



11 Visiting Japanese Gardeners Spruce Up Sister City Garden

Eleven professional gardeners from Higashimurayama, Japan, were in Independence in September to spruce up the Sister City Garden at the southeast corner of City Hall, Lexington and Memorial Drive.

Jana Waits, Japanese Sister City Committee, said the garden was a gift to Independence as a symbol of peace and of the relationship between the two cities. The crew of gardeners, which included seven master gardeners and wives of four of the gardeners, returns every five years for pruning and maintenance. This is their fifth trip.

Most of the gardeners are nearing retirement age.

Shigeru Ohno, tour leader, said the next

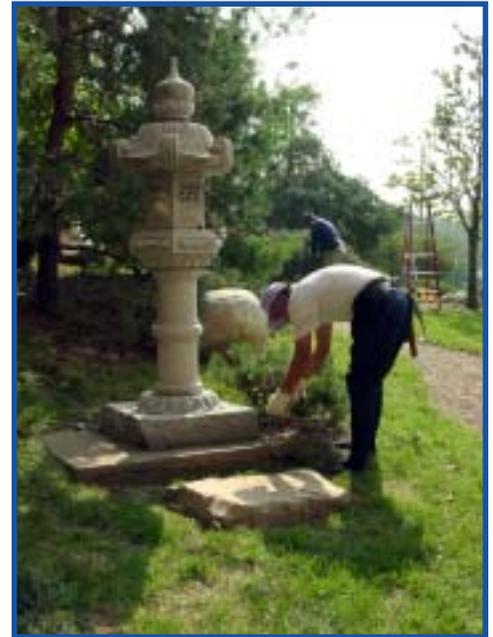
time the group is here they will bring younger gardeners to introduce to the project. "We love this garden and want to take care of it," he said. Ohno has visited Independence 12 times in the last 25 years.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the Sister City relationship between the two cities. Getting the garden back in shape was part of the anniversary year.

The gardeners also pruned the Japanese Friendship Garden at the Community of Christ Temple while they were here.

The gardeners had lunch with Mayor Ron Stewart and toured several Independence sites during their visit.

The Independence Sister City delega-



Master gardeners from Higashimurayama at work.

tion will visit Higashimurayama next fall.

Water Rate Increases Won't Affect Residents in First Year

A water rate increase approved in October by the City Council will only affect customers outside the City limits this year Water Department Director Dan Montgomery said. Independence residents, he noted, will not see the increase until near the end of 2004.

"These rate increases are necessary to fund various system upgrade projects, continue complying with various state and federal regulations, as well as offset the rising operating and capital costs," said Montgomery.

The Water Department's last wholesale customer rate change was July 1989, and the last rate change for the other customer classes took effect October 1, 1990. Since 1989, the Consumer Price Index has increased 40 percent. Water rates have not increased during that time.

Water rates for wholesale customers



This new 370,000 gallon clearwell and high service pumping station is being financed with revenue generated by the rate increase. The project, at the Courtney Bend Water Treatment Plant, also includes a 2.5 million gallon storage reservoir directly behind this clearwell.

(other area cities or water districts who purchase water from us) will increase 10 percent this year. Residential customers who do not live within the City of Independence city limits, but receive water

service directly from the City will have a 15 percent increase this year. Rates for private fire protection districts will increase five percent.

Beginning in the fall of 2004 all customers, including wholesale, Independence residents, other residential customers and fire protection districts, will receive a three percent annual increase in each of the next four years.

In addition to maintaining the general operation and maintenance of the Water Department, the new revenue will provide funds to expand the Courtney Bend Water Treatment Plant from 42 to 48 million gallons per day and modify the treatment process to comply with regulations, to continue the main replacement program, to construct the Little Blue Park-

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Ginger Rogers Birthplace Now a Historic Landmark

The birthplace of legendary dancer, singer and actress Ginger Rogers at 100 W. Moore St. was recently named a historic landmark by the City Council. Rogers, who was born Virginia Katherine McMath on July 16, 1911, and her mother Lela Owens McMath, who was separated from her husband, Eddins McMath, rented the home for a short time.

The home was one of four small houses built in the area at about 1900 as a rental property.

Patrick Steele, Historic Preservation manager for the City, said it displays the characteristics of the 20th Century working class bungalow. Steele said it is also significant because it has survived 100 years relatively intact and fairly well maintained.

Miss Rogers, one of Hollywood's biggest stars during the 1930s and 40s, lived only briefly in Independence, moving to Kansas City with her mother. She is best known for the musicals she made with



Birthplace of Ginger Rogers

Fred Astaire.

The City of Independence has held two "Ginger Rogers Day" celebrations. Miss Rogers and her mother attended the first celebration in 1964.

Miss Rogers returned in 1994 for the second celebration, during which the City dedicated a bronze marker and placed it in front of the home. She died a few months later on April 25, 1995 at her home in Rancho Mirage, CA.



I-Share
UTILITY ASSISTANCE
254-4100



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Hot Line Directory

Barking Dogs	325-7213
Crime Stoppers Tips	474-8477
Drop-Off Trash	325-7623
Drugs	325-6272
Potholes	325-7624
Street Lights	325-7535
West Nile Virus	325-7297

Tips for Coping With Floods

Available on the City's website, is a comprehensive set of informational sheets about coping with floods and flooding issues. Except fire, floods are the most common and widespread of all natural disasters and this information will help residents be aware of some things to do before and after a flood.

If a flood occurs and water has entered a basement or living area of a home, the fact sheets for cleanup go into detail about cleaning clothes, playing it safe with food, cleaning carpets and floors, how to clean up mold, electrical safety, and several other helpful cleaning tips, as well as dealing with other problems that arise.

In all, there are 13 fact sheets. There is additional information describing what you should know and do before a flood ever occurs to help you be prepared and which could very well minimize or prevent damage.

The easiest way to access the website is: www.independencemo.org/wpc then click "Coping with Floods" listed on the left side of the screen. If you do not have access to a computer, please call 325-7711 to request a copy be sent to your home.

If you have any questions about the website or need more information, please call Water Pollution Control at 325-7711.

Water Rates From Page 1

way transmission main, for security improvements and to comply with new and existing unfunded federal and state regulations.

"Revenue generated from these rate increases will enable us to continue providing citizens of Independence and

wholesale customers a plentiful supply of safe drinking water that exceeds all federal and state regulations at a reasonable cost, Montgomery said. "We believe our product and service continue to provide a great value to our customers."



City Drop-Off Depot

8 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Second Saturday Of Each Month
November -- Last Chance Till Spring!

875 Vista Drive
325-7623

Truman Road
East of M-291,
One Mile North
On Vista Drive
Next to Animal Shelter!



Trash: Cars, \$10;
Vehicles Larger Than Car, \$15;
Trailers 8 Feet or Longer, \$25
Brush: Limbs, Firewood, Bushes,
Stumps. No Leaves or Grass: \$10
per load
Major Appliances: \$15 Each
Batteries & Lawnmowers:
Free
Tires: Car, \$1; Mounted Car, \$3;
Truck, \$4; Mounted Truck, \$10;
Farm/Tractor, \$15
Residential vehicles only, no commercial. No vehicles larger than a pick-up truck. Proof of residency required.

Sanitary Sewer Rate Increase

The City Council recently approved a sanitary sewer residential and commercial rate increase. The Sanitary Sewer Fund is self-supported by revenues generated from sewer bills.

Sanitary sewer rates have not increased since July, 1998. Since 1998, the Consumer Price Index has increased 10% and the Association of Metropolitan Sewerage Agencies reports increases of 12% in sewer rates among its members. Water Pollution Control Director Dick Champion said by implementing various cost saving measures, the City has previously been able to postpone sewer rates increases.

Since 1996, the City has completed 77 capital improvements that total more than \$20 million.

“However, as our system ages, we must continue this progress,” Champion

Bullard Wins Susan Paxton Block Award

Police Sgt. John R. Bullard is recipient of the 2003 Susan Paxton Block Distinguished Service Award. He received the award during the September 22 City Council meeting.



Sgt. John Bullard and Daro

The award is named for Susan Block, who represented the third Council District from 1992 until her death November 11, 1996. Bill Paxton, Block’s father, established the award to honor her memory.

Bullard was selected by a committee of local service organizations led by the Junior Service League (JSL) of Independence. Block was a member of the JSL.

The award is \$1,000, a sterling silver medallion and a sterling silver lapel pin. Proceeds come from the memorial fund. Bullard has decided to split his cash award between Coins for Canines and Independence Legacy.

Bullard started his Independence career as a dispatcher in 1975. He was com-

Sample Residential Bills						
Monthly residential bills for sewer usages shown in hundred cubic feet (ccf).						
USAGE	CURRENT	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
0	\$8.28	\$8.53	\$8.79	\$9.05	\$9.32	\$9.60
2	\$11.22	\$11.62	\$12.07	\$12.52	\$12.95	\$13.40
4	\$14.17	\$14.72	\$15.34	\$15.99	\$16.58	\$17.20
6	\$17.11	\$17.81	\$18.62	\$19.46	\$20.21	\$21.00
8	\$20.05	\$20.91	\$21.90	\$22.93	\$23.84	\$24.80

said. “While the City is committed to holding down costs as much as possible, the rate increase is necessary to fund sanitary sewer projects to reduce overflows and basement backups, fund trenchless technology to reduce infiltration and inflow, replace treatment plant and pumping station equipment, comply with new and existing unfunded federal and state regulations, fund the City’s proportionate share of the Little Blue Valley Sewer District’s increased operating and capital costs, and offset the effects of inflation.”

The rate increase will be phased in over five years. For the majority of cus-

tomers base rates will increase 3% per year while volume rates increase between 4.6% and 5.9%. The first increase will appear on sewer bills in mid-November.

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Social Security Discount

The City will continue the policy of discounting the bills of residential customers receiving Social Security or similar retirement benefits, with average sewer usage of 1 - 4 ccf per month. The discount is \$1.00 per month. Proof of eligibility is required.

Holiday Closings

City Hall will be closed Thursday and Friday, November 27 and 28 in observance of the Thanksgiving Holiday; Thursday and Friday, December 25 and 26 in observance of the Christmas Holiday; and Thursday, January 1 in observance of New Year’s Day.

Before You Dig Call!

1-800-DIG-RITE 1-800-344-7483

CITY COUNCIL

*Mayor Ron Stewart	325-7026
*City Council Office	325-7021
*Councilmember Don Reimal	District 1
*Councilmember John Perkins	District 2
*Councilmember Renee Paluka	District 3
*Councilmember Charlie Rich	District 4
*Councilmember Jim Schultz	At Large
*Councilmember Jason White	At Large

*City Manager Larry N. Blick	325-7170

Holiday Season Features 30+ Hometown Heritage Events

There are more than 30 Christmas events happenings in and around historic Independence. Highlights of the season include:

Friday, November 28

Kick your Christmas season off by touring the decorated historic homes of Independence from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays and 1 to 4 p.m. Sundays. This year, the theme at the Vaile Mansion, 1500 N. Liberty, is "Victorian White Christmas". The Bingham-Waggoner Estate, 313 W. Pacific, is decorated with the theme "Keeping Christmas in Your Heart" and the 1859 Marshal's Home, 217 N. Main, illustrates "Christmas from the Past".

The Truman Presidential Museum and Library, 500 W. 24 Hwy., will feature a performance by Niel Johnson, noted Harry Truman impersonator, who will share stories about the holiday season during his term of office and offer an occasional press conference. This show is also scheduled Saturday, November 29; and Friday and Saturday, December 26 and 27.

IPL Offers Winter Energy Saving Tips

Here are some suggestions from Independence Power & Light (IPL) on ways to save on heating bills this Winter:

- ✓ Keep heating equipment well maintained and change filters regularly
- ✓ Caulk and weatherstrip doors and windows that leak air
- ✓ Check ducts for air leaks and seal where needed
- ✓ Close curtains and shades at night

Theatre Productions

"Man of La Mancha" is the next production for the City Theatre, which is in its 24th season. This musical is based on Miguel Cervantes' epic story of Don Quixote.

Performance dates are 8 p.m. Thursday, Friday and Saturday, January 15, 16 and 17; and Friday and Saturday January 23 and 24; and 2 p.m. Sunday, January 25. Admission is \$6 Thursdays and Sundays and \$7 Fridays and Saturdays. There is an \$18.50 dinner theater the first Sat-

Friday, December 5

Plan to attend the 7 p.m. lighting ceremony and grand opening of "With Grateful Hearts We Seek Him," at the Mormon Visitors Center, 937 W. Walnut. The Center includes decorations and the annual gingerbread display.

The Independence Symphony Orchestra will present "An Old Fashioned Sing Around the Orchestra" at 7:30 p.m. at the Community of Christ, 1001 W. Walnut.

Saturday, December 6

Children may enjoy a holiday puppet show, "The Littlest Angel," from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Puppetry Arts Institute, 11025 E. Winner Rd. The show is also scheduled Saturdays, December 13, 20 and 27.

Sunday, December 7

Begin with a Laura Ingalls Wilder Christmas Open House from 12:30 to 4:30 p.m. at the National Frontier Trails Museum (NFTM), 318 W. Pacific. Then choose between a 1:30 p.m. concert at the Community of Christ Auditorium or the 2 p.m. lecture on Lewis and Clark Christmases at the NFTM.

and open them during the day

✓ Lower thermostat settings consistent with health and comfort needs and use programmable thermostats to better control temperature settings.

For customers purchasing new heating equipment, consider a high efficient heat pump system. IPL offers rebates for qualifying equipment. For more information, call IPL at 325-7494.

urday of the show.

The Children's Performing Theatre group, for ages five to 15, will present "The Christmas Toyshop" 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday, December 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, and 14. Tickets for the Children's Theatre are adults, \$5; senior citizens, \$4; and children 12 and younger, \$3.

All performances are at the Sermon Center, 201 N. Dodgion.



Victorian Christmas at the Vaile

Enjoy a Twilight Tour of the three "Spirit of Christmas Past" Homes from 4 to 6 p.m. and finish with the 6 to 9 p.m. "Voices From the Past" candlelight reenactment at the 1859 Jail.

December 1-30

Experience Christmas Peace at the Community of Christ Temple, 201 S. River, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays and 1 to 5 p.m. Sundays, where trees are decorated in a variety of themes.

You can also get into the presidential holiday spirit by enjoying the decorations and expanded gift shop at the Truman Presidential Museum and Library from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Mondays through Saturdays; 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Thursdays; and noon to 5 p.m. Sundays. See 1940s and 1950s era seasonal decorations, cards and photographs from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily at the Truman Home Ticket and Information Center, Main and Truman.

For a complete Holiday event list, or to request a Holiday brochure, call the Tourism Department at 325-7111 or visit www.visitindependence.com online.

City
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City Council
 6 p.m. Mondays
 10 a.m. Tuesdays
 7 p.m. Wednesdays
 2 p.m. Sundays

Planning Commission
 6:30 p.m. 2nd & 4th Tuesdays
 10 a.m. Wednesdays
 7 p.m. Thursdays

Inside Independence
 7 p.m. Fridays, Saturdays & Sundays
 10 a.m. Mondays