



Issue 05

County Administration Newsletter

Vision & Stewardship

May 2014

Administration

Public service can, from time to time, be a very thank-less job, but also very rewarding. Over the past seven months (I can hardly believe I have been here this long already!) I have had an opportunity to meet with many staff, both individually and in their departments. Through meeting with staff, I have seen firsthand the passion many of you bring to your positions and daily tasks! Seeing this dedica-

tion makes our work in Administration and Human Resources that much easier, and to you I say thank you!

May 3-9 was Public Service Recognition Week and while there wasn't a whole lot of hoopla surrounding the week, it is important to note that the Public Safety Committee has worked on and recommended a resolution recognizing the Employees

of Burnett County and their families. The resolution will be going to County Board in the near future. Currently, Administration is working with the Lounge Committee to plan an event for employees and their families this summer! This appreciation from our elected officials is well received and we hope that many of you, and your families, can join in this event. Watch for details!

ADRC

Last year the State office of the ADRC developed some generic advertisements for local ADRC offices across the state to use. Our agency applied for and received extra grant funds totaling \$22,816 for supporting our out-

reach and marketing efforts. In addition to our targeted event ads that you are currently hearing on the radio, we will be running the state generated generic ads. These will run on both AM and FM stations in Amery and

WXCX from Siren. There are also video ads that will be shown in the local theater. You can expect to start seeing those ads in the Siren and St. Croix Falls theaters beginning in July!

Airport

Mina Copeland Head Start classes toured the Airport during two different visits on May 13. The chilly windy weather didn't diminish the enthusiasm of the nearly three dozen visitors ages three to five. During the tour the kids got a chance to

a close-up look inside the cockpit of a plane as well as get pictures taken sitting in the seat of the snow plow tractor. These visits take place every year sometime during late April or early May. Because of the adverse weather there was no aircraft activity around the airport

but the kids still enjoyed getting out of the classroom for the day.



Child Support

Because establishing paternity for children who were born in, or who are now residing in Burnett County is the first step to ensure that they have the support of both parents, it continues to be a high priority for our office. During 2013 we were able to have father's names added to birth records for seventy-four children in our caseload.

As one would expect, collecting

court ordered child support when parents do not reside with their children is also important to us. Through the efforts of our child support specialists our collections for 2013 were \$2,222,394, which was 81% of the total amount ordered to be paid.

We are grateful for the cooperation we have with our local employers who are an important

part of the child support process. When employers cooperate by processing our income withholding orders they enable families to receive regular and timely child support payments.

We also thank those parents who work with us in order to make the process of paying and collecting child support less stressful for all.

Emergency Management

It seems that each week in the news we hear about a sudden and tragic incident of workplace violence. No one is immune. The reasons for perpetrating violence are varied and cannot be predicted. We must be prepared to respond when it happens here.

For that reason, I dusted off an old draft of a Government Center security plan with the intent to update it. I immediately found 2 major problems. One, the warning phrase that was to signify taking protective action by staff and visitors was "Mr. Burnett is in the building". When I approached random staff and asked if they recognized that phrase, most asked

"Who?" The second problem was that the phrase was to be announced over the building loudspeaker system. This building does not have a loudspeaker system. Oops.

The revised security plan warns staff through the building's phone system. A select number of phones can be activated throughout the building to issue clear and unambiguous warnings to Evacuate, Lockdown and Shelter-in-Place. The plan also includes guidance on what to do if you are taken hostage or receive a bomb threat over the phone or in person.

For this plan to be successful, training for employees is being planned for early summer. Periodic drills will also be held to test and improve the plan. By working together, we can be prepared!



Forestry and Parks

Burnett County is the proud owner of 221,000 new arrivals to the county, and by the time this newsletter is sent out to everyone, they will be scattered throughout the county forest. I'm talking about 221,000 new tree seedlings which will be planted on 275 acres of county forest lands. A migrant crew was hired to put these trees in

the ground, by hand, and it is expected to only take 5 days. We will work closely with this crew during this time, shuffling boxes of trees, taking plots for tree counts, and making sure they are planting the trees according to our specifications. A lot of time and energy goes into getting these trees in the ground, and then it's up to

Mother Nature to supply adequate water and sunshine to allow the trees to grow. If not, we will find ourselves back at these same locations doing it all over again.

Wishing everyone a happy spring from the Forestry & Parks Department.



Health and Human Services

In a follow up to the story in last month's newsletter, the National Park Service was awarded a \$25,000 Active Trails Grant. Burnett County Health Department will receive \$5,000 to promote the use of the Namekagon and St. Croix Riverways and associated parks and trails by residents of Burnett County for holistic health and wellness. Some possible partnership grant activities include:

- Detailed trails brochure and short video to promote the trails, activities, locations, etc.
- Fact sheets about the trails, trail difficulty, and preparing for trail activities.
- Park prescription pads for dieticians, social workers, and registered nurses to prescribe use of the trails to participants through DHHS programs such as WIC, PNCC, MH Unit Programs.
- Passport check-off list for

participants to record trail related activities they have completed in order to earn incentive items.

- Trail events and activities through a community-wide campaign and some targeted populations.

The Mental Health Task Force of Burnett County is active in providing Question, Persuade, Refer Gatekeeper Trainings for suicide prevention, which is a primary objective of their work. Ashley Goffin, Burnett County social worker and Debra Eichman, Siren School Counselor, have trained the Grantsburg and Siren school staff and the NW WI EMS District. All staff of Burnett County HHS were trained in April. Other populations that are being considered for training include local health clinics, the American Legion/VFW, community industries and corporations (such as Parker Hannifin), and

clergy/faith leaders. The purpose of the training is to give the average person some tools to recognize the warning signs of suicide and to reach out and save a life.

May is National Foster Care Month. When children need to be removed from their homes due to abuse, neglect, or uncontrollable and delinquent behaviors, foster care is often the only option. Family Foster Care is people who are willing to open their homes and hearts to children and their challenges. Foster families can assist children and their families as they work through the issues that brought the child into care. Burnett County is actively recruiting families and individuals who may be interested in providing foster. Contact Melanie Brown in Health and Human Services if you are interested, or know of someone who may be interested in becoming a foster parent.

Highway Department

It's the start of our second season (construction and maintenance); hopefully the winter season has passed. At this time approximately 67% of our annual winter maintenance budget has been used and materials for the fall (salt) have been ordered.

The 2014 spring road restrictions were lifted on May 9, 2014. We have a very busy summer planned with road maintenance projects scheduled to start with approximately 20 miles of chip sealing on June 23, 2014. Our

plan is to prep the roads for this surface treatment soon.

The county highway improvements will begin after the July 4th weekend with CTH B (3.52 miles). This will complete CTH B from STH 35 to CTH H, and it only took 30 years. The next improvement project will be CTH M from STH 70 to CTH D.

We will also be painting centerline and fog lines on approximately 69 miles of roads this year. We have had many positive comments from motorists

about how nice the fog lines are for keeping vehicles in the traveled lanes.

Have a safe summer and take extra care and reduce speed when approaching or in construction and maintenance zones to protect our crews and equipment.



Land and Water Conservation

The LWCD's *Shoreline Incentives Program (SIP)* is open to all waterfront property owners in Burnett County. The SIP is the program that meets full program standards:

- \$250 initial payment
- \$50 annual tax rebate
- An exclusive program shirt or cap
- A property sign identifying the parcel as a *Preserved Natural Shoreline* (optional)

Program enrollment requires signing and registering a restrictive shoreline covenant, which states the parcel will be maintained according to the county shoreline zoning



regulations and buffer preservation/restoration standards. Enrollment is open to sites that already meet program standards, sites that are restored voluntarily, and sites where restoration was required for a land use permit. Our department provides technical assistance and financial assistance for voluntary restorations. (No financial support is provided for required restorations - technical assistance only). We also offer assistance to riparian landowners for

storm water runoff control and aquatic habitat restoration projects under this program.

Since its incep-

tion in 2000, the program has resulted in 680 covenants registered, protecting 244,420 linear feet (46.29 miles) of shoreline, and restoring 117,677 square feet (2.7 acres) of water frontage. There are 101 named and 18 unnamed water bodies represented by the program.

This program is supported by grants from the WI DNR Lake Protection Program. The grant pays for 75% of program expenses (the remaining 25% is match from the County). To date - Three Quarters of a Million Dollars (\$750,000)!! - of technical assistance and shoreline practices have been implemented on Burnett County water frontage!

Maintenance and Grounds

Well, it has been a busy winter/spring for the Maintenance Department and this is the first real chance to provide some real input for the newsletter – didn't want to just complain about the snow.

Speaking of snow, it is good to note that all forms of water control are a big concern for the department. Whether it be snow removal, rain water drainage, circulating boiler water for our heating system, the testing and quality of well water for drinking, waste water treatment and dispersal, and of course, the dreaded water leak from the ceiling - water control has a big impact on what we do and takes up a lot of time. Naturally, we all dealt with the snow this winter. This spring we replaced the

Government Center's water meter and made improvements so that it can be serviced and calibrated, where as the old meter could not. About the same time we had some steel fittings that had been introduced into our plumbing system back in the 1990s removed. Unlike metals in a plumbing system cause galvanic reaction, and can lead to the steel fittings to fail over a period of time.

Those were the planned water projects, the unexpected problem was that one of the two well system's pressure tanks failed. Instead of repairing the tank, an alternative variable speed drive pressure control was installed.



This will provide a more stable water system pressure and was cheaper than repairing the old tank. It should also save energy; we should get a \$450 energy rebate from Polk-Burnett for this installation.

Also this year, so far, we have temporarily relocated two departments in the meeting room areas of the Government Center for about a week at a time. This allowed us time to make some repairs, paint and have new carpet installed in their office space and allowed the impacted departments to find things they haven't seen in years. There are three more of these temporary moves planned for this year.

Sheriff's Department

Field Services Division:

Please join the Sheriff's Office in welcoming our two newest members; Deputy Tim Imrick and Deputy Mitch Olson. Both have recently completed field training and are now working solo patrol. Tim and Mitch are both experienced officers, having worked for the Washburn and Douglas County Sheriff's Offices, respectively, before joining our agency.

Congratulations to Deputy Ryan Bybee on his recent promotion

to Sergeant. It is expected that an additional promotion to sergeant will made in the Field Services Division in June or July.

Jail/Emergency Communications:

On May 7th, Burnett County officially went online with the second portion of VINE (Victim Information Notification Everyday.) This is a national system of law enforcement and correctional agencies that have organized to provide victim notifications by phone or e-mail when-

ever an offender in their case is released from custody, transferred to another facility, or served a protective/restraining order. Burnett is one of the first counties in the region to adopt this program in its entirety and is working in conjunction with the Wisconsin Department of Corrections to provide a safe and efficient means for crime victims to receive important information about the offender in their cases.

Veteran Services

Monday, May 26, we as a grateful nation recognize Memorial Day to honor those who have served in our military and have passed on. Some were killed in action, some died of injuries as a result of their service, and others died of natural causes or injury/illness not related to their service. They all served with honor to protect and sustain the freedoms we enjoy as a nation. As you enjoy this three day weekend, please remember to display your flag of the United States at half-staff from sunrise to noon in their honor. Also, observe a moment of silence at 3:00 p.m.

There will be several Memorial Day programs throughout the county on Monday. I ask that you take time and attend one. Information can be obtained through the American Legion and/or VFW.

The proper way to place a flag at half-staff is to raise it to the top and then lower it to half-staff. To take it down, it should go back up to the top and then lowered. If you are present at a local program and the flag is presented and/or during a gun salute and taps, veterans, whether in uniform or not, are encouraged to salute. If not sa-

luting, others should place their right hand over their heart.

Have a safe weekend.

June Dates of Interest

- 6 D-Day, Operation Overlord (1944)
- 14 Flag Day, Army Day (1775)
- 22 Pledge of Allegiance Recognized (1942)
- 22 GI Bill signed (1946)
- 25 Korean War began (1950)
- 28 WWI ends (1919)

During the April NW WI CVSO Association meeting, Doug Stubbe was elected to serve as President for a one year term. NWWCVSO represents 20 Wisconsin counties.

Zoning/Land Use

Over the last year the Burnett County Land Use/Zoning Office has gone through several changes. These changes involve organization, staffing, and personnel.

Over the last few years there have also been changes with our state partners in the POWTS (Private Onsite Waste Treatment System) and DNR Shoreland Zoning programs. Consequently, there has been less assistance and guidance and new requirements for review, permit issuance/tracking and audits.

Changes have been made to provide a more efficient and automated permit tracking sys-

tem, which will eventually be available to the public online. To make this system work, it is necessary to have complete, accurate and detailed applications.

The Burnett County GIS website can provide a tremendous amount of detailed and accurate information for permit applications. This includes legal descriptions, parcel (or lot layout), setback information, building locations, wetlands, floodplain, etc.

Our goal is to try to get applications reviewed and/or issued within 7 to 10 days. The better the information the faster we can process the permits. The

one or two day turnaround on permits is not realistic, nor is it realistic to expect office staff to complete applications. Reviewing and returning incomplete or inaccurate applications takes as much, if not more, time than issuing a completed application.

We understand the need to get construction projects started and keep equipment and people working.

Please contact me if you would like help or information on the county's GIS mapping website or if you have any additional questions or concerns.