



Tom Brownlow Profile

Charles City

City Administrator

Tom was born and raised in Springfield, Illinois. His parents are Frances Martin (Brownie) and Helen Brownlow. They are retired and still live in Springfield. They are both 90 and are celebrating their 65th wedding anniversary.

Tom has a brother, Mike, who is a lineman for City Water, Light and Power in Springfield. His sister, MaryAnn works for Blue Cross/Blue Shield in Springfield.

Tom is married to Sandy who works for Pfizer Animal Health. They have a daughter, Tara, who is in graduate school at Western Illinois University studying Accounting. Tom has a stepdaughter, Anda Saxbery, who is a branch manager for a bank and has two daughters. Tom has two stepsons. Bruce Knapp lives in

Port Washington, Wisconsin and has two sons and a daughter. Tony lives in Charles City and works at Pfizer.

Tom enjoys running, biking and swimming. He and Sandy plan to spend their vacation next year at the Olympic swimming trials in Omaha.

Tom has a BA in Liberal Arts from Southern Illinois University - Carbondale. He also earned a Master of Science degree from Iowa State in Industrial Administrative Sciences (now the College of Business Administration). He has a PhD in Marketing from Southern Illinois.

He spent twenty years working for the City of Springfield, Illinois. Springfield has a Strong Mayor form of government where the Department Heads are political appointees and tend to change with Mayors. He started as an accountant but spent 18-1/2 or his twenty years with the city as a division manager, just below the level of the political appointees. Twelve years were in the position of Division Manager of Community Services. The division had varying functions

during Tom's tenure. He spent seven years in the Finance Department with accounting and accounts payable functions. One year of his tenure with the city was spent in "time out" while the new administration shifted responsibilities in a substantial changeover.

Charles City hired him as City Administrator in 2006. He has thoroughly enjoyed his experience working with a very good Mayor and City Council.

The City has recently completed a very comprehensive riverfront park project. The project included various aspects. The most notable are an amphitheatre and a whitewater course. The whitewater course involved removal of the top portion of a low flow dam and addition of two rock structures to create three river level changes with rapids along the Cedar River adjacent to downtown Charles City. There was some initial resistance to the plan, but the acceptance level of the changes has been very good since they were completed. They have spurred business opportunities renting rafts, tubes and kayaks for recreation. Fishing also has improved in various aspects.

Using proceeds from the Local Option Sales Tax that was approved for street improvements, the City has completed a large street replacement project using permeable paving. They received federal grants to offset the added cost associated with the project to keep stormwater from a 100 year rainfall at the location where it was generated. It involves porous rock layers under the interlocking concrete pavers, with gaps between the pavers allowing rains to penetrate into the subsurface. Some controversy arose with the project from the local paving contractor and from residents unsure of the new concept. The residents have been pleased with the final product. Residents of other areas of town are now in favor of the design being used for street replacement in their neighborhoods.

A new cable-stayed bridge to carry a trail across the river has recently been completed to replace a bridge destroyed by the 2008 floods. The bridge is a very attractive new structure. The owners of MUSCO lighting are originally from Charles City and donated lighting to show off the new structure at night.

Two of the major employers in the community are in the pharmaceutical business. Pfizer has 400 employees. Cambres employs 180.

The city recently succeeded in attracting Metas to open a tire manufacturing facility in a vacant plant that had been used by Winnebago. The plant is owned by a European company that makes large tires for specialized equipment built by John Deere and Caterpillar.

Another major employer in the community is the Floyd County Community Hospital.

Charles City has recently won two national awards for volunteer efforts involving community improvement. The local Main Street organization has been an essential part of those efforts.