



KEISER NEWS

"Small town, big heart - that's Keiser!"

2024

July Newsletter

Vol 15

FROM MAYOR RICK CREECY

Tackling Persistent Flooding in The Circle

Residents of The Circle in Keiser have endured persistent flooding for far too long. The Circle, comprising Bruce Wilson Drive, JT Polk Drive, Senter Street, Pine Street, and Bell Street, experiences significant flooding during heavy rainfall. The main culprits behind this recurring problem include inadequate main drainage ditches, blocked or missing culverts, lack of drainage ditches in homeowners' yards, and existing ditches not graded correctly for drainage.

Historical Context and Persistent Issues

For years, heavy rainfall has resulted in streets transforming into rivers and homes being threatened by rising water levels. The inadequate main drainage ditches are overwhelmed during storms, leading to overflow and subsequent flooding. In many cases, culverts are either blocked with debris or entirely missing, further exacerbating the problem. Additionally, the absence of proper drainage ditches in homeowners' yards means that water accumulates with no effective route to escape. Existing ditches often do not adhere to the correct drainage grade, preventing efficient water flow away from properties.

The Launch of Keiser Drainage Improvements

In 2022, we recognized that immediate and substantial action was necessary to alleviate these long-standing issues. Thus, the "Keiser Drainage Improvement" project was initiated. In collaboration with our city engineer, we developed a comprehensive and strategic plan aimed at mitigating the flooding problems plaguing The Circle. This plan involves a multi-faceted approach, addressing the key areas of concern: upgrading main drainage ditches, installing new culverts, creating yard drainage solutions, and re-grading existing ditches to ensure proper water flow.

Challenges and Initial Setbacks

Our efforts to secure funding led us to the Arkansas Economic Development Commission, where we applied for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). This grant, designed to support community improvements, seemed ideal for our needs. However, our application was denied due to the state's Low to Moderate Income (LMI) scale. The LMI scale ranges from 0 to 100, with a minimum of 51 required to apply for the grant. At that time, Keiser's LMI was 39, indicating a wealthier community based on Census data taken every 10 years.

A Turn of Fortune and Renewed Hope

Despite this setback, there is great news for Keiser. The most recent Census data has significantly shifted our LMI to 66.5, making us eligible to apply for the CDBG grant this October. This increase in our LMI is a crucial development, opening the door to potentially securing up to \$500,000. This grant is precisely what we need to implement our comprehensive drainage improvement plan effectively.

Moving Forward: Aggressive Pursuit of the Grant

Preparations are already underway for our renewed application. I have begun working closely with our City Engineer and East Arkansas Planning to update the project numbers and refine the narrative to strengthen our application. Although we will submit our application in October, the review process means it will be around April before we know if we have been awarded the grant. Securing this highly competitive grant is no small feat, given the extensive needs across Arkansas. However, I assure you that we will be aggressive and thorough in our pursuit. The chronic flooding in The Circle has gone on far too long, and we are committed to ending this hardship for our residents.

City Council meeting on the 3rd Monday of each month at 6:00 pm. All welcome.

Follow us on Facebook and at our website www.cityofkeiser.com

Water bills due the 16th of each month. Late charges will be applied on the 16th and shutoff on the 27th unless the 27th is Friday.

Remember riding ATV's on city streets is a violation of state law and will be enforced.

Remember the city has a leash law. If you are walking your dog in the city limits they MUST be on a leash. No exceptions.

If you have not yet registered your dog or cat. Please come to City Hall and do so.

You can buy 40 gallon garbage bags at City Hall. There are 50 in a roll and the cost is \$10.00 per roll.

Home owners and contractors are required to notify city hall before any mechanical excavation can be done.

City Hall—870-526-2300

New City Hall Hours

Hours 8:00am to 4:45pm M-F
Closed 12:00 to 1:00 for lunch

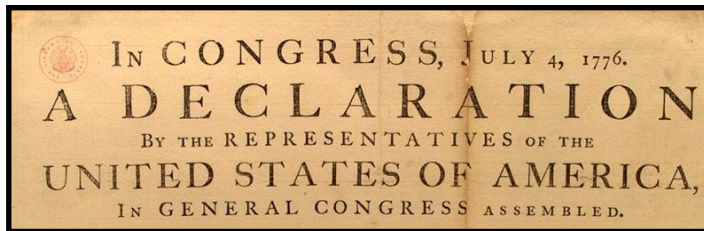
“LET FREEDOM RING” - by Peggy Sellars

“Who the Son hath made free is free indeed” is the promise of personal freedom to all mankind granted by our Creator. A trip to a hill called Golgotha by a Savior made this possible. It involved the shedding of blood.

It was over 2000 years ago that a man called Jesus, in essence, signed our declaration of independence from a life of sin, removing that bondage from mankind.

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, LIBERTY, and the pursuit of happiness.” These words from the preamble to the Declaration of independence is the guarantee of national freedom granted to all Americans. A long hard-fought war made this freedom possible. This fight also involved the shedding of blood.

It was on July 4, 1776, that the 13 colonies ratified the Declaration of Independence and proclaimed themselves free of British rule. America is now 247 years old.



Freedom is such a precious thing. The freedom we enjoy today was bought and paid for with the blood, sweat, and tears of many. We must protect it at all costs, and it has cost us dearly. Our own Mississippi County has grieved the loss of our young men who have left our country to fight wars on foreign soil. We have never had to face our enemy on our own soil.

In America, we are free to live as we choose; we are free to worship as we choose, or not worship at all if that's what we choose. Our freedom encompasses all possibilities, as long as we don't infringe upon someone else's freedom.

So, shouldn't we be free? Yet so many are living in bondage. So many are using their freedom as a cover-up to do whatever their hearts desire. It is



possible to get so caught up in our freedom that we end up enslaved to that freedom.

There are two kinds of freedom – freedom to and freedom from. We need to be careful that our freedom to (do whatever we desire) does not lead us into needing freedom from (such as an addiction) that very thing that we had freedom to do.

I'm so thankful for that personal freedom that was made available to me over 2000 years ago, I willingly accept that freedom, and I appreciate the sacrifice that made it possible. I'm so thankful that I live in a country that I am a partaker of all that the very word freedom embodies. I appreciate the sacrifices that made it possible.

Civil Rights Activist Fannie Lou Hamer once said, “Nobody's Free Until Everybody's Free”

I wish everyone lived in freedom – freedom from everything that holds them back, everything that inflicts harm or heartbreak of any kind. Freedom feels so good.

Water Bill Payments - Online/Card Reader/Automatic Draft

In June, the City of Keiser offered residents two new convenient ways to pay their water bills. To make the payment process more accessible and efficient, City Hall accepted credit and debit card payments both in person and online. Residents who preferred to handle their payments in person could visit City Hall during business hours and use their credit or debit cards, streamlining the process and reducing the need for cash transactions.

For those who found it more convenient to manage their payments from home, the City introduced an online payment system. This system allowed residents to use their credit or debit cards to pay their water bills through a secure online portal, with detailed instructions available on the City's official website. Additionally, the City is considering offering an automatic monthly debit option, enabling residents to set up direct debits from their checking accounts. This will ensure that water bills were paid on time every month without the need for manual payments, providing a hassle-free "set it and forget it" approach.

These new payment options were very well received, with many citizens using both the online system and card reader at City Hall. Due to this positive feedback, we are considering proceeding with automatic debit accounts, although this feature will require substantial changes to our current processes. To better understand the demand for automatic debits, we plan to conduct a survey. If you are interested in utilizing automatic debits, please contact City Hall and let us know.

The City of Keiser remained committed to providing flexible and efficient services to its residents. We continued to accept cash and check payments, and the dropbox at City Hall remained available for after-hours payments, offering further convenience. By introducing these new payment options, we aimed to make it easier for everyone to stay on top of their water bills and avoid late fees. For more information, please visit our website or contact City Hall. Thank you for being a valued member of our community!

Introducing "Talk with the Mayor: Your Voice, Your City"

I am excited to announce the launch of a new initiative, "Talk with the Mayor: Your Voice, Your City." Each month, I will set aside time to meet with citizens who wish to ask questions, voice concerns, or simply learn more about how our city government operates. These open forums will be held at City Hall at scheduled times, providing a valuable opportunity for me to hear your concerns and consider them in future decisions.

In "Talk with the Mayor: Your Voice, Your City," we aim to foster a sense of community and transparency. I believe that direct interaction with citizens is crucial for understanding the real issues and needs of our community. This initiative will serve as a platform for meaningful dialogue, where every voice can be heard and every concern can be addressed.

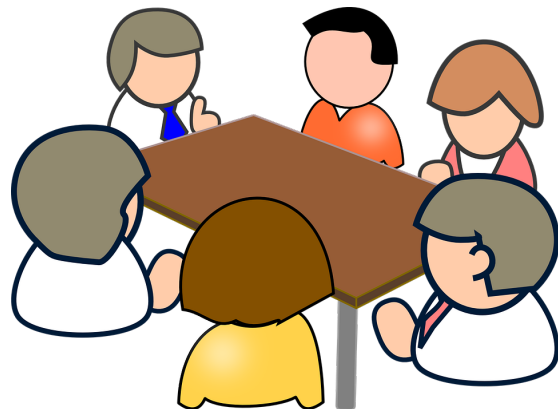
These sessions will not only allow me to provide updates on current projects and future plans but also give you an inside look at our decision-making processes. Your feedback can play a pivotal role in shaping the policies and initiatives that impact our daily lives.

It's important to note that this initiative does not replace our existing channels of communication. You are always

welcome to call City Hall, make an appointment, stop by, or reach out to me directly at any time. Additionally, I encourage everyone to attend our monthly City Council Meetings, held on the third Monday of each month. These meetings are another excellent opportunity to stay informed and involved in our community's governance.

I look forward to engaging with you through "Talk with the Mayor: Your Voice, Your City" and working together to make our city even better. Your input is invaluable, and I am eager to hear your thoughts, ideas, and concerns.

Let's collaborate to build a stronger, more connected community.



Happening Around Town - Keiser Update

Keiser City Council Approves Emergency Exit Plan

The Keiser City Council, in collaboration with the Keiser Fire Department, has taken a significant step towards enhancing public safety by identifying and addressing the need for emergency exits for residents of the Circle and Dunavant Addition. This initiative was prompted by a recent fire at the old Agri Building on Main Street, which underscored the urgency of the situation as firefighters battled the blaze for several hours, leaving residents unable to move in or out of the east side of town.

This incident highlighted a critical safety concern. In the event of a disaster, medical emergency, or even routine travel to and from work, the current situation poses significant risks to residents. To mitigate this risk, the Council has approved a plan to connect Elm Street and Cypress Street, creating an additional escape route in case Main Street is blocked.

Additionally, the Council is exploring a second route by connecting the northwest corner of Bruce Wilson Drive with Jefferson Street. This proposed connection would provide another crucial exit for citizens on the east side of Keiser. However, this option is still under review due to an initial cost estimate of \$186,500.

The Council's proactive measures aim to ensure that all residents have safe and reliable access in and out of their neighborhoods, particularly during emergencies. The collaboration between the City Council and the Fire Department exemplifies a commitment to the safety and well-being of the Keiser community.

SCORE ANOTHER WIN FOR THE CITY OF KEISER!

We are thrilled to share that we are one of 343 grantees selected nationwide to receive a 2024 AARP Community Challenge grant from @AARPLivableCommunities and AARP Arkansas! We are incredibly proud that AARP selected us for this investment to make the City of Keiser more livable for residents of all ages. Through this grant, we will focus on installing senior-specific exercise equipment, comfortable seating, and picnic tables in Keiser City Park. This initiative aims to provide older adults with opportunities to stay active, healthy, and engaged by offering them a dedicated space for exercise, socializing, and enjoying the outdoors, ultimately enriching their lives and supporting their well-being.

This project should be a reality by the end of 2024. Progress never stops in Keiser!



Sewer System Evaluation and Replacement Plans Underway

The cleaning and televising of our sewer system have now been completed. Our city engineer has received detailed pictures, videos, and a report from the contractor. Currently, the engineer is meticulously reviewing the footage and assessing the damaged areas to develop a strategic game plan. While our ultimate goal is to completely replace the sewer system, we anticipate that this will need to be done in phases unless we secure a large grant. Once a plan is finalized, we will communicate the chosen direction to the community.

Unfortunately, this process is taking longer than we would like, but we assure you that progress is being made. The wheels of progress turn slowly, especially when dealing with state or federal government requirements, but we remain committed to resolving these issues efficiently and effectively.

City Park Lighting and Security Enhancements

The city park is undergoing significant updates to improve both lighting and security. Entergy has already installed three 1000W LED lights, with plans to add two more 1000W LEDs in the parking lot to illuminate the northeast side and the existing playground equipment. Additionally, we plan to bury underground cables from the power loop at the existing pavilion to the center of the park. This will allow us to install a pole with two more 1000W LEDs to light up the new playground equipment and the planned fishing pond.

To enhance security, we are installing cameras to deter vandalism and increasing police patrols in the area. These improvements aim to create a safer and more enjoyable environment for all park visitors.

City to Install Speed Bumps

In response to numerous complaints about speeding, particularly in the Circle area, the city is taking action to ensure the safety of residents. Concerns have been raised about the risk of injury due to drivers not adhering to the 15-mph speed limit in residential zones. Despite multiple efforts to raise awareness about the dangers of speeding, there has been little to no improvement.

To address this issue, the City Council has approved the installation of speed bumps throughout the community to help control excessive speeding. The speed bumps have arrived, and installation will begin shortly.

Join the City of Keiser Volunteer Fire Department!

The City of Keiser Volunteer Fire Department is seeking passionate and dedicated individuals to join their team and serve the community. Volunteering as a firefighter is more than just a role; it's a commitment to safeguarding your neighbors, friends, and family. By becoming a volunteer firefighter, you will be a crucial part of the emergency response team, helping to protect lives and property during fires, accidents, and other emergencies. The training and experience you gain will teach you valuable skills such as teamwork, leadership, and crisis management, benefiting you both personally and professionally. You'll join a close-knit group of individuals who share a common goal of serving the community, creating a strong sense of belonging and family. There is no greater satisfaction than knowing your actions have helped save lives and property. By volunteering, you set an example for others, especially young people, demonstrating the importance of civic duty and selfless service. No prior experience is necessary; all you need is a willingness to learn, a commitment to serve, and a heart for helping others. Our team will provide you with the necessary training and support to prepare you for the challenges

and rewards of the role. If you're ready to make a difference and take on the rewarding challenge of being a volunteer firefighter, we want to hear from you. Contact Reggie Horton or City Hall for more information on how to join, the training process, and what to expect as a member of our team. Volunteering with the City of Keiser Volunteer Fire Department is more than just a service; it's a calling to be there for your community

when it needs you the most. Join us in our mission to keep Keiser safe and strong. Your community needs you. Together, we can make a difference.



New City Hall Hours



Monday - Friday from 8:00 - 4:45

Closed for Lunch from 12:00 - 1:00

Celebrating Independence Day: A 4th of July to Remember

As the 4th of July approaches, the excitement and anticipation in the air is unmistakable. This day, a cornerstone of American tradition, commemorates the signing of the Declaration



of Independence in 1776, marking the birth of the United States as a free and independent nation. The 4th of July is a time for reflection on our history, celebration of our freedoms, and enjoyment of festivities with family and friends.

A Rich History

Independence Day is more than just fireworks and barbecues; it's a day immersed in history and significance. On July 4, 1776, the Continental Congress formally adopted the Declaration of Independence, a document primarily authored by Thomas Jefferson. This declaration announced the thirteen American colonies' separation from British rule and voiced the principles of individual liberty and government by consent of the governed. The 4th of July became a federal holiday in 1870, and it has since evolved into a beloved American tradition.

Festivities Across the Nation

Across the country, cities and towns prepare for a variety of celebrations. From parades to concerts, and fireworks to family picnics, the 4th of July is marked by numerous activities that bring communities together. Here are some highlights:

Parades: Many towns kick off the day with patriotic parades featuring marching bands, floats, veterans, and local organizations. These parades are a colorful display of community spirit and national pride.

Fireworks: As the sun sets, the night skies are illuminated by spectacular fireworks displays. Cities like New York, Washington D.C., and San Francisco are renowned for their breathtaking pyrotechnic shows, drawing spectators from near and far.

Barbecues and Picnics: The aroma of grilled

hamburgers, hot dogs, and corn on the cob fills the air as families gather for outdoor feasts. These gatherings often include games, music, and plenty of red, white, and blue decorations.

Concerts and Festivals: Many communities host concerts featuring local bands and artists, often culminating in a fireworks finale. Festivals may also include craft fairs, food vendors, and activities for children.

Reflecting on Freedom

While the 4th of July is a time for celebration, it is also an opportunity to reflect on the freedoms we enjoy. It is a moment to honor the sacrifices of those who have fought for our independence and to appreciate the diverse and vibrant nation we have become. It's a time to think about how we can continue to uphold the values of liberty and justice for all.

Safety First

As we celebrate, it's essential to keep safety in mind. If you plan to handle fireworks, ensure you follow local regulations and safety guidelines to prevent accidents. If attending public events, stay hydrated and protect yourself from the summer heat.

A Community Affair

This 4th of July, let's come together as a community to celebrate our nation's heritage and the freedoms we cherish. Whether you're watching fireworks, marching in a parade, or enjoying a backyard barbecue, take a moment to appreciate the spirit of independence that defines the United States of America.

Happy Independence Day! Let freedom ring!



Protect Yourself from Today's Most Common Scams

In today's digital age, scams have become increasingly sophisticated, targeting individuals of all ages and backgrounds. From phishing to tech support scams, online shopping frauds, impersonation schemes, and fake investment opportunities, scammers are constantly devising new ways to trick unsuspecting victims. Protecting yourself from these fraudulent schemes is essential to safeguard your personal information and financial well-being. Here are some of the most common scams and tips on how you can protect yourself.

Phishing scams typically involve fraudulent emails, text messages, or websites that mimic legitimate companies or institutions to steal your personal information, such as login credentials and credit card numbers. These messages often create a sense of urgency, claiming that your account will be suspended or that you need to verify information immediately. To protect yourself, always verify the source of any communication you receive, checking the sender's email address or phone number. Look for red flags like generic greetings, grammatical errors, and urgent requests. Additionally, use multi-factor authentication on your accounts for an added layer of security. It's also wise to avoid clicking on links or downloading attachments from unknown or suspicious sources. Instead, navigate directly to the official website by typing the URL into your browser.

Tech support scams involve scammers posing as representatives from reputable companies, claiming there are issues with your computer or device that need immediate attention. These scammers might call you unexpectedly, display fake pop-up warnings on your screen, or send alarming messages. To avoid falling victim, hang up if you receive an unsolicited call from someone claiming to be tech support. Legitimate companies do not make such calls. Never grant remote access to your computer to someone you do not know, and if you suspect an issue, contact the company directly using the official contact information on their website. Additionally, install and maintain reputable antivirus software and keep your system updated to prevent vulnerabilities that scammers might exploit.

Online shopping scams can lead to paying for goods that are never delivered or receiving counterfeit items. These scams often involve fake websites that look like legitimate online stores or fraudulent sellers on marketplace platforms. To protect yourself, research the seller by checking reviews and ratings before making a purchase. Be cautious of deals that seem too good to be true, as they often are. Use secure payment methods like credit

cards or secure payment services that offer fraud protection, which can provide recourse if something goes wrong. Avoid wiring money or using prepaid debit cards, as these methods offer little protection. Regularly monitor your bank and credit card statements for any unauthorized charges, and report discrepancies to your bank immediately.

Impersonation scams involve scammers posing as trusted figures, such as government officials, family members, or company executives, to extract money or personal information. These scams can be particularly distressing, as they often prey on your trust and emotions. To safeguard against these scams, independently verify the identity of the person contacting you using known contact information. For instance, if someone claims to be a family member in trouble, try to contact them directly through a different method. Do not rush into any actions, as scammers often create a sense of urgency to prevent you from thinking things through. If you suspect an impersonation scam, report it to the relevant authorities immediately. It's also helpful to educate your family and friends, particularly older adults who may be more vulnerable to such scams.

Investment scams involve fraudsters promoting fake investment opportunities, promising high returns with little risk to lure individuals into investing their money. These scams can take many forms, including Ponzi schemes, fake stock tips, or fraudulent cryptocurrency ventures. Protect yourself by thoroughly researching the investment opportunity, checking the credentials of the individuals and companies involved. Be skeptical of investments that guarantee high returns with no risk, as legitimate investments always carry some degree of risk. Consult a trusted financial advisor before making significant investment decisions, and avoid investing money you cannot afford to lose. Additionally, be wary of unsolicited investment offers, especially those that come through social media or email.

Staying informed and vigilant is the key to protecting yourself from scams. Always trust your instincts and take the time to verify any suspicious communication or offer. By following these tips and educating yourself about common scams, you can reduce the risk of falling victim to fraud and keep your personal information and finances secure. It's also beneficial to keep up with the latest scam alerts and reports from trusted sources like the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) or your local consumer protection agency.

Happy Birthday America



July 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 Canada Day	2	3 Eat Beans Day	4 Independence Day	5	6
7 Chocolate Day	8	9 National Dimples Day	10	11	12 Pecan Pie Day	13
14	15 Council Meeting	16 Water Bill Due	17 Hot Dog Day	18	19	20 Moon Day
21 Ice Cream Day	22	23	24 Cousins Day	25 Chili Dog Day	26	27
28	29 Cutoff Date	30	31 Watermelon Day			

City Fun Page

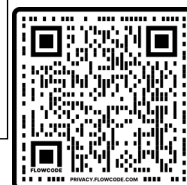
4th of July

V A W D N N F K C X S O O R S I L S C B T N E B X
R B V O X Y X V J J C D W F S G G M T H R L Q N M
F U V P A R A D E C J N L B X W R C Q Q K P Y A F
T Z P H O F T U E W T F E T B Z Y Z Z H X Z D S F
B S F A K A V L I B E R T Y B E L L L R E X M E I
A T L F O U N D I N G F A T H E R S Y D X R I K R
C A A X I U J C G U I K B D D D C J R V U W V Z E
K R G Z I K S R Q B N K Z Z T H I K G M R B F F W
Y S W Y F W T Z W S D W W U P A T R I O T I S M O
A A A C A O C G J I E E W T T V A N E R E T I R R
R N V J K S T A R S P A N G L E D B A N N E R B K
D D I Y W L O S Z R E D W H I T E A N D B L U E S
P S N K T E F X L F N Y H J I E W A R U C E J J S
I T G P S U L B C I D S H M A J F X T X F T D Q B
C R D Q G S D A Z F E L I Y Y T C O N V R D R E A
N I C M D U W C W P N F V W E B Q W R Q E X O S R
I P O V Y M W O J Y C O M E I K P U X P E E X Y B
C E O R A L R I H Y E R J B Z I K V W B D M H K E
X S P M Z D Q B W R D V S B X P Q Q G D O K L S C
Q V X I Y J X L C E A S L A F U P A Z L M M D D U
V H U S Z X H J D G Y Q F K D L A J I I U N N M E
N P L W M B S A M E R I C A N R E V O L U T I O N
W U A C Q V N P Q G S P M N V J X H B U V B F G O
D E C L A R A T I O N O F I N D E P E N D E N C E
D L C G I Y A H W A X L E X Z E Q S D S B A I D I

Declaration of Independence	Star-Spangled Banner
Independence Day	Stars and Stripes
Liberty Bell	Founding Fathers
American Revolution	
Red, White, and Blue	Flag Waving
Fireworks	Patriotism
Barbecue	
Freedom	Parade
Backyard Picnic	

Contact Us

City Hall—870-526-2300 Email—cityofkeiser@gmail.com Mayor—rjc.cityofkeiser@gmail.com



Scan Me...