

**CITY OF ELY**

1570 ROWLEY ST  
P. O. BOX 248  
ELY, IA 52227

PRSR STD  
POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
ELY, IA  
PERMIT NO. 249

ECR WSS  
ELY, IA 52227

C O M M U N I T Y N E W S

## Historical Preservation Committee News

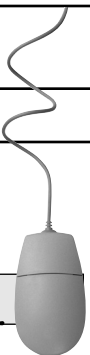
Come and see the historical wall displays that are now part of the Ely Community Center! You can view displays on early settlement history, the Dows Street Historic District, Ely School history and the history of our city including government, library, fire department and community center. You can stop in any time the building is open.

In the works are displays about the history of the Shueyville and Western areas and displays about other aspects of our history. Remember, we still need your donations of photos and anything historic for our Archives Room. We have over 50 collections with about 10 more waiting to be processed. On note is a recent loan from the American Legion, St. Quentin Post 555. Visit us at [www.elyiowa.com/history](http://www.elyiowa.com/history)

## Website

Have you visited our website?

 [elyiowa.com](http://elyiowa.com)



## New to the Website:

The City Hall Blog and Online Forum. This new feature encourages discussion of topics related to city activities. You are invited to visit the blog to read current blog postings and share your ideas, thoughts and concerns.

## Cook's Corner

### Cheesy Corn Bake

- 1-can whole kernel corn (drained)
- 1-can cream style corn
- 1-c elbow macaroni
- 1/2 stick margarine
- 1-c cubed Velveeta cheese

Mix all together and bake uncovered in glass casserole dish 350 degrees for 1 hour.



**APRIL-JUNE  
2008**

VOLUME 2 ISSUE 2

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[www.elyiowa.com](http://www.elyiowa.com)

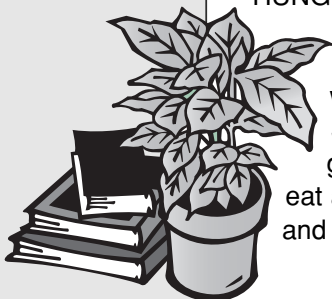
Ely Community TV  
Channel 217  
South Slope Digital Video

Phone/Fax: 848-4103  
After Hours Emergency  
Only: 848-7603

**Regular business hours:**  
Monday – Friday  
8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

**Office Closed:**  
New Year's Day, Memorial  
Day, Independence Day,  
Labor Day, Thanksgiving  
Thursday & Friday, and  
Christmas Day.

**Council Meetings:**  
2nd Monday each month  
7:00 p.m. in the Council  
Chambers 2nd floor.  
Public is welcome and  
encouraged to attend.



# Ely Expression

## A Glimpse Ahead:

- **Water System Upgrades.** We are researching two options to upgrade pressure and storage capacities to Ely's water system: building a new water tower and connecting to Cedar Rapids. The City Council is collecting a lot of information on both of these options and will review it over the next several months before deciding which option to pursue.
- **Park Development.** Over the next few months the City Council and Parks & Recreation Commission will be working on prioritizing facilities and activities to include in the first stages of construction.
- Ely *might* re-open discussion with Cedar Rapids on an annexation boundary/limitation agreement. (see *Bob Ballantyne's article for more*)
- In April, the City Council will consider an ordinance that would set up a local permit system to allow golf carts on city streets and would also allow ATV's to travel on city streets for snow removal, gardening, and lawn care purposes.

Check Ely's website [www.elyiowa.com](http://www.elyiowa.com) and the City Hall Blog for more and updated information on these and other items.

## Front Page News

### Parks Board Plant & Garage Sale May 3rd

The Parks & Recreation Commission will hold a plant and garage sale in the yard of the "Ely Corner House" at the intersection of Dows and State Streets during the City Wide Garage Sales, May 3rd from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Stop by early to get your premium choice from the great selection of garage sale items and the finest flowers, ferns and other flora in the area. All proceeds of the plant and garage sale will go toward building the Ely City Park and similar park related projects.

Please contact Stephanie Mai at (319) 361-5240 or email: [nsemai@southslope.net](mailto:nsemai@southslope.net) if you have plants or garage sale items to donate for the Parks Board sale.

Garage Sale-ing can make a person HUNGRY. The Parks Board has your mid-garage-sale-day meal covered with the destined to be world-famous Ely "Made-Wrongs". Stop by the Parks Board plant and garage sale for a delicious bite to eat and a great selection of plants and garage sale stuff!

### Farmers Market

The Ely Farmers Market will start up again soon on Tuesday afternoons 4:00 p.m.-6:30 p.m. and Saturday mornings 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. The market will have a new location this year on the northeast corner of Dows and State Street by the "Ely Corner House". Watch for it to open, or check [www.elyiowa.com](http://www.elyiowa.com) or South Slope Channel 217 for updates. If you are interested in becoming a vendor, please contact Lisa Hinton at 848-4013 for details.



### City Wide Clean-Up Day May 17

This year's City Wide Clean-Up Day will be Saturday May 17th from 7:00 a.m. to noon. This is your opportunity to dispose of large/bulky items and other eligible items for free. For residents with a few smaller items we will have a collection station located at the City Maintenance Building on Main Street. Larger loads will require a courtesy voucher and need to be taken to the Linn County Landfill on County Home Road north of Marion. For more information contact City Hall 848-4103.

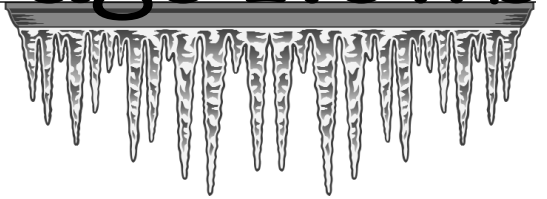
# More Front Page News

## Fire Hydrant Flushing

The City of Ely will be flushing fire hydrants April 7th – 21st. This is regular scheduled routine maintenance. While being done, from time to time you may notice some discoloring of your water. Although the water may look a little different, it will be safe to drink and creates no health risk. When you are doing laundry, it is your responsibility to check for water discoloration before adding clothing. The discoloration will affect the brightness of your laundry. If you notice discoloration let the water run until it runs clear.

## Ely's Fourth of July

It's never too early to think about the 4th of July (especially after this year's nasty winter). The Ely Volunteer Fire Department's Annual Pancake Breakfast starts America's Summer Holiday off early and right. Join the hard working Ely VFD from 7:00 a.m. through 12:30 p.m. for a great breakfast! Then, join in or watch the 4th of July parade at 6:00 p.m. The parade route starts at the Fire Station.



## Ice Storm Cleanup

Yep, we are still cleaning up from last December's ice storm! The Ely Public Works crew will pick up at the curb, branches and tree limbs, from trees damaged by the December 10th ice storm Tuesday, April 22 through Friday, April 25. Tree limbs and branches need to be no longer than 6 feet and in bundles that can be handled by one person, and must be brought to the curb for the Public Works crew to collect. Please call City Hall (848-4103) to let us know you have branches/limbs to be picked up.

## Streetlights Not Working?

Do you know of places where streetlights aren't working? Maybe they flicker off and on, or it's just plain dark where it shouldn't be? Please contact either Ely City Hall (848-4103) or the electric utility for that area. Alliant Energy (1-877-740-5050) is the electric utility in most locations in Ely, but Linn County Rural Electric (1-800-332-5420) also serves some locations in Ely.

## Upcoming Events:

**April 14**

City Council Meeting

**May 3**

City Wide Garage Sales

**May 12**

City Council Meeting

**May 17**

City Wide Clean-up Day

**June 9**

City Council Meeting

*Coming this Fall to an Ely near you – Ely Fall Festival and Cell Phone Olympics!*

## As your yard wakes up to spring.....

The City of Ely offers a service to properly dispose of residential yard waste. All pickups must be scheduled with City Hall. The Public Works Department will do the pickup and not our solid waste and recycling hauler, Waste Management. The cost per container or per bundle is \$2.00 and will be added to your monthly utility billing. Yard waste must be separated by the homeowner from all other solid waste and placed in environmentally approved biodegradable refuse bags and put at the curb. Tree limbs (less than 4" in diameter) and brush should be securely tied in bundles no larger than 48" long and 18" in diameter. Each bundle should weigh less than 75 pounds and be able to be handled by one person. If yard waste does not meet these standards it will not be picked up. Take advantage of the service and enjoy the beautiful weather.



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## A COUPLE OF CONSIDERATIONS

*Like other cities of our size that are in the fringe of large metropolitan areas we've had to "grow up" in a hurry. Consider, Waukee, Iowa in the Des Moines metroplex, or Fairfax, our sister City to the west. These communities have experienced rapid growth. Both have suffered growing pains. Keeping an eye on what they do and how they do it is one of the ways our Mayor, Council and staff keep ahead of our own growth. We have two concerns to bring to common discussion. First, let's discuss our relationship with the "eight hundred pound gorilla", our neighbor to the north and west, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, the City of Five Seasons.*

### A Dialogue with Cedar Rapids

It has been two years since Ely worked out a fringe area plan with Linn County. This was a mutual agreement with the County for how Ely and the County will cooperate to approve development in the two-mile area around our city limits. The project went very well. Lots of citizens turned out to help and lots of our neighbors in the two-mile apron participated as well.

However, the eight hundred pound gorilla that was not in the room was the City of Cedar Rapids. Its southern border is within our two-mile apron and it is annexing new land and developing new residential additions in our direction as we speak. Perhaps you are aware that Cedar Rapids has annexed the land along Interstate 380 all the way into Johnson County and does have a fringe area agreement with Swisher, Johnson County, Iowa. You may also be aware that Cedar Rapids has annexed both sides of Highway 30 from highway W6E to the Cedar

River. You may have also have read in the Cedar Rapids Gazette that as Cedar Rapids has grown it has had a major dispute with the residents who lived in the area between it and Hiawatha over annexation to the north of Cedar Rapids. This matter was settled in court. In 2001 Cedar Rapids and Fairfax developed a fringe area agreement that was taken to court by unhappy residents of the fringe between the two cities. It was also litigated.

More recently Cedar Rapids appears to have developed more effective discourse and better annexation agreements with Palo and Atkins. Apparently, Cedar Rapids, Palo and Atkins have learned from the experience of Fairfax and Hiawatha. A constructive dialog with Cedar Rapids is long overdue. Hopefully it can result in a satisfactory plan for both cities to grow without the problems that befell Hiawatha and Fairfax. We're hopeful that our process with Cedar Rapids can be modeled after our process with Linn County and that it will begin soon.

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## E L Y C O M M U N I T Y D E V E L O P M E N T

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Our second concern about our growth is more complicated. As we grow, we are pushing our infrastructure to its limits. Provision of water for home use and for firefighting has become a major concern. It is essential that we have abundant and safe, potable water. We are growing beyond the capacity of our water tower and we have a capital improvement plan in the works for development of another tower. Perhaps you were unaware that some of the homes at higher elevation in our northeast additions do not have adequate water pressure to satisfactorily operate showers in their upstairs baths during peak use. New residential development in higher elevations on the north side of Ely is on hold until adequate water pressure is available.

Providing the infrastructure—streets, sewer and water—so that Ely can grow effectively will be the major focus of City Councils well into the future. We are not a revenue rich city. Taking care of our existing infrastructure and providing the infrastructure needed for growth, while containing taxes and fees, will require strong will and adroit budget skills. The property tax roll back and the slow down in residential housing development will significantly reduce tax revenue in the coming years. It would be very helpful to us if we had more business development because businesses pay half

again as much property tax as do residential home owners, and that is before we factor in the property tax roll back.

Many other cities our size and larger have commissioned private non-profit community or economic development groups and/or city departments to facilitate commercial growth. Some of this growth will happen naturally as a city grows, but there are also opportunities to attract professional developments that coincide with our small town amenities and proximity to the airport and community college too. In order to keep our taxes and fees down and to assure adequate streets, water, sewer and parks maintenance and development and public safety, we must plan for commercial development to expand our tax base. It is time that Ely became very serious about thoughtful commercial development into the future. It is time Ely considers a formal economic development effort. The beauty of such an initiative is that it can proceed with volunteers. We have the individuals with the skills and talents to do much of this pioneer work right here in eastern Iowa's most pleasant community. We urge you to give these matters some thought...And, keep in touch.

– Bob Ballantyne, Ely City Council