



# Talk of the Town

City of Victoria

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Dear Victoria Citizens,

Here it is the end of the first month of the New Year already. No wonder before we know it, the end of the year will arrive again way before we are ready for it. Our hope always seems to be for better things in the New Year, and we make many resolutions which we hope to make our life better and improved.

This year, however, will have its challenges, just like any other year. I'm sure for some of us those challenges have already begun to show their ugly faces. We obviously have one thing that continues to show its ugly face, and that is the drought. As I sit here writing this letter, the wind is howling and the dust is blowing similar to the way it did in the 1930s. At least that's what I'm told. The drought just doesn't seem to be healing itself or going away.

This situation continues to pose many problems for a lot of people. It seems that every day I hear of another person having to haul water to his cattle or worse his home because his water well(s) have dried up. As far as the city is concerned, we are continually monitoring our seven water wells and I must say the situation is obviously not improving. How could it without any moisture? The wells continue to seem to hold their own, but that is only because we are only pumping at less than approximately 50% capacity. If we pumped the wells at full capacity, there is no way they could keep up and would draw down to below the pumps. In other words, they would have nothing to pump. We have been operating this way for more than 18 months now.

Without being terribly complicated, it is just not a good situation. As a governing body, we have tried everything we can to make the situation the best we can, but without rain there is little more we can do. We have retained the services of a water hydrologist to help us review how the wells were drilled and how much water they had originally, compared to how much they have now. The well levels have all dropped significantly. We are pursuing other sources of water, but with the drought being so widespread, we have not found any viable source so far. We will continue to work on this issue with our hydrologist but again, without rainfall, soaking rainfall, there is little we can do to heal the problem.

**Consequently, at last Monday night's Council Meeting we decided to advance to Phase III water restrictions. In short, this means there will not be any outdoor water usage allowed: no watering of lawns or flowers, no washing of cars, and no filling of private swimming pools.** This was a very hard decision to make and was made with careful consideration as well as hydrological data to back our decision. We certainly hope that the situation will begin to correct itself with rainfall, but at the current time, we cannot depend on that. Other communities have made and are making the same decision. Russell and Ellis have had this restriction already, and Palco and Natoma have just decided to go to Phase III as well.

I certainly hope we can bring you better news about water in the future. At the current time, however, we must sustain life. We must have water for household use and to fight fires. We must take care of human life. Blessings to you in this New Year. We pray for better times ahead.

Best regards,

Curtis Unrein, Mayor

## City Officials

### Mayor

Curtis Unrein

### City Council

Jerry Brungardt

Erica Dinges

Kenneth Pfeifer

Jan Piesker

Leroy Schmidtberger

### City Clerk

Mary Pfeifer

### Utilities Clerk

Nancy Piatt

### City Superintendent/

### Building Inspector

Julius Windholz

### Public Works Assts.

Terry Riedel

Robert Schmidt

### Police Chief

Cole Dinkel

### Patrol Officer

Ryan Mauch

# Calendar of Events



## February

- 2 Ground Hog Day
- 2 Super Bowl Sunday
- 7 VHS B-Ball vs. Macksville  
Snowball Ceremony
- 10 School Board Meeting
- 14 **Valentine's Day**
- 17 City Council Meeting
- Presidents' Day — No School**



## March

- 9 Daylight Savings Begins
- 10 School Board Meeting
- 17 **St. Patrick's Day**  
City Council Meeting
- 17-21 Spring Break
- 20 Spring Begins



## April

- 1 **April Fool's Day**
- 12 Prom
- 13 VES Fundraiser Breakfast
- 14 School Board Meeting
- 18 No School - City Hall Closed
- 20 Easter
- 21 No School
- 22 Earth Day
- 26 City-wide Garage Sale

# Service Awards

During January, members of the Victoria Volunteer Fire Department were recognized with awards for their years of service as follows:

**20 Years—Chris Brungardt**

**15 years—Dave Gagnon**

**15 years—Terry Riedel**

**5 years—Kami Weber**

**THANK YOU**



### Check out the new website

The City of Victoria has a new website which can be found by logging on to [www.victoriaks.com](http://www.victoriaks.com). The old website, created in 1999, was in need of updating and John Schulte was designated by the Victoria City Council to create the new one.

The new site features items about city services, businesses, organizations, city history and a collection of old, original maps.

If anyone has any suggestions to offer regarding the site, he/she is encouraged to contact City Hall.

DID YOU KNOW THERE IS A 2 1/2 MINUTE VIDEO ENTITLED VICTORIA-CATHEDRAL OF THE PLAINS AVAILABLE FOR VIEWING ON YOUTUBE? CHECK THAT OUT TOO!

FYI— Building Permits are required for any construction, reconstruction, moving or some remodeling of any structure. This includes shingling, fences, underground sprinkler systems etc. They are also required for sidewalk/driveway construction. Permits must be obtained BEFORE the project is started. Permits are intended to protect the homeowner from un-licensed workers and fraud. They are available at City Hall. Some projects do not require a permit. Check with City Hall or Julius Windholz, building inspector to see if your work needs a permit.



## Victoria hosts two exchange students



Photo courtesy of Sam Ottley

The roster at Victoria High School for the current year contains two foreign exchange students. Elisa Zoppalato, a junior from Mogliano, Italy, is staying with John and Karen Nowak and has truly become a daughter to them! At VHS, Elisa has participated in volleyball, cheerleading, and several other organizations.

Ferdinand Poschenrieder, also a junior, comes from Dresden, Germany, and is being hosted by Dan and MaryKay Schippers. Ferdinand has participated in football, basketball, and plans to go out for track.

Counselor Kori Braun commented, "The exchange students bring such flavor and culture to our school. It is amazing how much more full the students' (and teachers') education is during the year that we have the opportunity to have exchange students within our student body. We all receive a much better world view of all subject areas taught daily than we would if we did not have the exchange students here."

CCI Greenheart, the sponsoring organization, has exchange students from over 60 countries. HOST FAMILIES are needed for the 2014-2015 school year. They will arrive from Europe, Asia, and South America in mid-August 2014 and stay with the host family for one semester or until the end of the school year. They are in need of caring American families (with or without children) to provide a home and share with them this unique experience. The host family provides a bed, meals, friendship, understanding, and a genuine desire to share the American way of life. The students speak English, are covered by medical insurance, and have spending money for their personal expenses. Country, religion, hobbies, and other information is provided in order to best fit students with host families. For more information, please call Kori Braun at 785-735-4161.

## Herl opens full service salon

As of Jan. 9, Victoria has a new style salon and boutique operated by Sheena Herl. Color Pallet, located at 1106 3<sup>rd</sup> St., is an "eclectic blend of rustic and modern" that displays some of the limestone of the original building dating back over 100 years and artifacts from the Herl family including barn wood, an old barn door, an old cabinet and sink, and a ladder that once led to the loft. She loves reusing "old stuff" and in this case that includes a table from her first apartment and old kitchen chairs.

The modern element includes a glittering chandelier and trendy shampoo and style chairs. The three new full-size mirrors she selected are set in colorful frames made of recycled newspapers and magazines. In addition to her salon services, she presently has a small inventory of jewelry, scarves, and purses. She hopes to "grow the boutique" once she has a sense of her customers' tastes.

Her service menu includes haircuts for men, women, and children, a variety of hair coloring options, special occasion styling and makeup. In the future she plans to offer gel nail care. Her hours are set at Tuesdays through Fridays 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m., Thursdays 10:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. and Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Her business phone is (785) 735-4617. Walk-ins will be welcome. Herl remarked that she is looking forward to filling up her appointment book and to serving Victoria and surrounding communities. She also has room to add a second stylist when the time is right.



Ribbon Cutting at Color Pallet included Council members Ken-ny Pfeifer, Erica Dinges, Jan Piesker, Mayor Curt Unrein, friend Austin Gagnon, owner Sheena Herl, Sheena's parents Pat and Dan Herl and Council member Leroy Schmidtberger.

## New Thrift Store Thriving

The new St. Fidelis Thrift Shop, which opened its doors in November, has experienced considerable success. According to Jan Brungardt, the store sold over \$4,000 in merchandise, "more than imagined."

Beginning Feb. 3, more hours will be added including Mondays from 10:00 - 8:00 pm and Thursdays from 10:00 - 4:00 pm. Some special events are also coming up. On Feb. 26, the shop will be offering a bowl of Fr. John's homemade soup to anyone who stops by for quick lunch. Other ideas being considered are a craft day for kids, a senior citizen discount day, and a student discount day.

There have been many donations and customers, some shopping for clothes while others are looking "for that special treasure." They have added another building plus use of a storage building. Furniture and appliances have been among the donations.

Brungardt stated, "We would like to thank all those who have donated, all of our customers, and especially those wonderful volunteers who help us out every day."

## Chief Dinkel creates recognition for “Good Kids”

Once a month during the school year, Police Chief Cole Dinkel pays a friendly visit to both Victoria school buildings to recognize a “good kid” at an all-school assembly. The student is designated as the P.A.T.R.O.L. (Police and Teachers Recognizing Outstanding Learners) student. The student is selected by the faculty and staff of the building. In addition to the recognition in front of his peers, each recipient receives a certificate, PATROL T-shirt donated by the City of Victoria, and **is treated to a pizza buffet lunch sponsored by Gambino’s. If the high school recipient is 18 years of age, he/she is also given the opportunity to do a ride-along with Dinkel to gain a better understanding of a police officer’s role and encounters.**

The certificate presented states that the award is being given for **“being a positive role model who is always willing to help students and staff.”**

According to Dinkel, his reason for creating this award dates back to his days in school when it seemed all the recognition was given to students who excelled academically or athletically. There was no formal acknowledgment for good kids who did the right thing.

Victoria Junior/Senior High Principal Stuart Moeckel commented, **“We greatly appreciate the Victoria Police Department for taking the time to recognize our students for their positive influence both in the classroom and in general.”**

Elementary Principal David Ottley added, **“This is an awesome opportunity for our students.”**

Students who have received recognition thus far at the junior/senior high school include Adrienne Thomas, senior, Susanne Maestas, junior, Makayla Crawford, junior, and Jared Kisner, eighth grade. Recipients at the grade school are Scarlett Nowlin, sixth grade, Payden Leiker, fifth grade, Kenzie Sweat, fourth grade, Abigail Braun, third grade, and Eli Schmeidler, second grade.

This is the third year the award has been presented.

### Reminder



**Victoria City Code requires all owners of any dog over six months of age to have their dog immunized against rabies and to obtain a city dog tag BEFORE March 1st. The fee for a tag is \$2.00 for each neutered or spayed dog. It is \$5.00 for each dog that is not spayed or neutered. A current rabies immunization certificate must be presented before a dog tag can be obtained. Owners failing to purchase dog tags before March 1st will be charged a late registration fee of \$1.00 per month (including the months of January and February) and also risk the chance of receiving a \$50.00 fine plus \$50.00 in court costs should their dog get loose and be picked up without a tag.**



Second grader Eli Schmeidler displays his PATROL certificate presented by Police Chief Cole Dinkel at an all-school assembly.

(photo courtesy of David Ottley)



Spring is not too far off—time to clean out the closets, basement, attic, **kids’ rooms, garage, etc. It’s also time** to make plans to be a part of the Community-Wide Garage Sale set for Saturday, April 26th. If you would like to be on the list, contact City Hall at 735-2259 or drop off a short list of items and the address where the sale will be held by April 1st. There is a \$7.00 charge to help defray the cost of advertising in the newspaper.