



Issue 23

County Administration Newsletter

Vision & Stewardship

February 2016

Administration

Burnett County is pleased to welcome Jessica Rubin as the new HR Generalist/Executive Assistant. Please stop in to say hello.

Jessica resides by Long Lake, north of Rice Lake, WI with her husband Jeff and two children Ellie, 13 and Jacob, 9. Her two dogs, Barry and Murray, believe they are the most fundamental members of the Rubin family. She enjoys spending time with her family, challenging herself with new workouts and running, cooking, reading, and shopping.

"I was very blessed to have had the opportunity to spend time as

a stay at home mom, while pursuing my education. I began at WITC in Rice Lake where I earned an Associate's Degree in Supervisory Management and Certification in Human Resources. After working in the field, I was inspired to continue my education and moved forward with earning my Bachelor's degree in Social Work at the University of Wisconsin-Superior.

While I found the field of Social Work both interesting and challenging, I have chosen to move my career from case and client management, back in the direc-

tion of administration and personnel focused service. I am especially excited for the opportunity to learn and grow professionally and am highly eager to work with all of you here at Burnett County. I look forward to meeting you!"



Aging and Disability Resource Center

The ADRC has welcomed Karen Nichols as the new Elderly Benefit Specialist. This position was previously held by Connie Crosby who retired in January.

If the last name is familiar to you, it's because she is married to Jason (Jake) Nichols, Forest & Parks Administrator for Burnett County. Karen comes to us from the Siren Pharmacy, where she was the Lead Pharmacy Technician since 1997.

When not at work, she enjoys spending time with family & friends, watching her kids compete in their sporting events and spending time in her vegetable garden. Karen and Jake have 2 kids, a girl who is 14 and a boy who is 12. Karen also has a love for photography. Several years ago, she turned that love into her own side business, Karen Nichols Photography.

Karen was born and raised in New Richmond, WI and moved to the area in 1997. Even though she is not from here, she feels that this community is where she is meant to be and it has become "home". She looks forward to helping and serving the residents of Burnett County for years to come.

Please stop by and introduce yourself to Karen in the ADRC.

**BURNETT COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
AND THE
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
PRESENTS**

SKYWARN SPOTTER TRAINING



APRIL 5, 2016, AT 6:00 PM

ROOM 165

BURNETT COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER

The National Weather Service's Skywarn program provides training to volunteers in the detection and reporting of life-threatening thunderstorms- those that contain large hail, damaging winds, and tornadoes. There are 1,700 Skywarn spotters across northeastern Minnesota and northwestern Wisconsin reporting to the Duluth National Weather Service.

The training is free and open to the general public!

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT BURNETT COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Health & Human Services

February is American Heart Month. Burnett County DHHS Public Health is encouraging the public to be aware of their risk factors for heart disease and stroke. There are a number of risk factors that you can control, including:

SMOKING

Smoking cigarettes puts you at a much greater risk for heart attack, and it's the single greatest cause of preventable death in the United States. Constant exposure to other people's tobacco smoke also increases your risk, even if you don't smoke. If you're a woman who uses birth control pills and you smoke, your risk is even higher. The bottom line: if you don't smoke, don't start. And if you do smoke, quit! When you stop smoking, no matter how long or how much you've smoked, your risk of heart attack drops.

HIGH CHOLESTEROL

Know your numbers to know your risk. A simple blood test can show if your blood cholesterol level is desirable, borderline-high, or high.

HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

Have your blood pressure checked each time you visit your doctor. High blood pres-

sure is often called the "silent killer" because it has no symptoms. People with high blood pressure are 4 times more likely to die from a stroke and 3 times more likely to die from heart disease, compared to those with normal blood pressure.

SODIUM INTAKE

Consuming too much sodium, or salt, increases blood pressure, therefore increasing the risk of heart attack and stroke. About 9 out of 10 Americans eat more salt than is recommended.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Get up and get moving. The American Heart Association recommends at least 150 minutes of moderate exercise every week, which equals 30 minutes a day for five days. This could be as simple as taking a brisk walk.

OBESITY

Obesity isn't an appearance issue; it's a health issue. Obesity is a major health problem for all Americans, including children. Nearly 27% of adults in Wisconsin are obese, and 65% are overweight or obese. Obesity significantly increases your risk of diabetes, heart disease, and even some cancers.

DIABETES

Have your glucose levels checked during annual physical exams. If you are already diabetic, take measures to keep your blood sugar within acceptable limits. Adults with diabetes are two to four times more likely to have heart disease or suffer a stroke than people without diabetes.

For more information on heart disease, view our Facebook page, 'Burnett County Wisconsin Public Health' or visit <http://www.cdc.gov/features/heartmonth/>



The American Heart Association is a non-profit organization in the United States that fosters appropriate cardiac care in an effort to reduce disability and deaths caused by cardiovascular disease and stroke. Originally formed in New York City in 1915 as the Association for the Prevention and Relief of Heart Disease, it is currently headquartered in Dallas, Texas. The American Heart Association is a national voluntary health agency.

Forest and Parks



Have you heard of or been following Senate Bill 434 & Assembly Bill 561? Are you aware of the potential benefits that these bills could have for local towns and counties as it relates to lands entered into the State's Managed Forest Law Program (MFL)?

Did you know statewide it is estimated 2.6 million cords of wood are produced and transported on public roads annually? This equals approximately 5,200,000 total tons of wood being hauled on public roads each year.

It is well known that lack of local and state funding to maintain, replace and upgrade roads

has played a big role in town and county governments having to take necessary steps to protect their roads and infrastructure. This has led to road & bridge postings and in some cases, restricting access for heavier weight vehicles such as logging trucks.

So how can these legislative bills make a difference to your local government? AB 561 & SB 434 propose to return much of the closed acreage fees from the MFL program back to the towns and counties that generate and collect the fees, vs. depositing them into the Department of Natural Resources Forestry Account of the Conservation Fund. These funds will go directly to the towns and counties and can be used to maintain and upgrade roads and infrastructure within these municipalities.

While this is not the save all solution to the road and infrastructure issues that many are faced with, it is a step in the

right direction. It is our hope that if this increased funding from the MFL program closed acreage fees does pass and becomes law, town and county governments will be able to invest more into their local roads and transportation infrastructure. This will allow industries, such as Wisconsin's \$22 billion timber industry, to be able to continue to use roads without added restrictions.

If you are not aware of or familiar with these bills, I encourage you to look them over and review how they could impact your local governments. There are many good documents out there that can help explain these bills. I would also encourage you to contact your local representatives and talk to them about these bills.

Thank you!

Jason A. Nichols

Zoning

The 2015 spring aerial imagery is now available on the county GIS website <http://burnettcowi.wgxtreme.com/>

The Zoning Department is beginning the process to update the ordinances from all the recent legislative changes. A public hearing

will be held on March 1st to go over the proposed floodplain ordinance and the proposed boathouse ordinance. The proposed floodplain ordinance can be found at <http://www.burnettcounty.com/DocumentCenter/View/4792>.

The proposed boathouse ordinance can be found at <http://www.burnettcounty.com/DocumentCenter/View/4791>.

The ordinances need to have all the changes incorporated and certified in compliance by October 1, 2016.

Maintenance and Grounds

The commissioning or re-commissioning of existing buildings is quickly becoming one of the most important topics in the building management arena. Commissioning is the practice of testing and adjusting the building systems to meet the original design intent and/or optimize the systems to satisfy current operational needs. Commissioning relies on existing building and equipment documentation, along with functional testing to optimize performance.

In general, commissioning is the process of ensuring that a building performs according to its design intent and the needs of its owners and occupants. Numerous case studies have demonstrated resulting Operations and Maintenance (O&M) related energy efficiency improvements on the order of 5% to 30% covering a wide range of building uses. The resulting simple pay-back periods are typically less

than 2 years and often less than 0.5 year. Research would be needed to further pinpoint the actual costs and resulting benefits of re-commissioning for a specific, existing building, such as ours.

Ideally, the building commissioning process begins during the planning stages of a new building design or new equipment installation. The fact is that the vast majority of buildings have never been commissioned. Even today, with mounting evidence of resulting expected benefits, very few new buildings undergo a complete commissioning process. Instead, new buildings are typically turned over to the building operating staff with operating problems in place, incomplete documentation, and minimal operator training for building-specific equipment. These same problems occur with major equipment installations. Then, during building and equipment operations

phases, the overall efficiency of mechanical systems degrades as sensors drift, short-term adjustments are made, tenant needs change, and so on. Even after adjustments are made, perhaps through a one-time re-commissioning effort, performance degradation is continuous.

Commissioning of existing buildings (and more specifically the energy consuming mechanical/ electrical systems within them and control systems that monitor them) is critical to ensure energy-efficient operation. Additional benefits include extended equipment life, increased tenant satisfaction through improved space comfort, improved indoor air quality, and fewer O&M emergency calls.

Veterans' Services

Veteran ID Card: Legislatively mandated in 2015 that VA will provide a Veteran ID Card to all veterans, VA has not yet written any policy or guidance as to how veterans will be able to obtain a card.

Once a draft policy and guidance is written, it will need to be vetted through public forum. As soon as a policy is approved, the system will need to be put into place.

The only information VA is providing at this time is that the cards will look different than the Health Cards, there will be a fee, and we won't see anything until at least sometime in 2017.

(continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

Travel Reimbursement: Veterans traveling to VA medical appointments are entitled to travel reimbursement if they meet one of the following:

- 1.) Veteran is 10%-20% Service Connected (SC) Disabled and the veteran is at the appointment for one of those SC disabilities.
- 2.) The veteran is 30% SC or more, the veteran is entitled to travel for any medical appointment.
- 3.) The veteran attending a Compensation & Pension exam.
- 4.) The veteran is in receipt of non-SC (NSC) Pension. The veteran has 30 days from the date of the appointment to request travel reimbursement – usually requested during check-in for the appointment. If the veteran receives medical treatment for disabilities that are pending a VA decision for SC, the veterans has 30 days from the date of the award letter to request travel for all those appointments attended after the date of the claim. In order for VA to pay travel, the veteran must establish Direct Deposit through the VAMC Beneficiary Travel Office. This is separate from the Direct Deposit a veteran may already have established for monthly SC and NSC payments.

Non-VA Care: If a veteran is receiving non-VA medical treatment through the Veterans Choice Program, that treatment does not get billed to the VA. It needs to be billed to Health Net, the contractor who oversees the program. All other non-VA medical treatment, including ER visits and ambulance, gets billed to the VAMC for that area – Burnett County is VAMC Minneapolis. Note that just because the patient is a veteran and it's been billed to the VA does not guarantee payment from the VA. If the veteran has any kind of Health Insurance, including Medicare, the VA will not pay in whole or in part unless the care is for a SC disability.

If you have questions regarding the above or veteran benefits, please contact the Burnett County Veterans Service Officer.



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs is a government-run military veteran benefit system with Cabinet-level status. With a total 2009 budget of about \$87.6 billion, VA employs nearly 345,000 people at hundreds of Veterans Affairs medical facilities, clinics, and benefits offices and is responsible for administering programs of veterans' benefits for veterans, their families, and survivors. In 2012, the proposed budget for VA was \$132 billion. VA 2014 budget request for 2014 was \$152.7 billion. This included \$66.5 billion in discretionary resources and \$86.1 billion in mandatory funding. The discretionary budget request represented an increase of \$2.7 billion, or 4.3 percent, over the 2013 enacted level.

March

- 3rd: Star-Spangled Banner Nat'l Anthem (1931)
- 4th: U.S. Constitution Completed (1789)
- 12th: GSA founded (1912)
- 18th: Operation Iraqi Freedom began (2003)
- 29th: WI Vietnam Veterans Day (2009)

April

- 6th: WWI began (1917 (US))
- 9th: Nat'l Former POW Recognition Day
- 11th: Persian Gulf War Cease Fire (1991)
- 12th: Civil War begins
- 22nd: Earth Day
- 23rd: Army Reserve, B-day (1908)