually with about 6,000 people treated for burns from hot surfaces.

To ensure safe use, follow these tips:

- Keep space heaters on low, flat surfaces, at least three feet away from flammable items like curtains or papers.
- Use heaters with an automatic shut-off feature that activates if the device tips over.
- Always plug space heaters directly into a wall outlet. Never use an extension cord.
- Avoid leaving space heaters unattended and unplug them when not in use.

Additionally, make sure smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors are functioning properly. For more information, contact the Bloomington Fire Department at 952-563-4801.



MEET A BLOOMINGTON FIREFIGHTER

Aaron Gutzmann began with the Bloomington Fire Department in 2021, as an on-call firefighter. He now serves as both on-call and full-time as a firefighter paramedic.

He started his career as a paramedic in La Crosse, WI, in 2008. From 2010-2022 he worked in the metro region as a paramedic, senior quality improvement specialist and critical care paramedic. From 2021-2022, he was a full-time paramedic firefighter in St. Paul. Finally, in 2023, he was hired as a full-time firefighter paramedic for Bloomington.

"With the fire department's push towards new and innovative ways, I was able to work as a paramedic and firefighter full time," Gutzmann said. "It was an opportunity I couldn't pass up."

Gutzmann is grateful to his wife. "Without her and her undying support, I wouldn't be here today." He also praised a member of his team.

"Cody Mittelstaed [a Bloomington firefighter] was pivotal during my initial training," Gutzmann said. "I have since learned that the care and compassion he showed runs deep in the Bloomington Fire Department."



NAME:
AARON GUTZMANN
STATION:
FIRE STATION 1

AARON'S FIRE SAFETY ADVICE

Learn CPR! It's the most critical link in the chain of survival for out-of-hospital cardiac arrest.

PRACTICE FOOD SAFETY DURING YOUR HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS

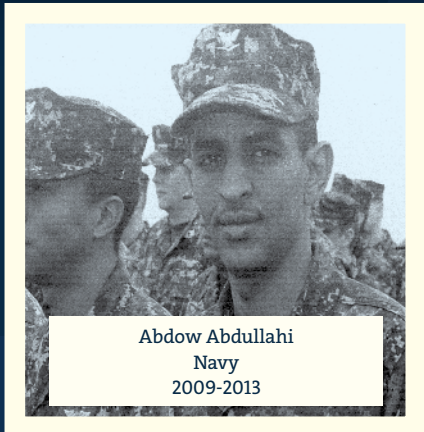
With the holidays coming up, you can keep your friends and family safe while enjoying your delicious food by following the Center for Disease Control's four steps for prevent food poisoning.

1. **Clean:** Wash your hands, surfaces and utensils after preparing each food item. Hot, soapy water is your friend in the fight against bacteria.
2. **Separate:** Keeping raw meat, poultry, seafood and eggs separate is key to preventing cross-contamination.
3. **Cook:** Food is safely cooked when internal temperatures are high enough to kill germs. Temperatures vary by food so be sure to check the safe temperature for what you are cooking. You can't tell by looking, so be sure to use a thermometer.
4. **Chill:** Refrigerate leftovers promptly. Bacteria can multiply rapidly when in temperatures between 40°F and 140°F. Never leave perishable food out of the refrigerator for more than two hours (or one hour if above 90°F).

For complete information on the four steps to preventing food poisoning, visit cdc.gov/food-safety.

A GRATEFUL TRIBUTE TO OUR VETERANS

The veterans' photo wall honors those who have served in the Army, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard, Air Force and Space Force. Hundreds of photos line the wall, each one a testament to the bravery and dedication of our local veterans. The display will be up in the lobby at Civic Plaza, 1800 W. Old Shakopee Road, from Tuesday, October 29 to Friday, November 15. The City continues to accept photo submissions of veterans. Submit your own and visit the digital album at blm.mn/veterans.



Abdow Abdullahi
Navy
2009-2013



Mary Baruth
US Army Air Force
1944 - 1946



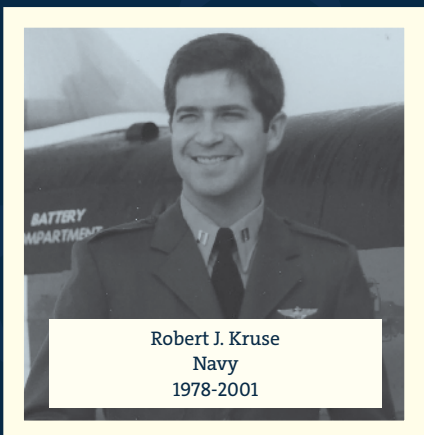
Genevieve Chapman
US Army Nurse Corp
1944-1946



Bill Kain
Army
1943-1945



Raymond F. Dutrieuille
Marines
1988-1992



Robert J. Kruse
Navy
1978-2001



Nghia Ba Nguyen
Navy
1999-2003



Travis Brinkman
Army
2004-Present



NOTABLE NEIGHBOR LES FORDAHL: A VIETNAM WAR COMBAT ARTIST

Veteran Les Fordahl is a war hero though he never drew a weapon. "I drew the war," Fordahl said. "I sketched or took photos at several fire bases, on the streets, on the rivers. Wherever I was, I documented daily life during the war."

A Bloomington resident since 1960, Les started sketching at eight years old, graduated from high school in 1964 then Normandale College in 1980. He entered the army and served in Washington D.C., Germany and Vietnam from 1967-1971, first as a draftsman, and then a combat artist.

Les returned from Vietnam with 131 sketches, but only 85 survived after a confrontation with protestors upon return to the States. Still, Les' work can be found in many places, including the Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, the National Vietnam Museum of Art in Chicago, the Minnesota State Capital, Bloomington Civic Plaza, the Federal Building and more.

Though he continued to sketch and take photos, he worked a day job for the U.S. Postal Service for many years. Now, he's back to sketching daily and has offered art classes and talks at local universities and Jefferson High School. He has volunteered at the VA Hospital for the past 15 years and, in 2018, was inducted by the Minnesota Center for Humanities for a Lifetime Achievement award.

Lately, a focus for Les has been raising money for the Bloomington Veterans Memorial.

"I am proud of the work that I have done," Les said. "I am honored to have served."



HONORING OUR POWs AND MIAs: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FALLEN COMRADE TABLE

As part of the City's Veterans Appreciation Lunch, the tradition of honoring our fallen, missing and imprisoned service members with the Fallen Comrade Table will be continued. Each item on the table carries deep symbolism, reminding us of the brave service members who have not returned home. The lemon symbolizes the bitter fate of the missing. The salt symbolizes the tears of the missing and their families. This tradition serves as a strong reminder that these heroes are not forgotten. Additionally, the POW/MIA flag will be flown November 8-15 at Civic Plaza and Public Works as a tribute to their sacrifice.