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"Preserving Our Past While Working On Our Future"

Rothsay Regional Report

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Changes Are Coming To The Rothsay City Council

As some of you may have heard, there are elections this year. You can't watch three minutes of television without being exposed to campaign advertising emphasizing the virtues of one candidate while berating the opponent.

The date when all of the political ads and candidates backstabbing

ends is Tuesday, November 6. On that day voters will go to the polls to determine representation at national, state and local levels. Virtually everything except township elections are on the ballot in November.

This year is what they call "the mid-terms" or that time between presidential elections. Even if we

are not electing a president, these elections set the tone for the next two years until we do elect a president again.

It is a particularly busy year in Minnesota politics. With an open seat at the governor's office, there is a spirited campaign between the two major party candidates. There

are actually two senate races in Minnesota, one full six-year term that would have come up on a regularly scheduled basis this year. There is also a two-year US Senate seat up for grabs that was created by the resignation of Al Franken.

There are a host of major state races that do not have incumbents running and that is creating a lot of interest in certain parts of the state. There are also seats in the Minnesota House of Representatives up for election this year. Rothsay sits on the edge of a couple of different districts so who you vote for will be determined by which side of the Wilkin-Ottertail County line you live on.

With open seats there are spirited races occurring for sheriff in both Ottertail and Clay County as well as the standard county office elections.

And there are big changes in store right here in Rothsay as the face of the city council is about to change dramatically. All five of the Rothsay City Council positions could see new faces in the chairs when the council is sworn in after January 1, 2019.

Every election brings changes. Some years the slate of candidates is all incumbents and nothing changes. That is rare. Usually there is a new face or two after an election with a lot of experienced faces still holding seats on the board.

It is also extremely rare to have an election where every position on a board is likely to change. But that is what the Rothsay City Council is looking at for the general election on Tuesday, November 6.

Usually boards are set up with staggered terms that assure that there is not a complete turnover in council personnel in a single year. With the Rothsay mayor facing election every two years and the four council members holding four year seats, with two of those four seats up for election in every even-numbered year, the table was set to assure some experience would remain on the board.

It was a good plan. . . . It didn't work. . . . For a variety of reasons, every single seat on the council is likely to change in January of 2019.

When filings for city offices closed on Tuesday, August 14, there were five hats that had been tossed

into the ring. The five are seeking the four seats that are now all open on the council.

Running for his first term as an elected mayor will be Joe Tillman. He has been filling in as acting mayor since early

summer. Tillman moved up from his council representative seat to acting mayor when then acting mayor Eric Larson stepped down.

Larson was forced to leave his council post when he accepted employment with the City of Rothsay. He can not sit on an elected administrative board and also be an employee so he was forced to resign. Larson himself was named appointed acting mayor in December when elected Rothsay Mayor Chris Buckingham resigned due to work demands.

That left the council one member short but they decided to operate as a four-member board for a short time until the election this fall. Tillman is in mid-term of his four-year election as a council representative. His is the only seat not up for election this fall. If he is elected in November, which is likely as he is the only candidate running, he will have to relinquish that council seat. The council would then appoint a successor in January for the remaining two years of Tillman's term.

Three people have filed for the two four-year terms open on the Rothsay City Council. Darrell "Tolly" Tollefson is an incumbent whose term is expiring. He has filed for re-election. There are two newcomers to Rothsay City Politics in

Daryl Schleeter and Les Nelson who have also filed for one of the two four-year terms on the board.

There was one filing for the vacant two-year council member's seat. Filing for that post was Tulsa-Leigh Kugler. This is the seat left vacant when Eric Larson stepped down from the council to join the city staff.

There was one incumbent who did not file for re-election. Lori Jorgenson has been a part of Rothsay city government for 23 years and is retiring from her position. She went to work as the Rothsay City Clerk on January 9, 1995. She held that job for 18 years before leaving that position on May 2, 2013. She was out of city government for a grand total of five days before being sworn in as a council representative on May 7, 2013. Jorgenson also held a state position representing small cities of Minnesota. Her experience on the board will be missed.

You almost need a scorecard to keep track of the open, appointed and elected positions on the Rothsay City Council. But it will all become clear once you see the ballot mailed out by Rothsay City Clerk Lisa Zimmerman.

She has mailed ballots to all registered voters of Rothsay approximately 30 days before the Tuesday, November 6 General Election. These ballots can be mailed back to the Wilkin or Otter Tail County Auditor's office prior to the election. Or the ballots can be brought to the voting precinct and deposited the day of the election on November 6. Ballots will also be available at the regular polling places for voters who are not yet registered.

There is an election in Rothsay every year. The even numbered years see the general congressional, senate, governor and presidential elections held as well as city offices. The odd-numbered years see school board races held the first Tuesday in November.

Drying The Corn Down . . .



You can smell it in the crisp, fall air. The sweet scent of corn going through a grain dryer fills the air. Steam from the process billows high into the sky where the moisture is returned into the air. This is a scene being repeated at every country elevator around the state this year. This picture was from the Agassiz Valley Partners Rothsay Elevator but it could have been snapped anywhere as a big corn crop begins to come off the fields, most of it wet.

After nearly four weeks of wind, snow and rain, the corn crop has actually picked up moisture over the past few weeks. Harvest was shut down by the weather beginning about September 15. It was the week of October 15 before combines began to roll, in at least a limited capacity.

Yet to be harvested are thousands of acres of soybeans that are being left in the fields as corn harvest begins. The beans have been especially hard hit by the soggy conditions. They should have been harvested in September but it has simply been too wet. Beans that were nearly ready to go in September have gained moisture.

The absorbent soybean pods have been pulling

moisture out of the air and then transferring the moisture back into the ripe beans. Instead of drying down, the beans are actually gaining moisture. Many farmers have given up on the beans and have switched over to corn heads and will take their corn off before the beans. As the weather gets colder, the freezing overnight temperatures will take away some of the moisture. Eventually the ground will freeze up enough so the beans will not have to be mudded out. If we don't get snow.

With a warm change in the weather pattern in mid-October, the corn harvest will shift into high gear. There is an enormous corn crop in the area. Even if it comes out wet and has to be dried, there is an awful lot of corn that it has to be taken off. Many farmers are predicting 200 bushel corn this year with a lot of acres standing ready for harvest.

Early corn harvested has been running 19 to 25% moisture which is wet. But it's better off wet with drying costs than it is standing out in a wet field. Corn and bean harvest, which early in the year pointed to an early harvest, will now see combines still harvesting corn at Thanksgiving.



Disappointing Color Show



If you are a fall leaf watcher and can't wait to get out and see Mother Nature's fine display, you were better off staying home this year. There was more color shown in sheltered areas within the city than there were out in the countryside this year. This maple tree located near the New Life Lutheran Church was still putting on a brilliant display in mid-October. It was past its prime but still struggling to produce a fine show before dropping its leaves until next spring.

The real show usually happens in Maplewood State Park, east of Pelican Rapids. Or there is a big display in the Erhard Ozarks. Or maybe you get your best color from the Olaf Lake Woods west of Pelican Rapids. But those displays were a total bust this year. They never happened at all.

Instead of a leaf display of brilliant colors, we got four weeks of steely gray skies, stiff cold winds, rain and even snow. Beginning in mid-September the rain clouds moved in and through mid-October the scenery never changed. It was gloomy, wet and cold.

We finally got a break in the weather the middle of October. Temperatures got into the 60s for a couple of days. But it was too little and way too late. During four weeks of wind, rain and snow, nearly all of the leaves were stripped from the trees before they ever had a chance to change over into their fall finery. Even the oaks, which many years hold leaves well out into November, have been mostly stripped bare already.

If you like to look at trees in full fall plumage, stay home. Drive around town. There is more color in the sheltered city than there is out in the countryside this year.

They're Outside Again, For Now...



Once again the laughing sounds of kids enjoying themselves on the outdoor playground equipment can be heard on the cool, crisp autumn air. Yes, it's cold enough that most of them are wearing winter coats already, but at least the weather is cooperating to the point where they can be outside again.

From mid-September through mid-October, there were virtually no days when it was fit for the Rothsay Public School kids to be out on the playground. If it wasn't raining, it was blowing 40 miles per hour. We even had some snow that lasted at least for a few days.

Although we may have missed out on any kind of an extended

Indian Summer, we did get a little break from the cold and wind in the middle of October. In fact, for a few days it was downright pleasant with a couple of days playing with the 60 degree mark. But we are on borrowed time now. Any day that gets into the 50s is a bonus. Halloween is only a little over a week away. . . . Deer season will open in a couple of weeks. . . . We're only a little over four weeks away from an early Thanksgiving on Thursday, November 22.

Enjoy the outdoors while you can. It will be white again soon enough.