

# Van Meter News

CITY OF VAN METER

May 2018



## Raccoon River Days 2018! June 1, 2, & 3

**R**accoon River Days is just around the corner!

*Come out and help us celebrate...*

### Van Meter's 150th anniversary

In honor of our town's sesquicentennial celebration, this year's Raccoon River Days is going to be the biggest and best yet!

#### **Come out and enjoy:**

- Farmer's Market
- Train rides by Iowa Interstate Railroad sponsored by VM Fire Dept
- Games and inflatables
- Van Meter History Hall
- Live music by Sons of Gladys Kravitz
- Beer Garden
- Fireworks and MORE!

A full schedule of events will be available on the Van Meter city website very soon.

Please note this special 150th celebration will be held in a **new location—downtown Van Meter**. Additional parking will be available at the school, with shuttles to/from the event.

Bring your own lawn chair and stay a while!

We are in need of volunteers to help make this great event a success. It's not too late to enter a team in the bags tournament, get your grill/bake on in the BBQ and pie baking contests, create a float for the parade, showcase your historical Van Meter memorabilia in the VM History Hall, or sign up for a short shift to help out during the event. Shift volunteers receive a free wristband for games and inflatables.

Register or volunteer by emailing [raccoonriverdays@gmail.com](mailto:raccoonriverdays@gmail.com) or using the link on the city website.

If you have historical Van Meter items you would like to display in VM History Hall, contact Becca at (515) 210-2848. Items can be dropped off Friday and picked up on Saturday.

#### **Elected Officials:**

-Allan Adams, Mayor

#### **Council Members—**

-Kim Sacker,  
Mayor Pro Tem

-Adam Coyle

-Joe Herman

-Lyn Lyon

-Steve Meyer

#### **City Staff:**

City Hall -  
515-996-2644

Jake Anderson-  
City Administrator

Liz Thompson-Clerk

David Herman-  
Public Works

Michael Abbott-  
Public Works

Bill Daggett-Police Chief

Dispatch: 515-993-4567  
Emergency—911

Jon Bruen, Fire Chief  
515-996-9253

Suzanne Lindaman—  
Librarian  
515-996-2435

[WWW.VANMETERIA.GOV](http://WWW.VANMETERIA.GOV)

## A LONG ROAD— LIBRARY & PUBLIC SAFETY

**I**n 2017, after a review of library and public safety facilities, the decision was made to work on a joint project to build a new library and public safety center in the City of Van Meter using as much donated funds as possible. The Van Meter Library Foundation was established to raise funds for the new library facility. The Fireman's Association has served the fundraising needs of our volunteer fire department for years and teamed with the new foundation to start a capital campaign, but that is not the beginning of the story.



Both Public Safety and the Library have been outgrowing their spaces for years. The original plan was for the Library to move to the empty lot at the corner of Grant and West Streets and for Public Safety to rebuild on their current location. The Library Board, with the assistance of a Library Consultant, soon realized that lot would not address the parking needs or provide room for growth. The members began a lengthy process of investigating other properties in Van Meter; such as near E-Bank, the Veteran's Center, and other locations. The other locations were either not available, too costly, or were in flood zones.

The Van Meter Public Library's space needs stem from averaging over 600 visitors a month in our 1,100 square foot area. Libraries are expanding beyond our traditional role and we provide more opportunities for community engagement with programs for all ages: Story Time, Tween crafts, and informational programs for adults. On average there are 90 people a month in the library for programming. Our collection is growing. We added 1,156 new materials in 2017. The number of people we serve is increasing, There were 280 individuals/families who signed up for a Van Meter Public Library card in the last year.

The Van Meter Department of Public Safety was formed in 2013, combining police, fire and EMS under one administration. As the new director and staff developed a five-year plan for the department, it became clear that a new station was paramount to allowing us to serve and meet the needs of the community. The department serves the City of Van Meter and the townships of Boone, Lee, Jefferson, and Van Meter. The district is approximately eighty-one (81) square miles with Badger Creek recreation area and the Raccoon River as major waterways and Interstate-80 and Highway F-90 as major roadways in the service area. We serve over 25,000 residents and businesses in the district. We house six of the fourteen apparatus needed to service the district in the current fire station and are in desperate need of new bay space. EMS is also a concern as Advanced Life Support service is not readily available to the community. Currently, EMS is served by our basic life support responders with Dallas County EMS. Dallas

## **LIBRARY & PUBLIC SAFETY CONT.**

County Ambulance's average response time to the City of Van Meter is 13 minutes. We are working diligently, through education of our members and purchase of equipment, to be at a standard to provide advanced life support care to the community as we move into the future. We want an under two-minute response time from time of page to your front door for advanced life support. Our current facility does not allow for the complete operation of the police, fire, or EMS divisions in the proper manner.

Based on these reasons, a request for proposals was put out by the Public Safety and Library depart-

ments with the approval of the City Council, and six architectural firms submitted their names to be considered for the project. After interviews and research, a firm was decided on and in January 2018 the City Council voted to hire ISG as the architect. After a study of the community, ISG laid out the pros and cons of the various building sites. They presented their information to the City Council with a recommendation to use the site named Cross Roads based on cost savings and an ability to plan for expansion. The council voted to have ISG create renderings of a new Public Safety and Library facility at the proposed Cross Roads development at the Southwest corner of Richland Road and F-90.

**The Van Meter Public Library and Public Safety have been serving together since 1956, and under the new motto "Educate and Protect," we look forward to serving Van Meter together in the future.**



**Combined Fire Station and Library in Van Meter in 1956. (Picture from the State Library of Iowa)**

## CEMETERY RULES AND REGS

### Pursuant to Municipal Code 115.05:

The following information is a partial list of rules and regulations. Please visit our website at [www.vanmeteria.gov](http://www.vanmeteria.gov) for a complete list of the rules and regulations found under the cemetery sections.

### Summary of Rules and Regulations:

**P**ets, food, and firearms, other than those carried by police officers or used in military honor funeral services, shall be prohibited in the cemetery.

No person shall drive any vehicle within the cemetery except upon the driveways prepared and designed for that purpose, and such vehicles shall not be operated in excess of the posted speed limit of 10 mph. Driving on the grass, walks, and alleys is prohibited with the exception of maintenance personnel.

It shall be unlawful for any person to desecrate or injure the cemetery, or any lot, grave, gravestone, monument, fence, tree or shrubbery therein.

General care is assumed by the City and includes the cutting and watering of grass, debris removal, fertilization, and periodic pruning of shrubs and trees.

Grave decorations of all kinds will be removed when in the judgment of maintenance personnel they do not conform to the decorum of the cemetery.

Holiday decorations are permitted, but must be removed thirty days after the holiday. Decorations may be removed and disposed of by cemetery personnel.

The planting or placing of shrubbery, plants, flowers, or grass is prohibited as is the placement of trees.

No coping or fence of any kind shall be permitted.

It is prohibited for cremains to be scattered in the cemetery; or buried without the City's permission and notification.

City staff may handle the placement of cremains upon the request of the family at a fee of \$150 and said fee is established by resolution.

Only a contractor approved by the city shall perform the opening and closing at any gravesite.

Lots shall be sold by the city clerk at the established price set by resolution adopted by the City Council. The city clerk shall issue a deed to the purchaser upon payment of the purchase price.

An owner of a space in the cemetery may only transfer his or her space to a relative by blood or marriage. Documentation shall be submitted to the city clerk for recording.

The City may purchase a space from an owner at the purchase price, and said space shall be made available to the general public and previous deed voided.

## **HONOR MEMORIAL DAY**

**We recognize and honor the brave military servicemen and women who died while serving our country. To the soldiers who mourn your fallen brothers and sisters and selflessly serve(d) our country—your sacrifice is also greatly appreciated!**

## **Memorial Day Service**

## **Iowa Veterans Cemetery**

**8am Monday, May 28, 2018**



**C**ity codes regulates "nuisances."

**Definition of Nuisance:** Whatever is injurious to health, indecent, or unreasonably offensive to the senses, or an obstruction to the free use of property so as essentially to interfere unreasonably with the comfortable enjoyment of life or property is a nuisance.

**Nuisance Abatement:** Whenever the Mayor or other authorized municipal officer finds that a nuisance exists, such officer shall cause to be served upon the property owner a written notice to abate the nuisance within a reasonable time after notice.

City officials will be more diligent in enforcing these ordinances.

A nuisance can be "junk" and/or the accumulation of "junk."

"Junk" means all old or scrap copper, brass, lead, or any other non-ferrous metal; old or discarded rope, rags, batteries, paper, trash, rubber, debris, waste or used lumber, or salvaged wood; dismantled vehicles, machinery and appliances or parts of such vehicles, machinery or appliances; iron, steel or other old or scrap ferrous materials; old or discarded glass, tinware, plastic or old or discarded household goods or hardware. Neatly stacked firewood located on a side yard or a rear yard is not considered junk.

It is unlawful for any person to store, accumulate, or allow to remain on any private property within the corporate limits of the City any junk or junk vehicles.

Also addressed in the nuisance section of the code are junk vehicles, noise control, animal protection and control, and dangerous and illegal animals.

In part, the dog ordinance prohibits an owner to allow a dog to run at large within the corporate limits of the City. It is unlawful for the owner of an animal to allow or permit such animal to pass upon the premises of another thereby causing damage to, or interference with, the premises.

It is unlawful for the owner or custodian of a dog to permit barking or any other noise excessively, continuously, or intermittently, for any unreasonable period of time so as to create an annoyance or disturbance of any person at any time of day or night.

**WEEDS AND BRUSH.** Dense growth of all weeds, vines, brush or other vegetation in the City can constitute a health, safety or fire hazard. Unless a variance is allowed by resolution of the Council pursuant to 53.05, weeds, brush, or other uncultivated plants, except trees, shall be cut, mowed and maintained so as to not exceed the heights set forth specifically in this Chapter.

Any property within the City, other than property used and taxed as Agricultural, whether vacated or non-vacated, is required to be mowed prior to the vegetation reaching a height of ten inches (10"). Once the vegetation has reached the height of ten inches (10") or twenty-four inches (24"), the City will arrange to mow the property at the property owner's expense.

Property used and taxed as Agricultural is exempt from

this chapter's height and mowing requirements.

Any property which is not mowed may be mowed by the City or their agents, and a charge of \$75.00 per hour, (with a minimum of one (1) hour, and any additional time over the first hour will be billed in half-hour increments), for such mowing, plus an administrative surcharge of \$100.00, will be charged to the property owner. Any property owner who fails to mow their property, thus allowing the same to be mowed by the City or their agents, and who do not provide payment for the mowing as required, will be assessed by the City for such costs, which will be collected in the same manner as general property taxes.

**Full copies of codes can be found at City Hall or on our website at [www.vanmeteria.gov](http://www.vanmeteria.gov).**

310 MILL STREET  
PO BOX 160  
VAN METER IA 50261  
Ph: 515-996-2644



City of Van Meter  
on Facebook!

**Garbage service  
will be  
Tuesday, May 30  
Recycling:  
May 14  
&  
May 28**

# Saturday, May 12

**Garage Sale Day!!** Why not start your spring cleaning by having a Garage Sale? Move out some of those "treasures" in the garage, basement and closets!!! The Annual Community Garage Sale Day will be **Saturday, May 12 from 8am to 3pm.** **All** sites are requested to register and pay \$5.00 which helps defray the cost of advertising and printing maps. All registered will be entered into a drawing for a free floral hanging basket.

**Plant Sale!!** For those that ordered plants from the park board, they will be available for pick up on **Saturday, May 12 between 8am and 2pm.** If you did not order in advance, there will be extras available for purchase the day of the sale. Pickup at the City Maintenance Building (just west of Casey's). Just in time for Mother's Day!!!

## MEMORIAL DAY

City offices will be **closed** on Monday, May 28th for Memorial Day.

That includes the following offices:  
City Hall  
Police Department  
Public Library  
Public Works.

**REMINDER:** You can view your account and pay your bill online.

Visit our website at [vanmeteria.gov](http://vanmeteria.gov) and click on the "Pay Bill" tab. You will need the account information from your bill to set up an account.

**CONGRATS!**

**Van Meter  
Class of 2018**

**We wish you good  
fortune and happiness in  
your future endeavors!**