

MAYORS CORNER

Spring appears to be upon us. It's a good thing as patience has been running a little short with many. Nothing is quite as galling as waking up at 6:00 am in mid April and looking outdoors before heading out to your 7:00 am Rotary meeting and realizing that you are going to have to brush the snow off of your car.

Hopefully, its gone until fall's swan song in November.

I wanted to take a minute to thank those that participated in the downtown and Playground of Dreams Earth Day clean up event on Saturday, April 21st.

Ms. Lindsey Ringo and her dynamic day care crew. The girl scout contingent led by Susan Kinaitis. The FFA group led by Jennifer Grivins. The Interact/Rotary club provided by Mr. John Letarte and Ms. Stacy Surato. Doug Kunkel, James Morrison and Jon Nobach of the City of Eaton Rapids department of Public Works. The Ribby Family. All of those other folks that took time out of their busy day to give Mother Earth a helping hand.

For the record: We had 55 volunteers that picked up approx. 25 bags of garbage and refuse from our sidewalks, city gardens and playgrounds. We spread approx.. 45 yards of wood chips. We power washed 2 blocks of sidewalk and, in general, gave our little corner of the world a make over.

Every day should be Earth Day. Leave things a little cleaner than you found them and pretty soon the large task is done. Keep watch for additional clean up events in the near future. These will involve planting some of our downtown and park gardens.

We are still in the planning phase of doing a river clean up. Extra precautions must be taken when undertaking this type of task. The river can be unforgiving if you are not careful.

For those of you that weren't aware you can now watch the rapids on the Rapids Cam. Simply log onto the City of Eaton Rapids Website and click on the River Cam header and watch the Rapids in all of their splendor. If you are lucky, you may catch a glimpse of Larry the Bird. Larry is the large domestic white duck

that was dropped off at the Outdoor Recreation Center 4 or so years ago in the early spring. I was working at the livery (then Highland River Adventures) and came into work one morning. Nestled against the building was this little fuzzy white and yellow duckling. He was scared and shivering. I scooped him up in a box and took him inside. I called a friend of mine and she told me what to feed him. I gave him a little bit of food and some water and decided to name him Larry the Bird (after the NBA star). He grew fairly quickly and shed his duckling down. By the end of the summer he was the king of our little corner. He would greet me every morning when I pulled in on my bicycle or in my truck.

I would encourage all of you to visit our parks, our GAR museum and the Miller Farm and Ice Cream Parlor. All are great week end outings. Don't forget to patronize our retail shops and restaurants as well. You won't miss them until they are gone. They need your support and encouragement.

By supporting these businesses their incentive to grow and expand will lead to future growth and investment. With that comes greater diversity and added prosperity for all. The more that is available the more attractive we become. Growth and expansion are not bad things as long as that growth and expansion is channeled in a positive direction. The key is offering big city amenities while retaining our small town charm and personality.

Please take advantage of our Curb Side Appeal grants. The applications are on the City of Eaton Rapids website and are available to both property owners and tenants (with landlord permission). The grants can make a difference in those uncompleted projects.

I would like to welcome our new Quality of Life Director, Lindsay Zeller. She brings a lot of experience to this position and will be a fantastic asset.

Thanks Eaton Rapids for your support. Please continue to make Eaton Rapids a great place to live, work, recreate and raise a family.