

# Another feather in RF's cap

City earns first of national honors

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Wisconsin Gold Water Star Community; Tree City USA Community; America in Bloom Community; and now add Bird City Wisconsin.

They are officially issued designations handed out by several national groups after a city has met certain criteria for an honor. River Falls has met them all, the most recent being the Bird City recognition.

City Planner Tony Steiner said about the award: "River Falls has a close relationship to the natural environment as exemplified by the city's designation as a Wisconsin Gold Water Star Community for our efforts to protect our surface and ground water resources, the Municipal Utilities' efforts in promoting sustainable energy that has resulted in several state and national awards, our designation as a Tree City USA Community since 1993, recognizing our efforts at preserving and promoting our urban forest resources and our national award as an America in Bloom Community, recognizing our efforts in promoting environmental awareness.

"Bird City Wisconsin seems to be a natural fit with all these efforts and contributes to making River Falls an even greater place to live."

The Bird City Wisconsin project recognized River Falls and 14 other communities in the state for their efforts to make their communities a better place for birds and other wildlife. This is the first time the project has extended the recognition.

According to a press release about the city's most recent designation, "The inaugural group of Bird Cities includes a wide range of communities statewide: The cities of (River Falls), Mequon, Stevens Point, Green Bay, Muskego, Oshkosh, New London, Lake Geneva and Brookfield; the villages of Bayside, Chenequa, Hales Corners and Williams Bay; the town of Manitowish Waters; and Ozaukee County.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Mayor Don Richards, right, accepts a plaque from Bird City Coordinator Carl Schwartz earlier this month. The plaque displays the logo of national organization, which recognizes communities that create healthy habitats for birds and people.

Mayor Don Richards accepted the award on behalf of the city earlier this month. River Falls was given a Bird City Wisconsin plaque, a flag and two street signs that will be installed at the city's boundaries.

About the award Richards said, "Jim Beix first contacted me about the possibility of River Falls becoming a Bird City a few months ago, and I'm glad he did.

"I've always been a bird fancier and I think the designation gives us another reason to feel good about where we live."

River Falls resident Beix, a retired physician and bird enthusiast who is with the St. Croix Valley Bird Club, explained how the city became aware of the Bird City program.

"Andy Paulios of the

(Wisconsin) DNR and the Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative gave a presentation here last spring," began Beix. "He challenged our St. Croix Valley Bird Club to assist River Falls in becoming a Bird City, as he noted the city had already achieved being a Tree City.

"Our club's mission statement, via education and exposure, is to encourage interest in birds among people of the St. Croix valley, thereby promoting habitat conservation and restorative efforts.

"As we read over the basic requirements, we discovered that many were already being done: Spring bird walks by Mike Middleton and Mike Elling, the city's urban forestry efforts, Christmas bird counts, and our club's educational programs that are open to the

public. The Bird City award coincides with our club's mission."

Modeled on the Tree City USA program, Bird City Wisconsin developed 22 criteria across five categories, including habitat creation and protection, community forest management, limiting hazards, public education and recognizing International Migratory Bird Day, says the press release.

If a community meets at least seven criteria, it becomes an official Bird City. River Falls met 10 of the criteria.

The city plans to set aside time this spring to officially celebrate the honor.

For more information about the award, go to [www.birdcitywisconsin.org](http://www.birdcitywisconsin.org).

# Hospital Foundation to give barn-dance proceeds

Programs that improve access to health care invited to apply

The River Falls Area Hospital Foundation has released a request for proposals from local programs that improve access to health care.

Applications are due on Friday, Feb. 18. Grant requests from \$500-\$25,000 will be considered.

To be eligible for funding, applicants must provide or plan to provide services that improve access to health services for residents of the communities served by the hospital; demonstrate compatibility with the mission, vision and values of Allina Hospitals & Clinic; and have the demonstrated capacity to carry out the program work funded by the grant and to maintain fiscal accountability.

In selecting this year's grant recipients, priority will be given to projects working to improve access to cancer education, screening, diagnostics, treatment and/or survivorship programs.

Additional preference will be given to projects that are collaborative, particularly those in which the River Falls Area Hospital is involved; are working to meet identified

community needs; do not duplicate existing services; have multiple funding sources; and are evidence-based, using strategies proven to get results.

More information about eligibility and the application process can be found on the foundation's website at [www.riverfallsareahospital.com/rfahfoundation](http://www.riverfallsareahospital.com/rfahfoundation).

The available funds — nearly \$50,000 — represent the net proceeds of the 2010 Harvest Moon Barn Dance, the foundation's annual fundraising event.

"The mission of the foundation is to raise and disburse funds to enhance the health and wellness of the communities we serve," said Heather Logelin, executive director of the foundation. "The Barn Dance helps us provide significant financial support to local programs that expand access to health care."

The River Falls Area Hospital Foundation raises funds for River Falls Area Hospital and other local health initiatives.

To make a gift to support the "Access to Care" fund, or for more information about the foundation, contact Heather Logelin at 426-4503 or [heather.logelin@allina.com](mailto:heather.logelin@allina.com) or visit the foundation's website at [www.riverfallsareahospital.com/rfahfoundation](http://www.riverfallsareahospital.com/rfahfoundation).

## DONATION



SUBMITTED PHOTO

River Falls Area Hospital recently donated \$2,000 to Our Neighbors' Place's "Campaign for Hope," a fundraising drive to purchase a permanent emergency shelter in the city. From left to right are: Bill Frommelt, director of Operations and Finance; David Miller, hospital president; Carole Mottaz, Campaign for Hope fundraising committee; Jack Palumbo, DDS, Hospital Advisory Board chair; and Heather Logelin, Hospital Foundation director. OPN continues working towards a fundraising goal of \$100,000 by year end. More information is available at [www.ourneighborsplace.org](http://www.ourneighborsplace.org).

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