



Issue 20

County Administration Newsletter

Vision & Stewardship

November 2015

Administration

At the November 10th County Board meeting, the Board voted to move forward with funding phase three for the highway/forestry facility. Phase three will provide the County with final construction and bidding specifications as well as provide oversight during construction.

Last week the Committee of the Whole met and discussed several topics. One major discussion and decision before them was to review and select a loan term to bid for the proposed highway/forestry facility. As identified throughout the preliminary design phase, the proposed facility has an estimated price tag of \$5 million. Presented with taxpayer implica-

tions of \$5 million paid for over 10, 15, or 20 years, the Committee decided to move forward with a 10 year term. The esti-

mated taxpayer cost per \$100K in value would be roughly \$24 dollars. On a median valued home in Burnett County, the annual cost would be approximately \$36 dollars. The debt calculations were estimated borrowing \$5 million dollars and paying it back over 10 years at an interest rate of 3.25%.

With the continued forward progress towards a new highway/forestry facility, an open house for interested persons will be held on December 9th, from 6-8PM at the existing highway facility. We look forward to seeing you at the open house.

- Nate

A flyer for an open house event. The top section is green with white text: "BURNETT COUNTY Proposed Highway/Forestry Facility OPEN HOUSE". Below this is a photograph of a paved road winding through a forest. A white text box is overlaid on the photo: "Join Burnett County Staff to tour the existing Highway Facility and view plans for the newly proposed Highway/Forestry Facility." Below the photo is a black box with yellow text: "Wednesday, December 9, 2015 6:00 - 8:00 pm 8150 State Road 70, Siren, WI". At the bottom is a blue box with white text: "Meet the new Highway Commissioner, Michael Hoefs Visit Information Stations Provide input on the proposed facility Refreshments Available".

Aging and Disability Resource Center

Every 3 years, we are required to submit a County Plan on Aging. This plan represents the intent of the county to ensure that older people have the opportunity to realize their full potential to participate in all areas of community life. Here are some key goals that we will be focusing on in 2016-2018.

- For our older population to
- The Elder Nutrition Program

have the skills and knowledge to utilize technology to connect virtually for socialization, education and as an avenue for public input and involvement with the ADRC, we will host technology trainings to increase self sufficiency and self efficacy for seniors.

will develop opportunities for local businesses/ organizations/ individuals to deliver meals to recipients which will increase seniors' interactions with a variety of community members. This will also help build a community investment in the senior nutrition program.

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- We will create an active caregiver coalition in our service area through partnership with the St Croix Tribe and Washburn County to develop support services and community education opportunities.
- We will develop a Memory Café to increase community interaction for those with dementia as well as their caregiver. We will also be developing community education opportunities for businesses and the general public to create a comfort level and knowledge of how to interact with individuals with dementia.
- We will develop and host a Healthy Aging Summit day to touch on subjects such as health literacy and medication management to assist people in maintaining their independence within the community as long as possible.
- We will collaborate with senior centers to help identify programs and services that the community wants and needs.

This is just a snapshot as to what we have in our aging plan. According to the Department of Health Services report on County Population Projections through 2035, Burnett County is expected to have a 46.5% increase in people 60 and older, which is the 5th highest projected in the state.

If you have any questions, comments or would like a full copy of our aging plan, please contact Laura Neve or Dawn Sargent.

County Clerk

Tax Deed Property for sale online at <http://www.WisconsinSurplus.com>.

Wisconsin Statute requires the County, when selling tax deed property, to first offer it for sale by public auction at a minimum bid price set by the County Board or designated committee. If the parcel doesn't sell at public auction, after advertising, the County Clerk can sell the prop-

erty to any individual at the price set by the committee.

Following our most recent Land Sale Auction of tax deed properties, the Administration Committee approved moving forward with listing these properties on-line at the above public auction site for disposal of the remaining parcels that didn't sell on August 21, 2015.

We recently listed 11 properties with information and photos on <http://www.WisconsinSurplus.com> and will continue to list more properties for sale periodically, in hopes to get these properties back on the tax roll, which benefits the entire county.

Emergency Management

Seven tower sites are built with only two more to go!

The next tower site to go online will be the Sirentel site in the Town of Jackson. We have entered into a partnership with Sirentel to co-locate our equipment on their tower. The shelter

is on site and power has been installed. All of the equipment is staged and awaiting the installation of lines and antennas. This site is the replacement site for the original Verizon tower in the Town of Scott.

Our partnership with Sirentel is

placing the County in a very good strategic position to adapt to new technologies. Many of our towers are located on a dedicated fiber optic ring which will handle vast amounts of data and not be affected by weather. Should the fiber be

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damaged, we can still rely on the conventional microwave links installed on the towers. In the future, public safety communications may transition to dedicated wireless broadband known as FirstNet. The County will be in an excellent position to take advantage of this technology when the transition oc-

curs.

Our last site is an important one. The Hertel water tower was in the original bid specifications. This site was designed to be the link to the Barronett tower that provides coverage to the southeastern part of the county. A Memorandum of Understanding between the County and the St. Croix Tribe has been signed by the Tribal Council and will

be on the December agenda of the County Board. If approved, construction will likely be completed in the Spring of 2016.

Even with our current partially completed system, communication is actually quite good, certainly better than it was with the old system. When the Hertel tower is complete, Barronett will be linked into our system and provide excellent coverage.

Health & Human Services

Each year, November is recognized as National Adoption Awareness Month. While all adoption-related issues are important, the particular focus of this month is the adoption of older children currently in foster care —because “We Never Outgrow the Need for Family.” This theme calls attention to our nation's population of older youth in foster care who need loving, permanent families. Youth ages 15 to 18 make up 5 percent of the foster care population. Creating lifelong connections for these young people is critical in helping them prepare for successful adulthood.

Compared to their peers, many youth in foster care face higher rates of poor outcomes, such as dropping out of high school, unemployment, and homelessness. Despite these challenges, research on positive youth development confirms that children and youth have the ability to overcome traumatic experiences

and thrive in adulthood when they are connected to a strong, permanent support system. All youth need a sense of belonging; through adoption, youth are connected to a family who not only provide a sense of stability, but also help them navigate the complicated landscape of their emerging independence. These lasting connections can help youth with important life tasks such as enrolling in higher education, finding stable housing, securing employment, and establishing healthy relationships.

Older youth who are adopted from foster care are more likely to finish high school, go to college, and be more emotionally secure than their peers who remain in, or age out of foster care. Studies of youth who have aged out or emancipated from foster care show that up to 50 percent of these youth become homeless and have limited access to employment or higher education. That's why finding

permanent, loving families for this population is of the utmost importance. Adoptive parents provide the essential guidance youth need to successfully navigate a strong path to independence.

People from many different cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds and family structures may meet the qualifications to adopt and be great parents. Welcoming a foster youth into your home can be profoundly rewarding for every family member. Prospective adoptive parents of older youth will benefit from exploring the developmental stages of adolescents, including how trauma, loss, and resiliency may affect a young person, and the important ways that adoptive parents can support a youth's successful transition to adulthood.

During National Adoption Month, prospective adoptive families can learn more about the needs of older youth and op-

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opportunities to positively guide them toward successful outcomes. The National Adoption Month website provides re-

sources and tools to help raise awareness about the need for adoptive families for older youth in foster care and provides strategies for overcoming common barriers to perma-

nency.

For more information on becoming a Foster Parent, contact Burnett County Health and Human Services at 715-349-7600.

Land and Water Conservation

The 39th Annual Tri-County Soil Judging Contest was held on October 21. This annual event rotates between Burnett, Polk and Washburn Counties. This year's contest, hosted by Burnett County, was held at the Crex Meadows Wildlife Education and Visitor Center in Grantsburg. This was an ideal location since the pits to be evaluated were located just a few miles down the road at a local field saving time and travel.

The event was attended by 44 students representing 6 schools. The students compete as teams and as individuals. Each school is allowed up to two teams of four contestants each. The participants examined the soil and surrounding land. They then defined texture, structure, drainage and production capabilities and land uses of several different soils. The weather was perfect which added to the excitement of the out-of-doors event.

After judging the pits, the students headed back to the educa-

tion center for lunch. Lauren Finch, Wildlife Educator at Crex, gave a presentation on the "Glacial Geology of Crex Meadows and the Grantsburg Area". Afterwards we proceeded to the awards presentation.

Team winners, and recipients of trophies, were:

- 1st Place: Siren #1, 799 points: Derek Berg, Keenan Cook, John Doric, Cassie Wentland
- 2nd Place: Shell Lake #1, 780 points: Bailee Hanson, Marty Anderson, Amber Anderson, Courtney Melton
- 3rd Place: Clear Lake #1, 761 points: Devan Tulgren, Blake Johnson, Conner Schramski, James Williams

Individual winners and recipients of a commemorative medal were:

- 1st Place: James Williams, Clear Lake, 298 points
- 2nd Place: John Doric, Siren, 268 points
- 3rd Place: Courtney Melton,

Shell Lake, 267 points

- 3rd Place: Derek Berg, Siren, 267 points
- 5th Place: Cassie Wentland, Siren, 264 points
- 6th Place: Cory Catts, Clear Lake, 258 points
- 7th Place: Marty Anderson, Shell Lake, 257 points
- 8th Place: Amber Anderson Shell Lake, 256 points

This year's event was extremely competitive with just points separating the top three teams and the top 8 individuals.

We would like to thank the staff at the Crex Meadows for their hospitality. We would also like to thank the property owners, James & Marlene Byers and Keith & Carolyn Byers, for their generosity in allowing us to use their fields for this competition.

Congratulations to all the students who participated in a job well done. We hope to see them all again next year in Polk County!

University of Wisconsin-Extension and Tourism

UW Cooperative Extension works with many local partners. Our longest running partnership is with counties. In Burnett County, supervisors support UW Cooperative Extension through the Wisconsin Association of County Extension Committees. Supervisors from our Natural Resources Committee work with supervisors from other counties to provide advice on UW-Extension's programming. At this fall's WACEC

conference UW-Extension Chancellor Cathy Sandeen recognized Burnett County Board Supervisor Brent Blomberg for his many years of service to WACEC. UWEX thanks Supervisor Blomberg and the entire Natural Resources Committee for all of their support.

Informational meetings are being held throughout the county on the new local tourism grant fund. Over \$15,000 is being

given out in tourism grants to local nonprofit organizations. Through the grant fund, the County of Burnett is partnering with tourism organizations to grow tourism and use marketing dollars as effectively as possible. The first grant deadline is February 1, 2016. People interested in learning more should attend an informational meeting or contact Mike Kornmann at 349-2979.

Burnett County Board Supervisor Brent Blomberg receives recognition for service to WACEC. From left to right: Counties Association Executive Director Mark O'Connell, Blomberg, Chancellor Sandeen, and UW-Extension Northwest Region Director Julie Keown-Bomar



Zoning/Land Information

New parcel mapping has been added to the GIS (Geographic Information System) website.

<http://burnettcowi.wgxtreme.com/>.

The Town of Jackson (Sections 40-15) and the west half of

Blaine (Sections 42-15) are now completely mapped and available on the GIS website. Next up for parcel mapping is Lafollette (Sections 38-15).

Tax season is almost upon us, we usually start printing tax

bills around December 1 (depends on when we receive all the required information). The printing takes about 2 weeks to complete.