



News & Notes



PHOTO BY JOSHUA KERWOOD

EXTRA! EXTRA!

COLOGNE INTRODUCES COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

This is the first issue of the new *Cologne News & Notes*, a newsletter for and about the greater Cologne community. Last fall, the Cologne Community of Belonging team conducted a community-wide survey, through which a majority of respondents reported that they wanted more information to help them feel connected to the greater Cologne community and each other.

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COLOGNE COMMUNITY OF BELONGING

YOU BELONG HERE

In partnership with Carver County Public Health, Cologne is **BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF BELONGING.**



COLOGNE
Community
of Belonging

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CITY OF COLOGNE UPDATES

SEASONAL REMINDERS

Brush/Lawn Clippings – Residents of Cologne can place their lawn clippings, leaves and brush at the brush pile located behind the City Public Works building (304 Louis St. West, Cologne).

Open Gym – Stay active this winter; Open Gym at the Cologne Community Center begins Nov. 2, 2022. Wednesdays, 7 to 9 p.m., Sundays, 3 to 7 p.m., \$1 per person.

Winter Parking – No person shall park or leave any vehicle on any public street in the City of Cologne after a snowfall of two inches or *City of Cologne continued on page 3*

REMEMBER TO VOTE

ELECTION DAY NOV. 8

General Election voting: Tuesday, Nov. 8, 2022, 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. at the Cologne Community Center (1211 Village Parkway) for City of Cologne residents or visit <https://www.co.carver.mn.us/departments/property-finance/elections/polling-place-finder> for your polling location.

IMPORTANT ELECTION REMINDER

Redistricting occurred in Minnesota this year and your ballot may look different if your State House or Senate representation changed. Early voting is available. Visit www.co.carver.mn.us for more information.

NEW TRAIL SIGNS INSTALLED AROUND BENTON LAKE

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE LAKE, FISH, VEGETATION & MORE

The Benton Lake Watershed Conservancy (BLWC) invites you to learn more about our natural resource. The BLWC recently partnered with the Carver County Extension Office to create and install eight signs along the walking trail – signs that highlight the history of BLWC and showcase the many fish, vegetation, birds, reptiles and more that share the lake. Founded in 2007, the volunteer-led BLWC is focused on efforts to clean Benton Lake, and to educate and encourage residents to enjoy our natural resource 'year round.



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A November 2021 survey of Cologne-area residents found that people who live here like much of what greater Cologne has to offer while identifying opportunities to help more feel that they are part of and engaged in the community. The survey was sponsored by the Cologne “Community of Belonging” initiative and Carver County Public Health, and was conducted as part of a local and County effort to create thriving and welcoming communities for all.

Community priorities

The survey found that residents believe that Cologne is made special by friendly, respectful, and helpful people, and that greater Cologne provides a small-town feeling of safety and affordability. Residents also noted that local activities – such as the Glad Days summer festival, the Cologne Hollanders baseball games, and the Cologne Fire & Relief Association annual steak fry events – help create a strong sense of community.

Survey respondents also identified improvements can be made to make Cologne a more welcoming community, including more gathering spaces, especially those where food or beverages are served. They also noted that a more vibrant downtown and a grocery store, and possibly a manufacturing or industrial park to provide job opportunities, would help to strengthen the community. Only 16 percent of survey respondents work in Cologne but 40 percent wish they could.

Residents also asked for better communication about what is happening in Cologne and the surrounding area, including how to become involved or participate, and



COLOGNE
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ensuring that everyone is always welcomed. (This newsletter is an outcome!) Following the survey, the Cologne Community of Belonging group identified five key areas of focus to address:

Signage: Install Welcome to Cologne signage on four corners of town; place You Belong Here signs along trails and a banner across Main Street for community celebrations; add community event signage.

Welcome Kits: Personally deliver “Welcome to Cologne” kits to individuals, families, businesses.

Communication: Increase multi-modal communication in the greater Cologne community to enhance information-sharing, engagement and connection.

Art & Murals: Beautify Cologne and bring arts and culture to the community.

Park/Trail Development: Partner with City to establish Park, Rec., and Trails Council; explore additional Park and other gathering spaces.

Watch the City website and future issues of this newsletter for Community of Belonging updates. To become involved with the initiative, contact Gracia Hegener, hegenerg@gmail.com or John Hendel, jhendel405@gmail.com.

Have an upcoming event to include in the next newsletter? Submit it to info@colognemn.com.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Oct. 29, 2022 Cologne Leos Trick & Treats on the Trail, 1:30-3 p.m., Lions Park
- Oct. 31, 2022 Trick or Treating, Cologne Fire & Rescue Station, 5-7 p.m.
- Nov. 4, 2022 Cologne Hollanders Bingo Night, 7-10 p.m., Cologne Community Center
- Nov 8, 2022 General Election, 7 a.m.-8 p.m., Community Center (City of Cologne residents) or visit www.co.carver.mn.us/departments/proper-ty-finance/elections/polling-place-finder
- Nov. 14, 2022 Cologne Academy Informational Open House, 6:30 p.m.
- Dec. 10, 2022 Christmas in Cologne - Events at local businesses all day; 5-7 p.m. activities at City Square Park (John Ave. N, by Splashpad) - food, bonfire, Santa & Mrs. Claus & more
- Jan. 5, 2023 Cologne Academy Informational Open House, 6:30 p.m.
- Feb 11, 2023 Ice Cribbage & Family Fun Day, Benton Lake

ONGOING EVENTS

- 1st & 3rd Tuesdays Seniors Cards group, 1 p.m., Community Center
- Open Gym Wednesdays, 7-9 p.m.; Sundays, 3-7 p.m.; \$1 per person

NEW DOG PARK AVAILABLE

ANOTHER COLOGNE COMMUNITY AMENITY



Bring your furry friend(s) and enjoy a visit to the new off-leash Dog Park. Just under an acre in size, the park is located at the intersection of County Rd. 36 and Henry Ave. South. (adjacent to Lions Park). Thank you to the financial support of community members and organizations that have helped build and maintain the Cologne Dog Park: The Cologne Fire Department Relief Association, The family of Terry Swanson, The Wrex and Dakota Seevers Family, Elephant Joe's Coffee, The John & Tracey Hildreth Family, Wade L. Scott and Associates, Inc.



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more in depth until after the snow from the street has been removed or plowed to the curb or other street boundaries.

Cologne Fitness Center – Cologne offers a flexible and affordable facility to help you regain or maintain a healthy lifestyle. Features include: 24/7 access; Men's and women's locker rooms; Cable TV; Insurance Reimbursement. Membership fees vary for Residents and Non-Residents and for Single/Family Memberships. **Purchase a membership at City Hall or download a membership application at www.colognemn.com**

Cologne Community Center – This multi-use facility can host small and large functions, and includes a serving kitchen, tables/chairs, dance floor, sound system and more. Call City Hall at 466-2064 for rental information.

1211 Village Parkway
PO Box 120, Cologne, MN 55322

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Published quarterly, the *Cologne News & Notes* will include updates from the City of Cologne as well as information about and from local organizations, businesses, upcoming events and more – to help inform and connect all who live, work and enjoy Cologne. This is **your** community newsletter – tell us what you want this publication to include by sending an email to info@colognemn.com. Thank you!

Copies of this newsletter will also be posted on the City's website, social media channels, shared with local organizations and available at businesses.



City of Cologne

1211 Village Parkway
PO Box 120, Cologne, MN 55322
Phone: 952-466-2064
Emergency/after-hours public works: 612-579-7054
Email: info@colognemn.com
Website: www.colognemn.com

City Office is open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday-Friday

City Administrator: Jesse Dickson
City Clerk: Michelle Morrison
Utility Billing Clerk: Lori Kasel
Cologne City Council: Mayor Matt Lein, Sarah Bruss,
Rachel Lenzen, Carol Szaroletta, Nathan Kells

The City Council meets on the 1st and 3rd Mondays, 7 p.m.
Citizens are welcome to attend these meetings and learn about City Council work.

Planning Commission meets on the 1st Monday, 6 p.m.

City Hall holiday closures – City offices are closed on the following dates: Friday, Nov. 11 (Veteran's Day); Thursday, Nov. 24 and Friday, Nov. 25 (Thanksgiving holiday); Monday, Dec. 26 (Christmas observed); Monday, Jan. 2 (New Year's Day observed).

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

COLOGNE ACADEMY

Celebrating 15 years in the community, did you know that Cologne Academy has two sites? There is the “brick and mortar” building in Cologne (1211 Village Parkway) and a “virtual” academy, Cologne Academy Online (CAO). Both are public schools, with Cologne Academy ranked #13 in Minnesota of all public school districts.

As a PreK-8 Minnesota public grade school, Cologne Academy teaches all required Minnesota state standards. What makes Cologne Academy different, according to Lynn Peterson, Ed.D., Executive Director, is that “We enrich all scholars by embedding the Core Knowledge Curriculum on top of the standards.” Cologne Academy is also one of a select Minnesota State School of Character, and has received top rankings nationally, statewide and in Carver County. Cologne Academy and CAO have a combined enrollment of 700 students and more than 110 staff members – a 10:1 student-to-licensed staff ratio. To learn more, visit www.cologneacademy.org or attend an upcoming Informational Open House on Nov. 14, 2022 or Jan. 5, 2023, beginning at 6:30 p.m.

STARS EARLY LEARNING ACADEMY TO OPEN IN SPRING 2023

Construction is under way on the new STARS Early Learning Academy, a nonprofit childcare center that will be located next



to Cologne Academy (though not part of the school) and the Cologne Community Center. According to founder Lynn Peterson, Ed.D., “STARS Early Learning Academy is driven and inspired by our vision to provide the very best in childcare and early childhood education from infants to school-aged children,” Peterson said. Opening is slated for Spring 2023. Learn more at www.starsela.org.

