



Mishawaka Communicator



Working together to build the "Best Hometown in America" by delivering exceptional services, promoting safe and clean neighborhoods, elevating the quality of life, and inspiring pride in our community.

Mishawaka, Indiana

Dave Wood, Mayor

March 2011

A Letter from Mayor Dave Wood

Dear Friends and Neighbors,



On February 21st, I gave my first State of the City Address as Mayor. Although this year marked my 12th State of the City as a public servant, it was my very first presentation as your Mayor. The annual State of the City report is a responsibility that I take very seriously. Not only does it represent our annual report to our citizens on the health of our local government, but it is also a chance to share with you some highlights for the upcoming year. I have past copies of State of the City reports in my office that date as far back as 1914, so I also view the State of the City as an opportunity to create a historical document that future generations can look to in years to come.

It has been a busy six months since becoming Mayor. We have passed a \$47 million dollar balanced budget, successfully negotiated 7 contracts with our labor groups, navigated through more City sponsored construction projects per capita than anywhere in the State, on top of that (literally), we received a record snowfall that, as a City, we responded to with the very best possible City services that our citizens have always relied on! There is no training like on-the-job training!

In addition to these things, I have taken the time to meet with each Department manager to review every Department and observe how each serves our citizens. In many cases, I worked side by side with our dedicated staff of public servants to witness first hand the services delivered by the City. My assessment is that as a City, we have a lot to be proud of:

- We are a city that strives to provide world-class service.
- We are a city that is well served by a dedicated staff of public servants.
- We are a city living within our means.
- We are a city that stands in stark contrast to the condition of other Cities who are now facing enormous budget deficits, drastic service cuts, impending tax increases, and a very uncertain future.

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Don't Let Stress Get Under Your Skin

Every month, the Communicator will provide a monthly series of articles for our Let's Move Mishawaka Program about healthy eating and lifestyles provided by Saint Joseph Physician Network, courtesy of Dr. Dale Deardorff, Medical Director.

Everyone knows that cleaning and bandaging a cut is one way to make it heal faster. What you may not know, however is that reducing your level of stress can aid in healing.

Results from a number of studies by the Wound Healing Research Program at The Ohio State University (OSU) found that stress can slow the healing of wounds and weaken the immune system.

Stress can make psoriasis or rosacea worse, inflame acne, lead to brittle nails and hair loss, cause or worsen hives, and impair the skin barrier function to allow irritants, allergens and infectious agents to penetrate the skin.

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In January, February and March, students from all 4th, 5th, and 6th grades at all Mishawaka public schools participated in a Let's Move Mishawaka program in their school gyms with community partners from St. Joseph Regional Medical Center, Martin's Supermarkets, Fire Prevention Chief Jim Schuster and his Fire Prevention Obstacle Course, along with several members of the Mishawaka Fire Department, Mike Faulkner from Mishawaka Parks and Mayor Dave Wood. Dave Kindig organized all of the Physical Education Teachers from School City of Mishawaka, so a big thank you goes out to him for his help. The program contained a lot of fun activities and exercise for the students who walked, ran, played tug-of-war, did jumping jacks, jump roped, enjoyed healthy snacks and participated in the fire obstacle course.



Visit our website for more info:
mishawaka.in.gov/move

A Letter From Mayor Dave Wood (continued)

Despite the worst economic downturn since the great depression, the City of Mishawaka continued to grow in 2010, but unfortunately at a slower pace than anyone would like. The City of Mishawaka continues to reap the benefits of our long-term strategic decision making, such as the relocation of the Saint Joseph Regional Medical Center and our emphasis on diversifying the City's economy by promoting higher paying medical and technology jobs.

Despite the lagging economy, Mishawaka has great reason for optimism. I am pleased to report that the State of our City is:

Fiscally stable - Another balanced budget. Unlike other communities we have not borrowed from the future to make it easier for today nor have we compromised our services.

Fiscally Conservative - In 2010 we received 94 percent of our tax levy which left us short \$1.3 million. This shortage reminds us that even though we are fiscally stable, the City needs to maintain our cautious spending and budget management to guide us through uncertain times.

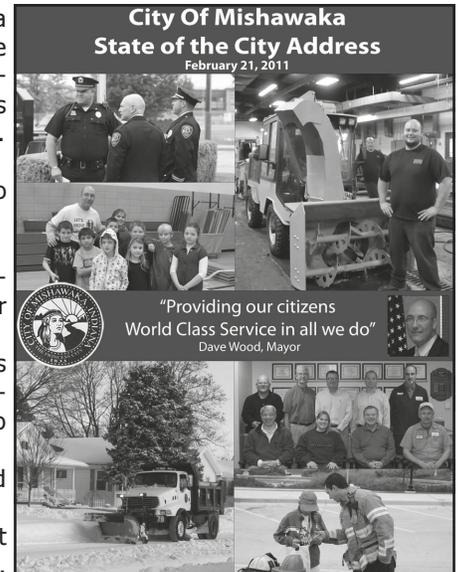
Lean and Efficient- Prior years cuts and constant search for efficiencies have resulted positively in remodeling the way services are delivered.

Growing- Mishawaka continues to grow in an orderly and efficient manner. The count recently published by the US Census has the population of the City at 48,252. Over the last decade, our population has grown 3.6%.

Welcoming to Business- Our City has an "open for business" philosophy. We foster and promote an environment conducive to business growth.

Strong, Stable and Safe Neighborhoods- As a City we continue to value and strategically reinvest in our neighborhoods to make them strong, safe and vibrant places to live.

Moving Forward- Our City continues to change with the times and I believe we are on the verge of taking our next great step forward with the improving economy.



The State of the City has been a very meaningful process for me. It is my responsibility to you to honestly report the condition of your city government. This is a responsibility that I take seriously. I invite you to read the State of the City. It is available online at www.mishawaka.in.gov or there are a limited amount of printed copies available in the Mayor's office at 600 E. 3rd St. in Mishawaka.

This process has reinforced in me that our City has a lot to be proud of. Together, we will work to keep Mishawaka on the right track. Though many different challenges lie ahead. We will continue to build a community that future generations can be proud; a community that is an attractive environment to live, work, raise a family and retire in. Together, we will strive to maintain Mishawaka's reputation as "the best hometown in America."

Mayor Dave Wood

Don't Let Stress Get Under Your Skin (continued)

Is stress putting your health at risk?

Everyone reacts to stress differently. Common symptoms include headaches, rapid heartbeat, chest pains, problems sleeping, irritability, anxiety, upset stomach, back and neck pain, overeating or loss of appetite, forgetfulness and fatigue.

To keep yourself from going mental, get physical. Activity causes your brain to produce feel-good endorphins, and exercise can also give you a feeling of control of your body and your life. One OSU study in particular found that older adults who followed a regular exercise routine could speed up the wound healing process by as much as 25 percent.

What is it that is driving you crazy? By first slowing down and analyzing the family relationships, work issues or health concerns that may be leading to stress, you can then more easily identify possible solutions.

Money worries are a major cause of stress. Take a realistic look at your financial situation and then plan a course of action that puts you in control of the situation. Make a budget, get the entire family involved in saving and consider outside resources such as not-for-profit credit counseling organizations for debt that seems overwhelming.

LET'S MOVE MISHAWAKA!



Tip of the Month

Because of their temporary nature, diets don't work. The people who do lose weight end up gaining it back again once they come off the diet. Instead of dieting, try to change your lifestyle. The changes you make to the way you eat should be sustainable for the rest of your life.



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Send your questions, comments, or concerns to communicator_feedback@mishawaka.in.gov