

The Melcher-Dallas Miner

What does civic pride mean to you?

If you asked 100 people what civic pride means, you would probably get 100 different responses. Most people would probably agree that, simply put, civic pride means you are proud of where you live. In an age where rural communities are struggling, it might feel like it's hard to find things to feel proud about.

If you are looking for something to be proud of, take a new look at the mural on the museum. It is not only a beautiful piece of art but a tribute to our city's coal mining history. Or how about the new mural on the Dallcher Legion? Local military heroes are depicted on a life-like mural that would spark pride in the heart of any American. How many small towns have a fantastic grocery store, a meat locker frequented by folks from miles around, or a great little restaurant?

Many small, rural communities have lost their local schools, with stately old buildings sitting empty and falling into disrepair. We can be proud that we have two modern schools in our town. Our city park is one of the most scenic parks in central Iowa, with walkways lined with memorial benches, beautiful green spaces, a great shelter house, and an old-fashioned bandstand in the middle of the park.

Every town has room for improvement, and our town is no different. It can be difficult for busy families and older residents on a fixed income to find time and resources to give needed attention to their property. Keeping front porches and front yards clean can go a long way toward helping to attract new residents and maintain property values. A city-wide clean-up day will be scheduled in September, with curb-side pick up by appointment. Watch for more information coming soon. In the meantime, take a look at all the great things happening in Melcher-Dallas, and you can't help but be filled with civic pride in your hometown!



Important Dates

July 15

Water bills due to avoid penalty

July 1—July 8

Fireworks allowed these days only

July 9, 6 p.m.

Regular Council Meeting

July 25, 10 a.m.

Comp Plan Advisory Board

Mayor

Barbara VanWyk

City Council

Brad Robbins

David Ernst

Chris Heaton

Mark Herold

Terry Fisher

(Mayor Pro-Tem)

A picture is worth a thousand words...and sometimes a \$200 fine

City Hall gets almost daily complaints about dogs off the leash. The city can issue a citation, which includes a \$200 fine for dogs off the leash, but we must have picture evidence. If you are walking or riding a bike and know of a household where the dogs are habitually running loose (especially if they are aggressive), snap a picture with your cell phone that contains the date and time stamp and mail it to city hall at mdcityhall@windstream.net. First time offenders will receive a warning, and habitual offenders will receive a citation for \$200 plus an \$85 filing fee.

NEWBIE NEWS

Please welcome to town Tanner and Samantha Patterson.



They moved to Melcher-Dallas from Pleasantville last summer. Tanner works at Vermeer and Samantha works at the M-D elementary school.

The Patterson's like living in a small town and say they have finally settled into their new home (Allen Farrell's former home on Church Street). When asked how they ended up in M-D, they said cost of living was a big factor. They say they have great neighbors, and enjoy having friends gather around their backyard fire pit.

Please say hello to Tanner and Samantha and welcome them to Melcher-Dallas.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

Gary Willoughby
Becky Fisher
Pat Jenkins
Glenda Knoot
Ken Willoughby
Art Worrall
Kathy Hoch
John Milburn
Jessica Rockhold

Have I abandoned my house?

It's natural to think that an abandoned house is one that sits empty for a long time. However, houses that are inhabited can also be declared abandoned by virtue of the fact that repairs are not being made, and the house is not only an eyesore in the neighborhood but may also present a health hazard to the inhabitants and neighbors.

A home that is neglected can present issues for both the home owner and neighbors. Junk piles provide a habitat for rodents and insects. Homes with rotting siding and windows that do not hold out the weather could potentially be declared abandoned if the owner

does not make needed repairs. When this happens, the city can take steps to gain ownership of the property .

Demolishing homes deemed abandoned is not cost effective for the city and causes long-term damage to the city's tax base. Empty lots place a greater tax burden on all homeowners. A better way to shore up the city's housing stock is to help homeowners find resources to make needed repairs.

The city is in the process of identifying resources that might be available to assist with repairs. Watch for more information coming soon.

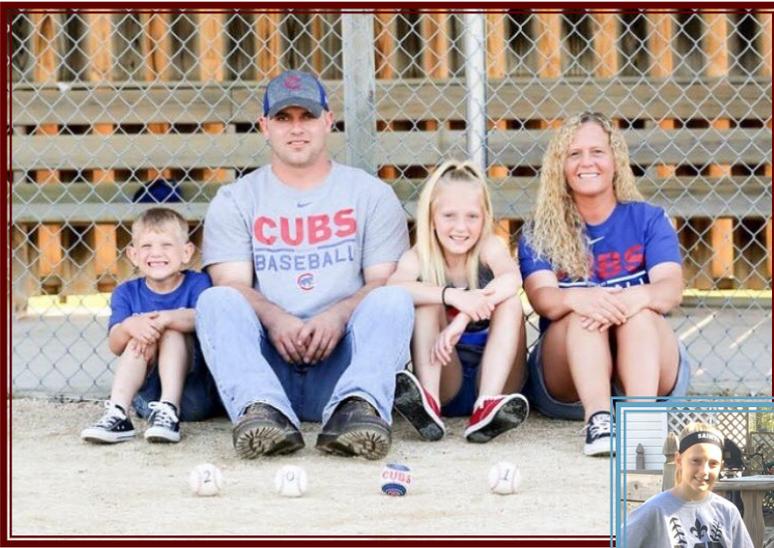
Comp Plan Advisory Board Working Hard

In 2018, the City of Melcher-Dallas commissioned a comprehensive study to identify community values and priorities, create a vision for the future, and establish a set of goals and objectives to create a vision for the future. The plan addresses many issues, including housing, quality of life, transportation and economic development.

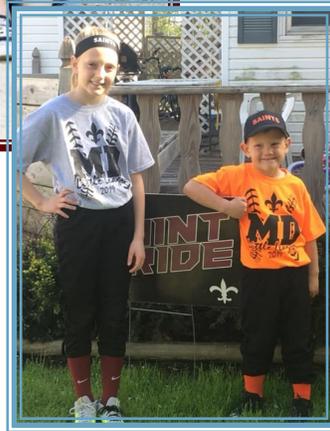
According to the comprehensive plan, one of the greatest threats to Melcher-Dallas is the declining condition of homes and the lack of new construction. In order to begin to address some of the issues identified in the plan, the City Council approved the creation of a Comprehensive Plan Advisory Board. This board is made up of individuals who are committed to moving the city in a positive direction and recommending changes that will help shore up the housing stock and help all property owners maintain property values.

Many of the dilapidated homes in town are rental properties that have been neglected and are not only eyesores but may be unsafe for tenants. The board has drafted an ordinance that calls for registration of tenants and inspection of rental properties at least every three years, as well as complaint inspections.

The Board is currently seeking potential resources to help landlords who are required to make needed improvements. The next step will be to meet with landlords and begin identifying rental properties and their landlords. Public information meetings will be offered to landlords and residents prior to official approval of the ordinance. Special thanks to all the members of the board for their hard work in implementing suggestions from the 2030 Comprehensive Plan.



Hayden and Logan are active in sports and their parents don't mind the busy schedule they keep.



Life as a “Lifer”

This young couple probably needs no introduction, as many of the citizens in Melcher-Dallas are related to one or the other. Travis and Tara (Fisher) Branson were both born and raised in Melcher-Dallas and graduated from M-D high.

Travis has worked at 3-M for ten years, and Tara has been employed at Knoxville Hospitals and Clinics for 15 years. That type of longevity and dedication to an employer is very rare these days and speaks to the work ethic and loyalty instilled in Tara and Travis by their families.

Travis was a state champion wrestler, and Tara says their seven-year-old son, Landon wants nothing more than to follow in his father's footsteps in both wrestling and football. Daughter, Hayden, is 12 years old and will be going in to seventh grade this fall. She's looking forward to playing junior high volleyball. Attending sporting events keep Travis and Tara hopping, but Tara says they “wouldn't have it any other way.”

The Branson family enjoys camping, spending time with friends and family and helping the kids raise 4-H animals. When asked if they ever considered leaving M-D, Tara tells me they have never had plans to live anywhere else. They enjoy living in the town where they grew up and living close to family. The Bransons find seeing familiar faces wherever they go in town very comforting. They want their kids to be raised in that kind of environment too.

Thanks to Tara and Travis for agreeing to serve as our Lifer feature. The Bransons and young couples just like them are the future of our school and our town. We are just as happy with your decision to stay in Melcher-Dallas as you are!

Your City Employees

Mike Damon—Sewer & Water Director
Gary Comer—Streets & Parks Director
Mike McCarty—Streets
Jacob Hoch—Police Lieutenant
Jamal Currica—Police Officer
Zachary Kalvig—Reserve Officer
Steve Johns—Chief of Police
Ruth Ryun—Deputy Clerk
Jenny Knust—Clerk/Treasurer
Steph Ripperger—Admin. Assistant
Lori Davis—Library Director
Fran Smith—Library Assistant
Bill Cooper & Janet McBride—Recycling

Employee Spotlight



Jacob Hoch has been employed as a police officer since March 2016, first as a part-time officer and as a full-time officer since June 2018. Jacob recently

accepted the position of Chief of Police and will assume his new duties in July.

Jacob graduated from Grandview in December with majors in criminal justice and psychology. While attending college, he also became certified through the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy. Jacob conducts many of the city's investigations and says he enjoys that part of the job.

When asked what he likes about working for Melcher-Dallas, he says he grew up here, knows most everyone and likes to help people. Jacob's father, Kevin, served as a police officer in Melcher-Dallas for many years and is undoubtedly proud of his youngest son.

Congratulations to Jacob on a well deserved promotion and for his outstanding service to the city.

What's up with the library, Lori?

Summer reading activities have started. On our first day we had 44 kids come to the Science Center presentation.

How do you become an astronaut? You have to go through years of training and learn to eat special foods. Can you walk a straight line after going in circles? Or find objects in moon sand? Participants learned how difficult it is to become an astronaut at training held June 19th.

We will also be hosting author Linda McCann at 2 pm on June 27th. Linda will speak about prisoners of war in Iowa during WWII. Please stop in for a calendar of all our events.

I would like to thank my volunteers for making our summer reading program a huge success. I couldn't do it without you!

Lori

P.S.: The Four-Square court is now set up in the tennis court area in the park. Balls are available.

NEW BOOKS THIS MONTH

Outrage by John Sandford
Tamed by the Beast by Grace Goodwin
Blessing in Disguise by Danielle Steel
The 13 Minute Murder by James Patterson
Falling for Owen by Jennifer Ryan
The Return of Brody McBride by Jennifer Ryan
River's End by Leanne Davis
River's Return by Leanne Davis
River's Escape by Leanne Davis
The Gorison Traveler Incident by Laurann Dohner
Marty Pants: Keep Your Paws Off by Mark Parisi
Winter Turning by Tui T Sutherland
Escaping Peril by Tui T Sutherland
The Yankee Window by Linda Lael Miller
The Fever Code by James Dashner
The Language of Sycamores by Lisa Wingate
A Simple Autumn by Rosalind Lauer
Smooth Moves by Marie Harte
Movies:
A Dog's Way Home
Mary Poppins Returns
Animal Adventures

A Trip Down Memory Lane

Do you remember:

- ◆ When a brand new ice cream store called "Piccadilly Palace" replaced the old drug store on the west side of the square?
- ◆ Miss Master's Variety Store on the south side of the square?
- ◆ The softball and baseball field sat where the elementary now sits?
- ◆ When Mrs. Moorehead delivered Avon door-to-door in her 1940-something gray sedan?
- ◆ When Delmar Dunham delivered AE milk to a box on your front porch?

REMINDER

City Hall is receiving daily complaints about ditches. The city's grass and weed ordinance requires homeowners to mow ditches. Failure to mow can result in the city crew mowing the ditch and assessing a \$100 fee.

Do You Know Your City Ordinances?

1. It is okay to leave a refrigerator in my yard as long as it has a rope or chain around it.
2. My pit bull can't be tied around a tree. He has to be in a pen.
3. It is against city ordinance to blow grass and weeds into the road when I'm mowing.
4. It is unlawful for my 16-year-old to be in public after midnight on Friday and Saturday night.
5. I don't need to get a building permit for a fence as long as it's on my property.
6. If I'm walking on the road, I can walk on either side.

1. False. Refrigerators in the yard are a violation of the public health ordinance requires walkers to stay on the left side of the road.
2. True. Pitbulls are classified as a vicious breed and must be in a pen.
3. True. Homeowners cannot blow grass clippings into the street.
4. True. There is a curfew for minors of 11 p.m. on weeknights and midnight on Friday and Saturday evenings.
5. False. All fences must be permitted.
6. False. Pedestrian