

# CITY NEWS

FALL 2011  
www.mfcity.com

City of Milton-Freewater – PO Box 6, 722 S. Main Street, Milton-Freewater, OR 97862

## CUSTOMERS OF THE QUARTER

In a day and age when apathy is running rampant, community involvement and dedication to public causes is at an all-time low.

Not so with our FALL 2011 CUSTOMERS OF THE QUARTER: Steven and Tara Patten!

Steven and Tara moved to Milton-Freewater in November of 2009, and in that short period of time have delved deep into community involvement and service. After their graduations from WWU, Tara landed a job with the Tri-state Steelheaders and Steven became an employee of the Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council. They choose Milton-Freewater as the community they wished to call their home.



Photo by: Leanne Steadman

We love living in Milton-Freewater and value the collaborative spirit of its citizens!" – Steven and Tara Patten

Always interested in politics and local government, they immersed themselves in attending nearly every single Council meeting of Milton-Freewater and keeping abreast of local issues and community concerns. Both of their jobs focus on community-based solutions to natural resource challenges, so they feel a great sense of personal responsibility to the community in which they call home.

When learning about the problems with the decertification of the flood control levee, the Patten's began attending the Milton-Freewater Water Control District meetings and soon volunteered to develop, and administer a web site for the Water Control District. The Patten's did an excellent job keeping the web site updated with progress and challenge reports on the levee project, and are still volunteering their time and talents to aid their community. Steven also gives regular updates to the Council on the great projects of the Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council activities and programs.

When the Patten's were informed of being honored as Milton-Freewater's Fall 2011 Customers of the Quarter, they were shocked and surprised. It was apparent they do not volunteer for recognition or glory, simply out of care for their community. As Tara and Steven said, "We love living in Milton-Freewater and value the collaborative spirit of its citizens!"

Congratulations Steven and Tara, and thank you for taking such an active and positive role in your new home of Milton-Freewater.

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### *A Message from Linda Hall, City Manager*

## WHAT KIND OF SHAPE IS MY CITY IN FINANCIALLY?

In this day and age of economic uncertainty and our federal government struggling with the overwhelming issue of the national debt, Milton-Freewater citizens may have wondered about the financial condition of their own local government.

The short answer is: your city is in very good financial condition. We have a balanced budget, adequate emergency cash reserves of over \$7,000,000, and we live within our means. We do not borrow against future tax payments, nor do we operate "in the red" with any of our funds. We are one of the few cities that have not had to dip into their emergency cash reserves to balance their current expenditure budgets.

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Don't get me wrong. This certainly does not mean that our city has not had to cut back on their expenses in order to "stay in the black". We have cut back on labor costs by not replacing some positions when they retired or quit, and we have applied many creative solutions to control our costs---many of which were suggested by our own employees.

The Council has been extremely careful to manage our debt to revenue ratio, so we are not burdened with debt or struggling to make a lot of long term payments.

We have been extremely fortunate to garner quite a few large dollar grants, which have brought a lot of progress and improvements to Milton-Freewater. One example is the \$3,000,000 worth of street and sidewalk improvements that are being constructed this year: College Street sidewalk, Mill Street widening, Key Boulevard extension and the South Main Street improvements. Another very large grant of \$1,477,241 was attained to upgrade our old water and electric meter reading system to a state-of-the-art "Smart Grid" fully automated meter reading system which will have several advantages for our customers' benefit. We have also brought in another grant of \$582,000 to construct an enclosed and efficient storm water run-off containment system, a problem that the City has been looking to solve for more than 18 years.

This year's budget contained only one utility rate increase---9% in our electric utility. Our BPA power rates have increased several times in recent years, and we could no longer afford to absorb the higher costs. The latest cost increase, 11.3%, was largely due to green power concessions which have increased our cost of power, plus have decreased our surplus power sales revenues. Four years ago, we received \$1,128,338 for surplus power sales. This budget year we anticipate receiving only \$202,440--- a staggering annual loss of \$925,898. This loss of revenue also contributed to the need for a rate increase for our electric utility.

But the overall picture for our city budget is good. We can take great pride in our city and its services. We have many advantages over the majority of cities across the nation---we have carefully protected our pristine water resources, we own our own electric, solid waste, sewer, and water utilities. We own our own landfill and wastewater treatment plant and disposal site. We provide two public transportation programs for our citizens. Our infrastructure is in great shape and has been strategically planned and built for future expansion and we are able to offer recreational facilities not commonly available in cities twice our size---an 18-hole golf course, aquatic center, large library, and over 60 acres of parks and ball fields.

We look at these challenging economic times as an opportunity to grow and improve. The Council and city staff is committed to continual improvement to ensure that Milton-Freewater is a place we can all be proud of.

### CONSERVATION CORNER

#### New Rebates Now Available!

All residential, commercial and agricultural conservation programs are available. Please contact Pat Didion at 541-938-8237 for information on the new rebates.



### DOG LICENSING

**2012 tags available November 1<sup>st</sup>**

**Help us ensure your pet gets returned to you!**

Dog licenses will be available for purchase on November 1<sup>st</sup> for your canine pals!

City code **REQUIRES** dog licensing for **ALL** dogs over six (6) months of age.

License tags help identify your animal in the case they wander off. If your dog has a license tag, they are much more likely to be returned to you rather than impounded.

To obtain your new license fill out the form below, get proof of valid rabies vaccination from your veterinarian and remit your fee of \$35 for unaltered and \$10 for altered dogs at the Police Department or mail them in to us. Fees after March 1<sup>st</sup> incur an additional \$10 charge.

#### **PET INFORMATION:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Breed: \_\_\_\_\_

Sex: M/F Altered: Y/N DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Color: \_\_\_\_\_

Rabies Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Vet to Confirm: \_\_\_\_\_

Microchip: Y/N Number: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **OWNER INFORMATION:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Em. Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Make Checks Payable to:** City of Milton-Freewater, PO Box 6, Milton-Freewater, OR 97862

#### **Do you have your 2012 Business License?**

If you have a business location within the City or if you are doing business in the City, you will need a City Business License. The fee is \$35.00 and is due by January 1 of each year.

All licenses expire December 31<sup>st</sup> and renewal notices will be mailed in November. To print a copy of the application from our web page go to [www.mfcity.com](http://www.mfcity.com).

Questions? Call the Planning Department at 541-938-8234.

## HOLIDAY CLOSURES



**Veterans Day**  
11/11/11  
Garbage Day:  
11/14/11



**Thanksgiving Day**  
11/24/11  
Garbage Day:  
11/23/11

Day after  
**Thanksgiving**  
11/25/11  
Garbage Day:  
11/28/11



**Christmas Eve**  
Observed 12/23/11  
Garbage Day: 12/22/11



**Christmas Day**  
Observed  
12/25/11  
Garbage Day:  
12/27/11



**New Year's Day**  
Observed  
01/02/12  
Garbage Day:  
01/03/12

### 2011 Leaf Pick Up for City Residents

Leaves piled or bagged in the street near the curb will be picked up without charge by the City of Milton-Freewater crews starting Monday, November 14, 2011 through Friday, December 9, 2011. Leaves will be picked up according to which "ZONE" your residence is located in. Dates for each "ZONE" are as follows:

- 🍁 Zone 1 11/14/11-11/18/11 - SW portion of town from S. Main west and south of Broadway
- 🍁 Zone 2 11/21/11-11/23/11 - SE portion of town from S. Main east and south of Broadway
- 🍁 Zone 3 11/28/11-12/02/11 - NE portion of town from N. Elizabeth east and north of Broadway
- 🍁 Zone 4 12/05/11-12/09/11 - NW portion of town from N. Elizabeth west and north of Broadway

Visit us online for a map at [www.mfcity.com](http://www.mfcity.com) under **Public Works**.  
**Please do not put leaves out in the street after the above dates designated for your "ZONE".**

If you want to burn leaves on your property, call the Police Department at 938-5511 for a burning permit. Please do not burn leaves on the pavement. If you have any questions, feel free to contact the Public Works Department at 938-8270, 8272 or 8274.

### Fall Clean Up Event

City refuse customers are allowed one load of up to 800 pounds of waste to the bi-annual clean up event held at the landfill between October 13<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup>. No automotive batteries, tires on the rim (we will accept tires off the rim), E-waste or hazardous materials will be accepted. Please follow proper disposal methods for prohibited items. Remember to bring your ticket and most recent utility bill for admittance. Event hours and information is printed on your ticket as well as on our web site at [www.mfcity.com](http://www.mfcity.com). Questions can be directed to the Public Works Department at 541-938-8270, 8272, 8274 or 8276.



College Street improvements complete!  
Photos by: Dave Robertson



South Mill Street under construction at the time of press shown above. This project will be complete by the end of September.

South Main Street Construction is under way. There may be slight interruptions in service and traffic delays. We thank you in advance for your patience through construction. This project is due to be completed by the end of October.



To participate, please cut here and remit with your next payment.



## ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM – *Customers Helping Customers!*



City Light & Power's Energy Assistance Program is managed in cooperation with the Salvation Army to help the under privileged in our community pay their winter heating bills. The money received through this program stays in Milton-Freewater.

If you are a customer interested in helping others, simply mark one of the pledge options below and mail this insert back with your next payment or drop it by City Hall. City Light and Power will add the amount to your bill each month for as long as you wish. Or you may send a check payable to "Energy Assistance Program" in the amount of your desired contribution. **ALL DONATIONS RECEIVED WILL BE MATCHED BY CITY LIGHT & POWER (up to a total of \$3,000).** Your contribution is fully tax deductible. There is no obligation and you can cancel at any time.

### TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

(check one below)

(check one below)

One Dollars

One Month

Signature

Date

Two Dollars

Six Months

Name & address (please print)

\$ Dollars

Continuous

Individuals interested in applying to receive Energy Assistance benefits may do so by calling the Salvation Army at 509-529-9470.

City of  
*Milton-Freewater*  
PO Box 6  
Milton-Freewater, OR 97862

PRESORTED  
STANDARD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
PERMIT NO  
MILTON FREEWATER, OR

CITY OF MILTON-FREEWATER INFORMATION

Aquatic Center	938.9166
City Manager	938.8242
City Recorder	938.8233
Community Development	938.8236
Conservation	938.8237
Electric Department	938.8231 or 938.8232
Engineering	938.8230 or 938.8238
Finance Department (utility bill payments/taxi tickets)	938.5531
Fire Business	938.8256
Golf Course	938.7284
Human Resources	938.8243
Library	938.8247
Municipal Court	938.8203
Planning & Zoning	938.8234 or 938.8235
Police Business	938.5511
Public Works	938.8270, 938.8272, 938.8274 or 938.8276

Visit us online at [www.mfcity.com](http://www.mfcity.com)

## MEETINGS & EVENTS

### OCTOBER 2011

City Council – 7 p.m.  
Monday, October 10, 2011  
Monday, October 24, 2011

Planning Commission – 7 p.m.  
Monday, October 3, 2011

Recreation Committee – 5 p.m.  
Tuesday, October 4, 2011

Library Board – 7 p.m.  
Tuesday, October 25, 2011

### NOVEMBER 2011

City Council – 7 p.m.  
Monday, November 14, 2011  
Monday, November 28, 2011

Planning Commission – 7 p.m.  
Monday, November 7, 2011

Recreation Committee – 5 p.m.  
Tuesday, November 1, 2011

Library Board – 7 p.m.  
Tuesday, November 28, 2011

### DECEMBER 2011

City Council – 7 p.m.  
Monday, December 12, 2011

Planning Commission – 7 p.m.  
Monday, December 5, 2011

Recreation Committee – 5 p.m.  
Tuesday, December 6, 2011

Library Board – 7 p.m.  
Tuesday, December 27, 2011

All meetings are open to the public. The locations of the meetings are handicapped accessible. Please call City Hall 541-938-5531, or write City of Milton-Freewater, PO Box 6, Milton-Freewater, OR 97862 if you will need any special accommodations or an interpreter to attend or participate in the meeting.

Next Issue: January 1<sup>st</sup>

Milton-Freewater City News – PO Box 6, Milton-Freewater, OR 97862 – Publisher/Editor: Krista Gannon – City Manager: Linda Hall